

ERRATUM

Page 1

In the paragraph headed HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS. The fourth line should read “very good and excellent elements.”

Page 40

Paragraph 97, fourth line. The fourth sentence should commence “Pupils in Key Stage 2 ...”

INSPECTION REPORT

The Oaks First and Middle School.

Tilgate, Crawley

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 131169

Headteacher: Mrs Penny Forbes

Reporting inspector: David Whatson
23494

Dates of inspection: November 13th-17th 2000.

Inspection number: 225323

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First and Middle

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Loppets Road
Tilgate
Crawley
West Sussex

Postcode: RH10 5DP

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: David Bennett

Date of previous inspection: This is the first inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Watson	<i>Registered inspector</i> 23494	Religious education; Design and technology.	The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught?
Dr. Barry Wood	<i>Lay inspector</i> 1311		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? Leadership and management.
Janet Sinclair	<i>Team inspector</i> 19824	Mathematics; Modern foreign languages; Foundation Stage; Special educational needs.	
Dr. Kevin Wood	<i>Team inspector</i> 7813	History; Geography; Information and communication technology.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Jeremy Collins	<i>Team inspector</i> 27736	Science; Physical education; Art.	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Oaks First and Middle School serves a residential area of Crawley. It is larger than other primary schools, as there are 409 pupils on roll, with roughly equal numbers of boys and girls in each year group, except in the current Year 7 where there are more girls. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, but the overall picture is average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. A small proportion of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds with 13 of them being at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. Pupils' attainment when they enter school in the Foundation Year is broadly in line with expectations for their age. The proportion of pupils at the school identified as having special education needs (21 per cent) is broadly average, as is the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need. Most have learning difficulties and a few have behavioural or emotional needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Oaks provides pupils with a satisfactory education. Although attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been improving over the last three years standards remain well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Teaching is good overall, with some good and excellent elements. Good relationships, behaviour and attitudes to work are strengths of the school. Good leadership and management give a clear direction to the work of the school. The value for money provided by the school is satisfactory.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The quality of teaching and support staff is good and is helping to raise standards.
- In Key Stage 1 the standard of writing attained in the national tests in 2000 was good.
- The reception classes provide the children with a very good start to their education.
- The good leadership of the headteacher has forged a new school out of two and has provided a staff and a structure that are poised for further improvement.
- The school promotes good attitudes and fosters a willingness to learn.
- The school provides a caring environment in which pupils can thrive.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The provision for after school clubs and the opportunities to compete.
- The use of assessment to guide curriculum planning and monitor and support pupil performance.
- The views of a minority of parents.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The Oaks has been open for three years. It is the product of the closure of one school, a change in character of another and relocation of the new school to the buildings of the closed school. The only report is from one of the previous two schools and no meaningful comparison is possible.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	B	E	E*	well above average A
Mathematics	E	E	E	E*	above average B
Science	E	E	E	E	average C
					below average D
					well below average E
					very low E*

The results in 2000 were well below average when compared to all schools, and very low when compared to those of similar schools (that is, schools with a similar proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals). This reflects the very low standards that the school has built upon over the last three years. The school's results have risen in line with the national trend but do not yet meet national averages. Girls have done better than boys in mathematics, by a wider margin than nationally. In 2001, the school's targets in English are likely to be met but are over-optimistic in mathematics. The majority of pupils make good gains in their learning. Standards of work seen at the end of Key Stage 1 during the inspection were above average in English, mathematics and science, and below at Key Stage 2. The difference between inspection findings and the national tests results of 2000 for Key Stage 2 was due partly to the disrupted education experienced by that group of pupils. The difference in performance between boys and girls, which was noted in mathematics in Key Stage 2, was not evident in the work seen in the current Year 6. Standards in art are particularly high at the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Once in school pupils enjoy learning. They are attentive and interested in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are generally well behaved in lessons, and play well together at break and lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful towards each other and adults. They are keen learners who work well together and independently. They are appreciative of others' contributions and achievements.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. In-term holidays are a major disruption to pupils' learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years	Aged 11-13 years
108 lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	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.

Teaching is good overall and was good or better in 64 per cent of the lessons observed. Only four per cent were judged unsatisfactory. Thirteen per cent were very good and 4 per cent excellent. Teachers manage lesson activities well. They ensure that pupils cover a wide range of work in English, mathematics and science. English skills are used well in other subjects. Teachers plan and resource lessons carefully to stimulate and encourage pupils to participate and extend their understanding. The teaching of literacy is good and numeracy satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well. Relationships with pupils are warm and encouraging and provide a positive learning environment. In the majority of lessons teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour so that pupils become confident learners who work well independently and in small groups. The main weakness in teaching is the lack of work adapted to meet the needs of all the abilities in the class, particularly the most able. Occasionally, also, the introduction is overlong, the pace of lessons slows and pupils lose their interest and motivation. The setting of homework is a consistent feature of good teaching. Marking is generally insufficiently analytical and helpful. Specialist provision for pupils with English as an additional language and who have special educational needs is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught, together with personal, social and health education, and French in Year 7. The curriculum for the under-fives is very good and it is good in Year 7. The number of after school clubs is currently unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The targets in the individual education plans are specific. The extra support given to some pupils is good and provides improved learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The teacher provided for pupils for whom English is an additional language gives good support and ensures pupils make good progress in acquiring English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Moral development is very good, cultural and spiritual are good and social is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The staff are very caring and supportive of all pupils. There are very good procedures to encourage good behaviour and good systems for monitoring attendance. The use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning, monitor pupils academic performance or provide them with individual targets is unsatisfactory. The informal monitoring of pupils personal development is good, although these are rarely recorded formally.

The majority of parents support the school particularly in relation to the good progress made by their children, the quality of teaching and the positive attitude to work that it encourages. A significant minority are unhappy about several aspects of the school that are the result of its size and the accessibility of senior staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is an effective leader. She is resourceful and motivating. She has provided the vision to create a new school. She and the deputy work well together and have created a hardworking team of staff. The management of subjects is satisfactory overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive of the school. Many are new in post, and they are starting to take an active role in fulfilling their responsibilities. Governors are aware that they need to become better informed to offer independent strategic guidance to the school. Statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has introduced monitoring of its performance, giving staff a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for improvements. The school has identified appropriate priorities for its development, based on its evaluations.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school applies the principles of best value consistently, linking spending to its education priorities.

The current staff are hardworking and intent on raising standards. Many are new to the school and the management is working hard to develop them into a highly effective team. Accommodation is good. The majority of classrooms are spacious and light. There are specialist rooms for science, and a combined art and design and technology room. The pupils benefit from spacious grounds for physical education and outdoor activities.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality of teaching.• The good progress made at school.• The expectation that their child should try hard.• The standards of work.• Homework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provision of after school clubs.• Information about their child's progress.• The school working more closely with them.

The inspection team agrees with the points that parents are pleased with. It finds no evidence to support the other areas, except the need for more clubs.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of assessments made of children soon after they join the reception class in the year they turn five show that there is a range of attainment that is broadly average in all areas of learning. The attainment of this year's group of children is historically atypical of the usual baseline assessment, which identifies children in previous years attaining below the expected levels for their age on entry to the reception. Currently, however, all children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in the reception classes due to the very good curriculum and the very good teaching they experience. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children will exceed the early learning goals¹ in all areas of learning.

2. When compared to all schools pupils' performance in the national Key Stage 2 tests in 2000 was well below average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils performance was also well below for science, and it was very low in English and mathematics. Only in test results for mathematics in Key Stage 2 was there a difference in attainment between boys and girls; girls' performance fell significantly below that of the boys. This same pattern was not evident during the inspection in the current Year 6. The local education authority has set challenging targets for mathematics at Key Stage 2 in 2001, which the school is unlikely to meet. Those for English, however, are more realistic and are obtainable.

3. Over the past three years results in English, mathematics and science have risen in line with the national trend at Key Stage 2. Pupils have achieved well. Standards in all three subjects are improving and academic progress has been mainly satisfactory. It has not, however, been sufficient to meet national expectations in any of these subjects, except in English in 1999 where the very good teaching of the Literacy Strategy had a marked impact on the standards achieved in that subject in that year. In the great majority of subjects and years standards have remained low in Key Stage 2 partly because of the very low baseline of three years ago and those pupils at the school, particularly those at Key Stage 2 have had a few very turbulent years. They have experienced a change of building, a new school and many changes of teachers. At the time of the opening of the school the priority was improving the behaviour and attitudes of many disaffected pupils. The group of pupils, who sat the national tests in 2000, also experienced difficulties and disruption due to the impact of being taught in mixed age classes and a series of unexpected staff illnesses. Under the direction of the head teacher the school has achieved very good progress in developing positive attitudes and good behaviour. This is beginning to have an impact on standards of attainment, particularly in Year 6. This year the school has introduced single aged year groups, and the school is more settled and has a full complement of staff. As a result, standards of work are rising more rapidly than before. The current rate of learning in the majority of lessons observed in Key Stage 2 during the inspection was at least satisfactory

¹ From September 2000 QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority), have introduced a set of Early Learning Goals for children's learning. These goals are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six in the areas of learning: language; literacy and communication; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development and personal, social and emotional development.

and sometimes good or better. The rate of learning was mirrored by the quality of teaching that pupils experienced. Judgements based on work seen in Key Stage 2 indicate that pupils' attainment in English and science is now currently in line with national expectations for 11 year olds. In mathematics it has risen from well below to below. This is an improvement on the Key Stage 2 national test results for 2000.

4. In English, pupils in Key Stage 2 have experienced, and contributed to, many good opportunities to discuss and listen to prose, plays and poetry. They have developed both the ability to listen to others' contributions and articulate their own well-reasoned opinions. By the time they are 11, many pupils are keen and confident readers. Pupils' skills in writing at 11 are below age related expectation. There is an unsatisfactory amount of work in books, few examples of extended and continuous writing, and the range and complexity of vocabulary and structure are not well developed. However, finished work is mainly well presented and neat with well-formed joined handwriting. By the age of 11 many pupils in mathematics calculate perimeters by adding the measurements of all sides and use the correct formula to calculate area. In Year 6 science many pupils demonstrate their sound understanding of air resistance in their well structured written work, accurately describing the experiments they have conducted.

5. Key Stage 1 pupils are achieving at a satisfactory level overall, and they show a particular strength in writing. In the national tests in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' performance was above the national average in writing, and in line for reading and mathematics. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school's performance reflected the same judgements. On the basis of teacher assessment, pupils' performance in science fell below the expected level. Over the last three years there have been steady improvements in standards in Key Stage 1 reading and mathematics that match the national trend. Writing, however, has improved far more dramatically, especially in 1999. This mirrored the above average attainment in English at Key Stage 2, and has been attributed, in part, to the impact of the literacy hour and the good use of writing in other subjects. Overall the rate of progress in the last three years has been satisfactory.

6. Inspection evidence also indicates a further improvement in the standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 when compared to the 2000 test results. In Year 2, standards were above age-related expectations in reading, and mathematics and broadly in line in science. In lessons observed, the rate of learning has been satisfactory overall. There is however, a difference between the two year groups. Achievement in Year 1 is mainly satisfactory and is a reflection of the overall quality of teaching. The rate of learning in Year 2 is good as a result of consistently good teaching.

7. By the time they are seven the majority of pupils are confident speakers. They listen well to their teachers, and respond positively to the shared book sessions in literacy sessions. The majority of pupils in Year 2 read books at or above the level expected for their age. During literacy sessions, pupils show a good understanding of the text, and identify vocabulary, spelling patterns and punctuation. Standards of writing are good in Key Stage 1. Pupils of all abilities sequence events and write accounts of their experiences, as well as writing about topics from other subjects. In mathematics, by the age of seven, many pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100 and use this knowledge to solve problems involving money values up to £5.00. In science the majority of pupils have a sound knowledge and a clear understanding of electric circuits and provide comprehensive explanations of how they work.

8. There are no statutory assessments for pupils before they leave the school at the age of 12. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils make good progress in this key stage due to the quality of teaching, but it is insufficient for them to fill the significant gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding that would enable them meet age related expectations. By the time they leave the school most pupils in English work collaboratively in groups and develop well-reasoned arguments to back up their opinions. In reading, the majority of pupils are keen readers and have positive attitudes towards books. Pupils have good research and retrieval skills and understand the classification system in the library. Pupils in Year 7 are given many good opportunities for writing and they produce a range of well-presented work. The standard of handwriting and presentation is very good. However, the content and vocabulary are not as well developed and lack complexity. This reflects the gaps in learning, which contributed to low standards in the end-of-key-stage tests for 2000. In mathematics standards remain well below national expectation. Pupils multiply and divide using decimal notation, measure angles using degrees and know how to simplify fractions and use this in solving simple problems involving weight. In science, most pupils used their knowledge and understanding of magnetic fields to devise successfully a plan for a game

9. Standards of work in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, and by the time pupils leave the school. Overall the rate of learning in all key stages is broadly satisfactory. In response to a monster's letter in Year 2 the majority of pupils use their word processing skills to produce a cake recipe. By the time they are 11 pupils confidently amend and add information to databases on the rainforests of Ecuador. In Key Stage 3, almost all pupils word process instructions for a 'Fractions Fun' game designed for younger pupils using two colours, a bold font, wavy headline and star graphics. Overall, pupils achieve the expected level in religious education. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are in line with the locally agreed syllabus and above at the end of Key Stage 1. The majority of pupils in Year 6 understand how religious abstinence affects the lives of Christians at Lent and Islamic believers during the Hajj. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress due to the quality of teaching and learning experienced. They use their knowledge of the Ten Commandments and the five Pillars of Islam to compare the two world religions that have these central to their faiths. The attainment in Year 7 pupils is below age related expectations due to their weak literacy skills and the slow rate of progress over the course of their disrupted education. However, the majority have a basic knowledge of the '5 Kalsa' of Islam and understand why these are important symbols for the Sikh community.

10. In all other subjects pupils achieve levels of knowledge and understanding that are at least in line with age related expectation. Standards in design and technology are good at the end of Key Stage 1 and good in history, geography, art, and music at Key Stage 2. The higher than expected levels of attainment in these subjects are a result of the good, very good and excellent teaching that encourages pupils to make good progress.

11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets set in their individual education plans in lessons where they are supported by the special educational needs teacher or teaching assistants. In all other lessons their progress is in line with that of their peers as insufficient use is made of their individual education plans to extend their learning in class. Pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress in

acquiring English in the Foundation Year and in Key Stage 1 due to the appropriate time and emphasis placed on language acquisition and the high quality of specialist support they receive. Progress made by gifted and talented pupils is unsatisfactory, as neither the school nor the teachers' planning has clearly addressed their current needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The school opened in September 1997 with a considerable number of disaffected pupils, and the headteacher quickly realised that she needed to improve this area of school life greatly. After considerable work by the headteacher and staff and the involvement of outside agencies, the school now has very high expectations of the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of all its pupils, and these are well realised in practice. The majority of parents show a strong approval level of the school's determination to make this area a distinctive strength.

13. Children in the reception classes always enjoy their work and are sensible when participating in the many varied activities that the school provides. They quickly gain confidence and independence, participate easily in the daily routines, and answer questions and give ideas without displaying any anxieties. A key feature of the reception children is the relationships that they form with their empathetic teachers and each other. There is no evidence of unsatisfactory behaviour.

14. Although some pupils find it difficult to come to school on time, they arrive calmly and are obviously happy to attend school. Their good attitudes to work allow them to settle well to lessons. As they progress through the key stages, they become increasingly keen and responsive to their teachers. The majority of pupils at the school listen quietly to their teachers and concentrate on tasks. They are stimulated by good teaching and become very involved in their learning. Because of the quality of teaching unsatisfactory behaviour is now a rarity. Only in a minority of cases when teaching strategies were inappropriate, did some pupils, mostly boys, become noisy and restless. Pupils have a good understanding of the school's expectations for self-discipline and there is a universal acceptance of the school's good behaviour norms. This leads to a calm, happy, and productive working atmosphere. Behaviour around the school is very good, as the close interaction of older pupils and younger pupils, particularly through the 'Oakwatch' playground patrol, has a calming and regulating effect. Historically, the incident and accident books indicate that there have only been a few interpersonal conflicts which have necessitated senior management team investigation. The school has used exclusions for challenging behaviour by a small minority of pupils but these incidents are decreasing.

15. The quality of relationships, at all levels, is good. The staff represent very good role models and pupils value the trust, empathy and care that they give. The older pupils mirror these same qualities in their dealings with younger pupils. In the classroom, pupils increasingly value each other's opinions and qualities as they progress through the school. They work together in groups and co-operate well to gain an effective outcome to tasks, as when pupils in Year 2 ran their own circle time lesson. When working together in groups, they share resources and are helpful to one another. A distinctive feature of all pupils is their politeness in holding doors open and their high levels of courtesy. The personal development of all pupils is good. This is now being underpinned by the quality of the formal personal, health and social education that the school has developed. From this pupils are creating a

very caring society that encourages all pupils to look after each other, as well as having an awareness of others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' knowledge of voluntary groups in Year 3 was impressive. They quickly settle into class routines and systems, and in some lessons, such as physical education have a good awareness of health and safety. The 'Oakwatch' playground patrol is particularly beneficial for younger pupils and, in conjunction with the school council, raises the self-esteem of the participating pupils. The school undertakes a series of residential visits, which stretch the pupils' spirit of adventure. The lack of after-school clubs and inter-school competitions hinders both personal and social development.

16. During the last three years, the overall level of attendance has been satisfactory. Since this September, however, half the 16 classes have attendance levels below the national average, and attendance in Years 6 and 7 is well below the national average, with many pupils taking holidays during term time. This has a negative impact on the rate of pupils' learning. Registers are completed in a statutory manner. They are regularly checked but there is no systematic analysis of absence levels. Despite pupils being granted 10 minutes at the start of the day to enter their classrooms, a minority of pupils are late. This disturbs the smooth start of the school day for the majority of pupils. Punctuality throughout the remainder of the school day is satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The teaching in the reception classes is very good. The quality of teaching across the rest of the school is good overall, with several examples of very good and excellent teaching. Seventeen per cent of teaching was very good or excellent, 42 per cent was good, 29 per cent satisfactory and 4 per cent unsatisfactory. The inspection figures hide differences between year groups. Teaching is consistently good or very good in years 2 and 7, with elements of very good teaching in Years 3, 5 and 6. The highest proportion of satisfactory teaching was found in Years 1 and 4. The highest percentage of unsatisfactory teaching was observed in Year 3.

18. All teachers have high expectations and expect pupils to behave well. In the majority of lessons, teachers manage their pupils well, particularly in Key Stage 2 where there are a number of pupils with challenging behaviour. Teachers make good use of praise to encourage pupils to contribute to lessons and to work hard. The majority of lessons have both a caring and industrious atmosphere in which teachers encourage pupils to answer questions and develop their learning. In a Year 5 music lesson, this allowed pupils to be innovative in their experiments with sound textures. In nearly all lessons, teachers are good at teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and reinforce these at appropriate times. In a reception class the teacher very effectively used the days of the week to sequence and reinforce the initial sounds of the days. Once pupils enter the school teachers make good and regular use of homework to reinforce and extend learning. This was evident in last year's homework books and from the current Year 7's work on eco-tourism.

19. In the very best lessons, as in the Year 1 and Year 7 science lessons, the excellent and dramatic introductions to the topics so enthralled pupils that their learning matched their eagerness to work. It was the very entertaining reading of the story 'Funny Bones' that focused the lesson and inspired all those in the room. Coupled with this, was the outstanding use of very focused and probing questions, which recapped on previous learning and involved

all pupils, regardless of ability or level of English, so that they clearly extended their knowledge and understanding of their work. In these very best of lessons, the content and associated activities as well as the pace of delivery were exceptional. The choice of a role-playing activity in Year 7 to develop pupils' understanding of eco-tourism was very effective in deepening pupils' understanding of the issues surrounding people's interactions with their environment. The teacher's very secure knowledge and understanding of the subject in physical education in Year 6 enabled her to set challenging targets related to pupils' individual performance. These targets were an excellent motivator and developed the pupils' physical prowess.

20. In the majority of lessons, teachers' choice and use of resources were particularly good. The display in Year 6 of World War Two food rations, compared to today's diet, visually brought home to pupils the austerity of life during World War Two. This promoted interest from all pupils, irrespective of their ability. Clear and precise instructions, given by teachers in good and very good lessons ensured that pupils understood the activity, as well as appreciating its relevance for future work. The introduction of the Year 5 lesson on bread-making focused pupils' thoughts on the activity at hand. It also ensured that they considered the effects of using different types of flour on the finished product. This issue was to be the main teaching point of the next lesson. In the majority of effective lessons, as in the Year 4 geography lesson on the Indian village of Chambakolli, teachers used the end of the lesson to synthesise, and therefore, reinforce the main points that the pupils had learned. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and often good. It provides clear direction and identifies key vocabulary, questions and issues for the lesson. In the majority of lessons it identifies activities for pupils of different abilities. On a few occasions, teachers' daily assessment of pupils' learning was not rigorous enough to match the work accurately to the needs of all pupils.

21. Where teaching is less than satisfactory the pace is invariably too slow. This is due not only to the unsatisfactory match between the requirements of the activity and pupils' needs and interests but also a too sedentary start to the lesson. Introductions were over-long and repetitive, with pupils staying too long on the carpet areas prior to the start of activities. On a few occasions, teachers' inability to control the class, or a few individuals, disrupted parts of the lesson, so that the pace slowed and pupils had disjointed learning experiences. In a minority of lessons, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject was unsatisfactory as in the case of the Year 3 physical education lesson, where opportunities to develop and extend pupils' learning were not seized upon. Marking is inconsistent. In the best practice, pupils receive advice on how to improve their work. For the most part, however, marking consists mostly of a series of ticks or a word of praise that gives no guidance. The school does not set individual targets by which both pupils and teachers can measure progress in any subject.

22. The teaching of literacy is good and that of numeracy satisfactory. They are both having an impact on raising standards. Lessons are well organised and usually provide skilled direct teaching. The mental and oral aspects of many of the lessons were not fully developed. Therefore, the opportunities to draw out and build upon pupils' mathematical ideas as a way of extending and deepening their understanding were limited. The quality of specialist teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Lessons are well planned in order

to meet their specific needs. Good questioning and supportive interactions help pupils to improve their skills and knowledge. Where behaviour is the issue, teachers help pupils to a clearer understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others, and how to find ways of managing their behaviour constructively. The visiting specialist teacher for pupils with English as an additional language provides well targeted support and pupils make good progress in such sessions.

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

23. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It meets recommendations of the early years curriculum and the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum in the other three key stages. The curriculum takes account of previous learning and the school builds on this through its planning. Its particular strengths lie in its provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage, and in personal, social and health education. Subjects such as music and art, history, geography, and the cultural and multicultural aspects to these subjects enhance the curriculum provision. The governors have a policy for sex education and the school deals with a number of topics relating to health, including drugs and their misuse. The school has based its curriculum mostly on published schemes of work and national guidance. It has, in a few instances such as design and technology, modified these to meet the specific needs of the pupils at 'The Oaks'. Some subjects, however, such as geography, do not have agreed policies. Some of the co-ordinators, and their link contacts in other areas of the school, are new to their posts and have yet to develop a full awareness of all the needs at every key stage in the school. There is no permanent co-ordinator for information and communication technology but this is not currently having an impact on standards. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The provision for both music and art has been enriched in the school by the involvement of resident artists and visiting musicians. The curriculum in the Foundation Year is very good and provides a wide and appropriate range of activities. It is thoroughly planned and meets the current guidance on early learning goals.

24. The curriculum is inclusive and all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs, have full access to it. There is a satisfactory policy for equal opportunities in place, which the school plans to review and up-date. The ethos of the school reflects its commitment to equal opportunities. All pupils are able to take part in extra-curricular activities. Specialist staff for pupils who have special educational needs plan lessons well both to support work in the classroom and to improve pupils' access to the curriculum. The very good individual education plans that are used by specialist teachers and support staff, ensure that the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs are clearly identified and that the work given at these times is appropriate. There is however, less evidence that class teachers use the targets and information from individual education plans to provide work, which clearly matches pupils' needs, particularly in the foundation subjects. Pupils from the minority ethnic community are well integrated into the school, and there is support in the Foundation Stage to help new children settle into the school routine. The visiting specialist teacher, funded through the ethnic minority achievement grant, provides good quality targeted support for pupils with English as an additional language who are in the early stages of acquiring English. This enables them to participate in the full curriculum,

especially in the reception classes, although they do not always receive such good support in other year groups where there is no additional help in the class. There are procedures to identify very able pupils. However, the school has not yet satisfactorily analysed the different needs and abilities of these pupils in order to inform initiatives which could raise their levels of attainment. In particular, the school does not always provide challenge for pupils of higher ability.

25. Literacy and numeracy are given particular emphasis as the school strives to equip its pupils with these basic skills and prepare them for the next stage of their education. The strategies that the school uses for teaching literacy are effective and, as a result, the attainment of pupils has improved well although it is still below the expected national levels at the end of Key Stage 2. There are good links between English and many other subjects such as geography, history and science. The strategies for the teaching of numeracy are satisfactory. The adoption of the three part lesson and the setting for mathematics in upper Key Stage 2 have helped raise standards, although they are still not high enough. The school has acknowledged that the use of oral work in many lessons is less well developed than the other parts of the numeracy strategy. In comparison to English, the numeracy strategy is not having such a significant impact on pupil attainment.

26. The school is reviving its provision of extra-curricular activities after numerous staff changes at the end of the last academic year. There are currently after school clubs for choir and recorders and these are both well attended. Overall, however, there are too few after school clubs or opportunities for inner-school competition. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to involve themselves in community activities such as road safety and the Crawley Junior Citizen scheme. All pupils have regular lessons to help them understand what it means to be responsible and to act in socially acceptable ways. Assemblies and the whole school ethos of caring and supporting provide much reinforcement to this aspect of the curriculum. In an effort to support pupils further, staff have undergone training on a nurturing programme, initially to raise pupils' self-esteem, but also to seek parental involvement in the personal, social and health education of their children.

27. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good; it enhances pupils' learning experiences. The local Baptist church has firmly established links with the school, and its minister is a regular visitor. The school draws on a number of willing parents who come into school to help pupils in, for example, making bread. Pupils make a good range of interesting educational visits to places such as Newhaven and Seaford and the Downland Museum and these visits enhance their work in subjects such as art, history and geography. The effectiveness of relationships with other establishments and institutions is good. The local senior citizens and a local refuge receive harvest gifts from pupils at 'The Oaks'. There are good relationships with the local secondary school that supports a professional network for all staff, and a forum for curriculum development that ensures that there is a suitable match between the different key stages in a pupil's education. This link is particularly strong in French.

28. . The provision for moral development is very good and there are many good elements to the provision for cultural and spiritual development. However, due to the weaknesses in the provision for clubs, social development is only satisfactory.

29. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. All assemblies meet statutory requirements as acts of collective worship. There is a strong Christian ethos in the school, enhanced by a respect for the beliefs of other major religions. Whole school and year group assemblies are positive experiences in which pupils have time to reflect on, for example, Remembrance Day. There is a strong sense of belonging in the assemblies, especially in the end of week assembly in which pupils receive rewards for their positive attitudes. Religious education lessons and lessons in personal and social education provide similar experiences. Pupils in Year 6 reflect on the meaning of a higher being in an introductory session on Hinduism, and understand the universal concept that he is invisible but can be seen everywhere.

30. The moral development of pupils is very good. The school places a strong emphasis on cultivating positive behaviour. Teachers and support staff guide pupils well and they are very good role models for caring and respect. Pupils contribute to their own class 'Golden Rules', and value the honour of having their names written in the class 'Gold Book'. Pupils regularly discuss issues of right and wrong in personal and social lessons. These issues also become the subject for school council meetings in which pupils show they are aware that they all have responsibility for the school community. There are very good examples in Years 6 and 7 of pupils developing a mature understanding of moral issues, which teachers raise in curriculum topics such as eco-tourism in geography and slavery in literacy.

31. The provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. Teachers ensure that pupils have the opportunity of working together as a class, where pupils' ideas are valued. Pupils work well in groups and help each other. Teachers encourage them to organise themselves, give out books and materials and tidy away. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility – the school council is a very good forum where pupils can contribute to the smooth running of the school. Older pupils take responsibilities, such as monitoring behaviour in the playground through 'Oakwatch', and the school encourages all pupils to play together well. Pupils develop well their awareness of the needs of the wider community through initiatives to raise money for charity, such as the Ronald MacDonald House at Guys Hospital, which supports parents of children with heart problems. However, the lack of opportunities for pupils to participate in school clubs and inter-school competitions is a weakness. There are opportunities for pupils to join in local initiatives such as participating in the local festival of music, and Dance 2000, as well as school productions open to parents to celebrate the millennium and harvest festival.

32. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Through many subjects in the curriculum, pupils become increasingly aware of their own cultural heritage as well as that of others. Pupils have regular access to a wide range of literature from popular writers, as well as traditional folk-tales and those from world cultures. Pupils recognise the styles of numerous famous painters in art and are introduced to a wide range of musical styles. There are frequent opportunities to play musical instruments from different musical traditions as well as the chance for recorder lessons. Pupils undertake field trips to support their geography topics, and develop their understanding of other cultural practices by studying life in an Indian village and the native Indians of the Amazon rainforest. Local church ministers

contribute to assemblies and pupils have an early introduction to world faiths. Pupils' written work shows a good understanding of, for example, Diwali and the story of Rama and Sita. The school helps to develop pupils' awareness of cultural diversity within the community through encouraging an awareness of other languages and scripts, and, on occasion, the involvement of parents from the minority ethnic community. Visitors from the local services and those representing different cultures, such as Mexiclore and African artists enhance this aspect of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. Although many teachers are new in post, they, the headteacher and established staff have a good knowledge of all their pupils. The developing relationship of parents and staff when they meet informally at either end of the school day reinforces this understanding. The school's all embracing aims of 'roots to grow and wings to fly' encapsulates the headteacher's vision for the new school. The present good quality welfare agenda contributes positively to pupils' progress and development. All staff work hard at their pastoral role, and display a diligence and real commitment to the well being of all pupils. Pupils feel well supported by this integrated community without any loss of their independence, and in turn are starting to promote the caring culture and ethos of the school. The school treats its Year 7 pupils maturely and has developed a pastoral programme involving the piloting of a careers advice game. Parents approve of the staff's efforts, and value the school as a safe, sensitive and caring environment.

34. Overall, there are satisfactory arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. The assessment arrangements for pupils in the Foundation Year in relation to the early learning goals are very good. Records provide sufficient information to report pupils' attainment and progress to parents annually. The school draws data from a variety of sources. National assessment tests at the end of each key stage are supplemented by optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. The co-ordinators of English and mathematics analyse the data and use the analysis to produce useful group targets in reading, writing and mathematics. Within English, however, the teacher assessments of a few individuals in a very small proportion of classes have not been accurate. The moderation and levelling of pupils' work within year groups or across the school by a few teachers is inconsistent. The detailed analysis of data in mathematics, however, has enabled staff to identify the weaknesses in pupils' attainment and modify the medium term plans to meet this need. In many other subjects, however, systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress and attainment have yet to be either developed or introduced. Technical difficulties in using computerised systems to store and analyse data have hindered the school in developing a detailed database that provides meaningful analyses; it continues to rely on paper records. Consequently there is insufficient meaningful data to assist the school in setting accurate targets for individual pupils' future attainment. This lack and under-use of assessment data pervades many subjects and therefore work planned in many classrooms does not consistently meet the needs of all pupils. The assessment of pupils identified as more able is unsatisfactory. It does not link to assessment data and nor do any of the identified needs link to planning. The school has no marking policy. There are wide variations in the quality of teachers' marking. In many instances it is neither supportive nor developmental and does not encourage pupils to improve their work. In line with the Code of Practice pupils who have statements of special educational benefit from a good provision. All pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language have effective

assessments that both identify and monitor their needs. This greatly assists the school in targeting the appropriate resources to assist these pupils in making good progress when working with specialist support. The assessment co-ordinator has identified many of these concerns and has a clear action plan to address them.

35. The monitoring of individual pupils' non-academic performance, including personal development, is satisfactory, except in reception classes where the early years learning record is excellent. In the remainder of the school, there are no formal whole school written procedures or systems. Information regarding personal development relies on the observations of the class teacher and on verbal exchanges between staff. However, to date, these informal procedures have ensured the school is very aware of its pupils in providing good quality additional support when needed. The school reviews and updates individual educational plans regularly to ensure that pupils continue to be challenged and make progress. There is a very good liaison and relationship between the school and parents prior to pupils being admitted to the reception classes. Parents receive considerable help at transfer to secondary schools so that parents and pupils reduce their anxieties. The school has a number of very relevant and updated support, guidance and welfare policies, which guide and underpin its actions. However, the school has not customised West Sussex Child Protection Policy to meet its needs. The school has recently reviewed the behaviour policy. It is currently awaiting ratification by the governors. All staff understand the policies fully and implement them consistently across the school to produce the desired results. The school is very welcoming to outside agencies to support the pupils on a routine basis or if there are specific problems. The school nurse has a close involvement with the school and helps provide sex and drugs education. The educational welfare officer supports the school well in addressing pupils who have persistent unsatisfactory levels of attendance. The local behavioural support team has assisted with the development and training of behaviour procedures, and the family links unit is setting up a nurturing programme involving parents and pupils across all year groups. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory, but the school has not yet underpinned these with training for staff.

36. The school has a culture of good behaviour and its procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are very good. They represent a definite strength of the school. The consistent display of school and class rules around the school reinforces the high expectations. Many aspects of the moral provision are reinforced by pupils and staff during interesting assemblies, or during the personal health and social education lessons. Pupils participate in developing or endorsing rules at the start of the year, but the accent is on building self-esteem and self-discipline and mutual respect so that pupils can be trusted in all situations. Constant good role models and the use of 'Oakwatch', are both examples where relationships play an important part in developing a calming affect throughout the school. The school is very effective in detecting any poor behaviour, and the vigilant headteacher and staff have eliminated all but the occasional example of inter-personal conflict. Attendance procedures and systems are good, and have produced broadly satisfactory performance levels over the last three years. Unauthorised absence is low due to the efforts of the school office and staff in telephoning and chasing parents. Parents are aware of their statutory obligations but the incidence of parents requiring holidays within the term is high and sometimes exceeds guidelines. Current systems emphasis details on what will happen to a pupil if they do not come to school, rather than approaches that celebrate pupils attendance.

37. The school is a safe environment for all pupils and staff as indicated by the low rate of minor accidents. The school has a good complement of first aiders, but first aid facilities are inadequate due to the current dual use of the medical room. It also functions as the deputy head teachers office. Health and safety procedures are good under the guidance of a governor and headteacher. Pupils are well acquainted with health and safety principles prior to activities and through the personal health and social education provision. There are only a very few minor health and safety points, which have been fed back to the school for action. The most important of these is the need for a review of fire instructions and muster points for all sections of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Prior to the founding of the new school, the headteacher had a healthy partnership with parents as headteacher in the original first school. The new school wishes to establish a similar level of relationship with all parents and has endeavoured to do so, but with only limited success. Although the majority of parents support the school with some minor qualifications, a significant minority are broadly dissatisfied with the school in the areas of:

- * Provision of an interesting range of activities outside lessons.
- * Working closely with parents.
- * Being well informed about how their child is getting on.
- * Feeling comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

39. The school has provided a small and varying amount of extra-curricular activities dependent upon the availability and interest of staff. The staff, including new teachers, are trying to revive some activities, but the lack of sporting clubs and inter-school competition makes parents dissatisfied, and their views are substantiated. The other areas of dissatisfaction have not been substantiated by inspection findings. The geographical layout of the school's administration offices isolates the headteacher from the main body of the school and the parents. Her presence is, therefore, disproportionately focused in the upper school and as a result her personal profile is lower for reception and Key Stage 1 parents. Parents feel intimidated by the size of the school and the difficulty in seeing the headteacher or senior management team on a regular informal basis. The school has not yet firmly established the unique identity of 'The Oaks' in the relatively short period it has been open and recent public relations have been troubled. Historical problems regarding staff illness and cancellation of social events have generated a view that the school does 'not care or cannot be bothered.' Although the aims of the school do not mention parents, the effectiveness of the school's links with parents is satisfactory. The school has an open door policy, whereby all parents are encouraged to enter the school at the beginning and end of the day. This is effective in reception and Key Stage 1 classes, but less effective at Key Stages 2 and 3, due to the inaccessibility of the classrooms.

40. The impact of parents in the school is developing well and is presently satisfactory. A good number of parents play a role within the school, and within classrooms. The school has its full complement of parent governors after competitive elections. They are enthusiastic, and want to grow into their responsibilities and understand the future challenges for the school. An enthusiastic chairwoman and committee of 30 parents have revived the parent network. This group is a useful forum for the integration of all parents into the life of the school.

41. The quality of information for parents is good. Both the prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents are of high quality and contain all the points of statutory information and indicate that the school values its parents. The many policies and procedures are well written but are not easily accessible to parents to read. Other written communications including the newsletters are of good quality, regular and respectful to the role of parents, and give them enough time to react. Written reports in the Foundation Year and throughout all the key stages of the school are good. They give comprehensive and perceptive feedback into pupils' abilities in all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, the targets included in the reports are not sufficiently specific to focus effort into identified areas of need. All formal open evenings are well attended, including the annual governors' meeting for parents. The growth of the educational partnership is a good feature of the school. There has been a concerted effort by the school to involve parents in their child's education. Induction procedures in the reception classes are very effective and greatly appreciated by parents. The school has offered parents' evenings on recent educational initiatives and to provide termly information on topics to be covered. There is a very high level of parents approval of the present homework arrangements. Parents and teachers use the homework diaries well. There is a close collaboration with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are appropriately involved in the annual reviews for pupils with statements of special educational need. The school works hard to ensure that all parents receive up-to-date information on individual educational plans and, wherever appropriate, involvement in supporting their children through activities at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. Since the founding of the new school, its leadership and management have been good. The headteacher has been extremely resourceful in solving the many problems that accompany an opening, and her vision has allowed the school to develop with a good and clear educational direction. She is well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has a deep commitment to raising standards in all areas of school life. A key aspect of her headship has been her good ability to define problems and to produce solutions that carry the school forward. She is now making a very significant contribution to the second phase of development of the school, through building a purposeful senior management team and motivating the many new staff and governors. The deputy headteacher works in a successful partnership with the headteacher and they are now well complemented by the middle school co-ordinator on the senior management team. Teachers holding additional responsibilities have a clear idea of their management roles and their necessary contribution to raising standards. The headteacher and her hardworking team have a good understanding of new educational initiatives and data analysis, allowing comparison with other schools. The close teamwork of the staff and their shared commitment to improving the school are ensuring that there is now a good capacity to succeed and improve standards in the future. The senior management team has defined appropriate priorities for the development of the school, including developing links with parents. The senior management team monitors the quality of teaching on a regular basis and this provides the basis for close support of teachers and mentoring of newly qualified teachers. The development and involvement of subject co-ordinators have strengthened the management of the school. Co-ordinators in the majority of subjects are making a considerable impact on raising standards by improving subject policies, schemes of work and planning. In their subject action plans many coordinators have addressed the need to develop existing assessment procedures and how this assessment data is to be used in both short term planning and curriculum development in an attempts to raise

standards. The school is addressing the vacancy of a co-ordinator in information and communication technology. All aspects of the governing body are of a satisfactory standard. Many of the governors are either new to the governing body or new to their post, as in the case of the chair. They are very supportive of the school and work well with the headteacher. Given their recent appointment, they are only starting to appreciate the challenges for the school going forward and are inevitably limited, for the moment, in terms of their strategic horizons. The committee structures are in place, governors have been allocated to either subjects or areas and they are starting to operate enthusiastically, efficiently and corporately. The governing body is meeting all statutory requirements. It has made satisfactory progress in developing performance management within the school. Governors have adopted the model policy and they have trained in procedures on how to set meaningful objectives.

43. The school draws up its improvement plan following a full consultation with staff and governors. It is a satisfactory document and is an effective tool for managing change. However, it is too extensive in trying to plan over a five-year cycle and last three years of the plan are only a sketch. There are many good priorities established but the links to raising standards or school improvements are not always clear. There is a clear link between the school improvement plan and the budget. Targets developed for subjects are sometimes optimistic, particularly in mathematics. The school has set up good procedures for the monitoring of teaching and curriculum. The effectiveness of the monitoring is reflected in the quality of teaching where 64 per cent was judged to be good, very good or excellent. The school management team reviews the quality of provision, standards of achievement and pupils' progress. Many subject coordinators, even though they are new in post, regularly monitor the teaching of their subject and the work produced. This has provided them with the insights to produce development plans for their subjects, all-dealing with improving standards mainly through the introduction of assessment. English and mathematics co-ordinators have systematically monitor the whole school and ensure proper implementation of the curriculum. They carefully evaluate their findings and know where strengths and weaknesses lie and are taking action to address these issues. In mathematics this has been the targeting of pupils oral work in staff training sessions. For English, a key focus in the development plan is the analysis of assessment data to track pupil performance and the accurate assessment of pupils work by all staff.

44. The system for the induction of newly qualified teachers is good and they have their own mentor to guide them through the management requirements of the school. The school has designed its improvement planning well to allow many subject co-ordinators non-teaching time to develop their role and to support and monitor teaching within their areas of responsibility.

45. The school is well staffed to meet the needs of its chosen curriculum. There is a wide variety of expertise covering most subjects. The headteacher has wisely appointed a team of co-ordinators who are either well qualified in their subject or who are already well experienced managers. Teachers with specialist knowledge or experience and are used very well in subjects such as music and French, and to support those who have English as an additional language or special educational needs. The classroom assistants participate fully in planning, take part in the school-based training and offer very good support. Accommodation is good. The accommodation is the result of resolute endeavour by the headteacher. It has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The classrooms are large, light and airy, though one Year 3 classroom is too small for the number of pupils and hinders activities such as role-play. The school has brightly redecorated its interior. It has two large

halls for physical education, and also uses both effectively for lunches and assemblies. Outside, the school has extensive grassed areas and a very large playground. Both of these features benefit the teaching of physical education. The library is small though well appointed. There are plans to convert the disused kitchens into a combined food technology and new information and communication technology suite that will provide far greater access to computer hardware than is currently available. The display around the school and in the classrooms is of very high quality and greatly enhances the learning environment as well as celebrating pupils' achievements. The school has adequate resources for learning, including good resources for science, the reception classes, and a number of the foundation subjects such as art, music and history. The school makes good use of all resources and they play a major role in good teaching and learning.

46. The carefully planned annual budgets are the cornerstone of the school. The headteacher and the chair of finance develop them jointly after a detailed discussion of a number of spreadsheet scenarios. There is a very good involvement of curriculum co-ordinators in bidding for resources and the school allocates money appropriately to educational priorities through a consultative approach. The school has very significant balances of cash in interest bearing accounts that is earmarked for the fitting out of the new ICT/Food technology room and developing the school grounds. The presentation of accounts, without showing these cash balances, gives a deceptively low carried forward figure between years. Once these figures are incorporated into the accounts the school is operating outside guidelines on cash balances carried forward. The highly effective school administration team helps to ensure the smooth running of the school. It allows the headteacher to maximise her input into the school. Although there is a good understanding of the use of computers in the office environment, the application of various packages to support educational monitoring is only satisfactory, due in part to technical difficulties. The headteacher has made determined and resourceful efforts to attract grants for the school and these have been well used to support various education and staff initiatives. Using devolved budgets the school provides a formidable amount of resources to support pupils who have special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language. The headteacher and very capable bursar ensure that the school implements best value principles effectively in all its purchasing decisions. A recent change from local education authority contracts clearly indicates these well-established principles and practices. Taking into account the overall level of good teaching, the good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, the rising standards and the unit cost per pupil the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47. The school has made good improvements and in order to raise standards further, as the school development plan recognises, the headteacher, senior management, governors and staff need to ensure that the following actions take place

- Raise standards across the curriculum, and particularly in Key Stage 2 English, mathematics and science by:
 - * Developing consistent good teaching throughout the school:
 - * Improving marking so it informs pupils what they have to do to improve:
 - * Enhancing the links between mathematics and the rest of the curriculum:
 - * Developing the oral aspect of all subjects, particularly in numeracy:
 - * Developing the creative aspects of all subjects to foster imagination and creativity.
 - * Increasing the pace of lessons to give them greater energy and a sharper focus.
 - * Ensuring that all pupils are given challenging work.
 - * Continuing to develop a cohesive staff and strong management structure.
(Paragraphs: 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,17,21,22,25,34,42,43,60,62,63,64,66,67,68,69,70,74)
 - Improve the procedures and use of assessment by:
 - * Tracking pupils' progress throughout their school career:
 - * Providing pupils with individual targets:
 - * Developing teachers' understanding of moderation through the levelling of pupils' work.
(Paragraphs: 20,24,47,64,65,66,72,73,76,82,85,88)
 - Improve links with parents by:
 - * Developing and promoting a powerful vision for the school that is shared and defined by pupils, parents and the community:
 - * Continuing to define the unique identity of 'The Oaks';
 - * Promoting and celebrating achievements and areas of excellence;
 - * Responding to parents' requests to provide additional after school clubs.
(Paragraphs: 15,26,28,31,34,38,39,42)
48. Other areas that the governors should consider in their action plan are;
- Training on child protection and developing formal systems for the monitoring of pupils personal development.
(Paragraph: 35)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	108
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	14	46	32	4	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	390
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	86

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	50

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.83
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.16
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
	2000	23	25	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	19	21
	Girls	9	20	23
	Total	22	39	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 [82]	91 [88]	92 [90]
	National	84 [82]	85 [81]	90 [86]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	21	19
	Girls	23	22	21
	Total	41	33	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 [80]	89 [90]	85 [90]
	National	84 [82]	88 [86]	88 [87]

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	30	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	14
	Girls	21	13	23
	Total	30	21	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 [85]	45 [51]	77 [62]
	National	75 [71]	72 [69]	85 [78]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	11	14
	Girls	18	9	10
	Total	33	20	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52 [74]	48 [59]	64 [44]
	National	68 [70]	69 [69]	75 [79]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	14
Pakistani	15
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	376
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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	8	1
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 – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.6:1
Average class size	24.4

**Education support staff:
YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	167.25

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	659858.00
Total expenditure	655736.00
Expenditure per pupil	1713.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	4119.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	390
Number of questionnaires returned	116

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	45	7	5	
My child is making good progress in school.	34	55	6	4	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	48	14	2	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	51	19	1	1
The teaching is good.	33	56	8	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	36	25	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	39	39	7	13	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	51	5	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	30	42	18	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	28	47	10	9	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	47	10	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	16	24	36	14

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The majority of parents support the school in all areas, except in the provision of after school clubs. There are, however, a significant minority of parents who do not support the school in a wide range of areas.

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were concerned about the high staff turnover and the use of temporary staff to cover staff to attend courses and meetings.

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

49. Children enter the reception classes in the year in which they turn five. There is a gradual induction during the first few weeks; the older children attend full time from the autumn term and younger children attend part time initially. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The school has created an extremely good learning environment in which the children flourish. Very good teaching ensures a very good start to their education. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to the teaching in the reception classes. Children begin in the reception class with a wide range of ability, which varies from year to year, but is currently broadly average. This is confirmed by the initial assessments carried out soon after entry to school. The attainment of the current reception group is not typical of previous year's intake. For the last two years baseline assessments indicate that pupils' attainment on entry to the school was below expectations for their age. The majority of children in the current year group, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are achieving very well across the curriculum and by the end of the Foundation Stage most will exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The school has very good induction procedures in place to enable a smooth entry to school. Home visits make a valuable contribution to this.

Personal, social and emotional development

50. Most children enter the reception class with satisfactory skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage most will have exceeded the early learning goals in this area. The children achieve well and this reflects the consistently good support and encouragement they receive from all members of the early years team. The children demonstrate very high levels of concentration and confidence in their ability, as is evident in the children's high levels of concentration on their observational drawings of teddies. The results were observations of very high quality, which the children executed confidently. Teachers plan well to ensure good provision and appropriate development of skills in this area. Their sensitive interactions and very good provision ensure that children become self-assured, independent learners.

Communication, language and literacy

51. By the end of the Foundation Stage communication, language and literacy skills will exceed the early learning goals. Children achieve well in this area of learning due to the very good teaching they receive. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing literacy skills across the areas of learning.

52. Children listen well to each other during story telling, whole class sessions and circle time, which the teachers lead well. Children are keen to articulate their ideas and they speak to adults and one another readily. Many use descriptive language well when talking about the bears, for example, 'heavy', 'soft', 'round'. Some use complex sentences when answering in

class and the majority respond well using simple sentences. Children negotiate well with each other for their role in the 'Three Bears' Cottage' debating for some time who will be 'Goldilocks' or which bear they want to be. In this activity they organise themselves independently and confidently. They become so involved that they ask adults to 'shush' as baby bear is sleeping.

53. Books are well displayed in the reception classes, particularly those on the current theme of bears. All children enjoy books and handle them with care. In their assembly they showed their interest and knowledge of stories very well when they retold the story of 'Brown Bear'. Higher-attaining children read simple stories confidently and already have a sight vocabulary of known words. Lower-attaining children know that a book tells a story to match the pictures. Most are gaining a good grasp of letter sounds and key vocabulary to help with their reading. Children make good use of the library, while regular reading activities in class and reading at home to parents support their developing reading skills.

54. Children enjoy writing and are currently using the writing area well to write letters to the 'Letter Teddy'. Most write their name correctly and many use strings of letters or simple words to communicate meaning. Teachers have provided a wealth of support material for writing and have encouraged children to use it. As a result, children make good use of topic words, and words around the classroom, to help with their writing. Most are already confident in their ability as 'writers' and enjoy the activity.

55. The teachers in both reception classes appropriately and effectively use elements of the National Literacy Strategy, such as stories and rhymes, to enable the children to gain a good understanding of phonics and word order. Teachers use the 'topic' very well to integrate the areas of learning, planning is very detailed and there is a very good emphasis on the creation of a literate environment. These all make a significant contribution to the children's learning. In a few lessons however the whole class sessions were overlong and the children started to lose interest.

Mathematical development

56. This area of learning is also very well taught and most children will exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. All children in the reception classes can count to 10 confidently and many can count well beyond this. Most are already clear about the order of numbers within 20 and enjoy the activity of guessing which number is in the wrong place. In group activities, they are keen to match the correct number of objects to the appropriate numeral. They use language such as 'more', 'less', 'empty' and 'full' confidently when playing in the sand. In one group activity, the teaching assistant made good use of the children's work on letter writing to discuss size and as a result the children decided the letter was too big to go in the envelope and had to be smaller. Teachers make use of a very good variety of strategies and resources to develop mathematical understanding. For example, in one class, the teacher used a teddy and bucket to help clarify children's understanding of positional language and in another class the teacher made good use of the 'teddy bear' washing line to help children count on from 15. Occasionally, too many group activities are organised and there are insufficient staff to intervene and help children in their learning in every activity.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

57. Children enter the reception class with a basic general knowledge. They build on this knowledge successfully during the reception year and most will have exceeded the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Many already know what a map is and as a result of good introductory lessons by the class teacher make good pictorial maps, which include roads, routes, the Three Bears' Cottage and many other suitable representations. Most children can use tools safely to construct and build. They have a good sense of how things can be joined together and are imaginative in the use of construction materials. They know how to make designs for bears using paper and then use their designs to make bears using recycled materials. In doing this they use the skills of cutting, gluing and joining materials effectively. They enjoy exploring the properties of wet sand and water and recognise when their containers are 'empty', 'full' or only 'partly filled'. Many use construction materials effectively to make roadways, buildings and vehicles with moving parts and the teachers ensure that they have the time and space in which to complete their tasks. The children are learning to use the computer, with adult support, but there are few opportunities for the children to use it independently. The children know that different cultures are represented within their class and have contributed to a display on the variety of first languages in the reception classes.

Physical development

58. Children make good progress in this area of learning and many will exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave the Foundation Stage. There is a good outdoor area, which is used well by the children for physical activity. The teachers ensure this is well planned and timetabled and provide a good range of activities to promote physical activity. Children use the space well when riding their wheeled vehicles. They demonstrate good control and physical skill in their movements and in their ability to manoeuvre around objects. They also have regular opportunities for physical activity through regular lessons in the school hall. Children manipulate the play dough with a very good level of dexterity when creating bears, their bowls and Goldilocks. Teachers ensure that children gain greater control of their finer movements through opportunities to cut using scissors, write in a variety of contexts and to trace objects.

Creative development

59. This is another area of learning where most children will exceed the expectations of the early learning goals. The children learn to mix paints and then use this skill to create skin colour for their paintings of themselves, which they undertake after close scrutiny of themselves in the mirror. The good provision for creative role-play and the very good level of adult interaction to set it up with the children enables them to take on roles confidently. For example, they enjoy dressing up as the bears and then proceed to growl at everyone. Through the very good questioning by teachers and teaching assistants the children hone their observation skills to a very high level. When drawing bears their attention is drawn to the

different features of the bear, its size, how it feels to touch and the texture of its fur. As a result the children produce observational drawings of a very high quality. They enjoy singing, know a wide range of songs and perform them confidently, as seen in their presentation in assembly when they sang, 'We're going on a bear hunt' enthusiastically and with a clear knowledge of the actions which accompanied it

ENGLISH

60. Standards achieved in English in the tests for 11 year olds were well below the national average for 2000, although there is good evidence that from a very low base line the general trend in attainment is improving. The school, however, needs to raise levels of achievement further. The low results for pupils aged 11 can partly be attributed to the disruption caused in their education following the creation of the new school. The above average attainment in 1999 is attributed to, the differences in cohorts and the introduction of the literacy strategy that year. Inspection evidence indicates that improvements in standards can be seen in the current Year 6 class, and that although standards are still below the national average, they are not as low as those achieved in 2000. Throughout Key Stage 2 standards are improving due to the good quality of teaching, the positive impact of the literacy hour and pupils' good behaviour and attitudes. Standards achieved in tests for seven year olds are relatively better than those achieved at 11 and pupils achieve above average results in writing and average results in reading. In Key Stage 1 there are good indications that the improvements already seen in the 2000 results will continue. The school is likely to meet its targets for English at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in 2001.

61. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils in both key stages to develop their speaking and listening skills. They set up the introductory part of lessons so that pupils have time to share what they know and have learnt, and so they acquire and use successfully the language associated with the topic. A good example of this is in Year 6 where pupils worked together to talk about the main points of a passage from the biography of Anne Frank in order to make a summary. In Year 7, teachers use effective questioning to stimulate pupils in role-play and to discuss issues arising from the topics they are studying, such as in geography. Pupils develop their arguments well, and back up their opinions with well-considered reasons. In Key Stage 1, teachers encourage pupils when working in pairs and small groups to discuss their work with each other. Pupils with special educational needs are helped through the support of the teacher, teaching assistants and voluntary helpers. Pupils in the early stages of acquiring English, are in the main helped to gain confidence in speaking through working with support or classmates who provide good speaking models. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on teaching correct terminology, so that pupils extend the vocabulary associated with the different subjects and topics. Throughout the school, whole class sessions in personal and social education lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to share their feelings.

62. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 are keen readers, with the majority of them preferring to read fiction. Pupils are introduced to a good range of reading through the literacy hour and they choose appropriately challenging books. Pupils review their books in their reading records, but teachers are not rigorous in ensuring this aspect is developed in order to encourage pupils to record their understanding of the story and evaluate its impact on them. Pupils in Year 7 are enthusiastic readers and have positive attitudes towards books. Pupils have good research and retrieval skills, and use the Internet to research information. The

majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 are reading books at or above the level expected for their age. Their reading records show that they are mainly reading fiction books. During literacy sessions teachers ensure, pupils have a good understanding of the text, and can identify vocabulary, spelling patterns and punctuation. In guided reading sessions, pupils show they are developing good comprehension skills and are developing an understanding of the organisation of books. Reading recovery sessions provide good structured help to less able pupils to develop their phonic skills and reading strategies. Reading records show that pupils read regularly at home.

63. Overall standards of writing are good at Key Stage 1 due mainly to the good teaching in Year 2. In Year 2, pupils create and record their own recipes for a cake for a monster, and show that they understand how to set out the recipe effectively using appropriate key vocabulary. In Year 1, however, teachers' low expectations of what can be achieved by pupils slows the rate at which these pupils are developing their writing skills. The standard of writing seen during the inspection for pupils in Year 6 is unsatisfactory in the majority of cases. Work displayed shows that teachers encourage pupils to produce finished work that is well presented and neat with well-formed joined handwriting. However, pupils are not able successfully to incorporate the work done on grammar and vocabulary into their written work. In particular the standard of writing by the more able pupils does not reflect their ability. There are, however, good examples of writing in other subjects, such as geography, history and science. The use of frameworks for planning writing is beginning to widen pupils' choice of appropriate vocabulary and improving the organisation of their writing. This is particularly helpful to pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. Teachers give pupils in Year 7 many good opportunities for writing and they produce a good range of writing, including poetry, song lyrics and play scripts.

64. The quality of teaching is good overall. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is mainly good with only one lesson being judged as unsatisfactory. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is good overall but this masks a difference between year groups. Teaching is good in Year 2 and satisfactory in Year 1. The quality of teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers have a good understanding of the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers choose texts which stimulate pupils' interest and use questioning effectively to promote learning and deepen pupils' understanding. They use resources to help pupils to learn, for example, letter cards to assist spelling, and individual white boards for pupils to try out their ideas. This enables pupils to take an active part in their learning. Where this is extended to role-play, pupils develop expressive language, for example, about what it felt like to be in The Great Fire of London. Teachers in Year 7 provide pupils with good and challenging opportunities for discussion and role-play. Teachers, support assistants and voluntary helpers give pupils with special educational needs good support. Particularly good teaching for additional literacy is provided by the support assistant for groups in Year 3 and 4. The specialist teacher, provided from the ethnic minority achievement grant, gives pupils with English as an additional language good support in the early stages of acquiring English, so that they achieve well. However, on some occasions where they are not getting additional support they are not able to work to the best of their ability, because the work has not been adapted to their individual needs. Throughout the school, teachers do not consistently meet the needs of pupils of higher ability. Marking across the school is not consistently good in enabling pupils to improve their work. Evidence in books from years 1 and 3 shows an inconsistency across the year group in the amount of work pupils are expected to achieve. In the rare example of an unsatisfactory lesson, pupils were not prompted to respond and show

what they knew. The photocopied text chosen was difficult to see and beyond the reading ability of most of the pupils. In this lesson, and on a few other occasions, worksheets were not well structured to facilitate good learning, and teachers failed to bring pupils back on task. Therefore pupils lost motivation and did not use their time productively.

65. The school has established a sound set of procedures to monitoring pupils' attainment. Pupils undertake the optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 and regular reading tests. Teachers do not, however, rigorously interrogate this wealth of data to provide information about individual pupils' progress or inform decision concerning curriculum development. Neither do teachers have a clear idea when assessing pupils' work against national standards. This coupled with a lack of well-analysed data provides insufficient or inaccurate data on which to predict future attainment for either whole groups or individuals. In a few instances teachers' assessment of reading levels are not sufficiently accurate, so that pupils are not always reading books which provide challenge, or on the other hand support their developing reading skills.

66. Through careful and systematic monitoring the coordinator has useful insights into the teaching of English in all age ranges in the school. She has a good understanding of the teaching of the subject and the demands of the literacy strategy. There is an appropriate action plan that identifies tasks to improve standards. This includes the need for closer interrogation of results in tests and the tracking of pupil progress.

MATHEMATICS

67. The 2000 test results for Key Stage 1 showed pupils attaining in line with the national average and that of similar schools. In the current Year 2 standards attained in the course of the inspection were above those expected for their age in all areas of mathematics, except in using and applying mathematics. This overall improvement in the current Year 2 is due to a different cohort and the consistently good teaching that they are receiving. By the age of seven many pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100 and use this knowledge to solve problems involving money values up to £5.00. They use their skills in mental calculations to support them in this, for example, counting well in 2s, 5s and 10s when using these denominations in their money problems. Pupils use measuring instruments accurately, for example, when measuring centimetres using a ruler.

68. Standards in the national tests in 2000 were well below the national average at Key Stage 2 and very low when compared with similar schools. This is partly attributable to a low level of prior attainment and the disrupted education that these pupils have experienced over recent years. Standards over the last three years at Key Stage 2, however, have slowly improved, and continue to do so, as the school and the National Numeracy Strategy have become more established. Standards are still not as high as they should be. Standards of work seen during the inspection in the current Year 6 were still below national expectations. By the age of 11, the higher-attaining pupils calculate perimeter by adding the measurements of all sides and use the correct formula to calculate area. Many lower-attaining pupils have a good understanding of the properties of triangles. Most are learning to use a variety of methods to calculate multiplication sums and understand equivalence fractions. They are less secure in data handling at Key Stage 2; it receives limited emphasis and is little used in other curriculum areas. There was very little evidence of work in using and applying their mathematical skills. These two aspects are now being addressed through the school's

effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Although the 2000 national tests indicated a difference in the attainment of boys and girls, with girls doing less well than boys, this was not evident during the inspection. The local education authority has set challenging targets for mathematics at Key Stage 2, which the school is unlikely to meet.

69. Attainment in Year 7 remains well below national expectations. Pupils multiply and divide using decimal notation, measure angles using degrees and know how to simplify fractions. They are ability to quickly manipulate numbers and use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge to problem solving activities is well below national expectations.

70. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but there are variations within year groups and across the school that need to be addressed to improve teaching and learning as a whole. Teaching in Year 2 is good and this is reflected in pupils' achievement and confidence in their mathematical ability. In Year 1, it is barely satisfactory, whole class sessions are slow and ponderous and as a result teaching is ineffective and pupils lose interest. Across much of the rest of the school teaching is satisfactory and only occasionally good or very good. The analysis of pupils' work revealed that the demands made on pupils are not sufficiently challenging because pupils of differing abilities get much the same work. In the very good lesson seen in Year 5 the teacher very successfully engaged and motivated the pupils with a brisk, stimulating session of mental arithmetic. The teacher encouraged pupils to solve problems and explain their methods, which helped to clarify their thinking. For example, pupils offered their ideas for triangles using all the appropriate vocabulary and explained the properties of triangles clearly. Questioning by the class teacher was challenging and deepened pupils' knowledge and understanding. The good teaching in Year 2 was characterised by detailed planning which appropriately identified work for pupils of differing ability. Good levels of support and encouragement and a clear focus on what had to be learnt enabled pupils to make good gains in their learning. A good emphasis on counting in 2s, 5s and 10s in mental arithmetic sessions enabled pupils to count accurately and quickly in denominations of 2, 5, and 10 pence to make the sums of money requested. Most teachers have a clear understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy, which they implement satisfactorily. The three-part lesson structure is securely in place and many aspects of planning are good. Learning intentions are clear but are not always shared with pupils at the start of a lesson. Teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary in many lessons. But pupils are given few opportunities to explain their work and as a result have a limited opportunity to use the correct terminology. Too many oral and mental sessions are delivered with limited enthusiasm and pace. Instead of pupils being keen to demonstrate their mental agility, they are mostly passive and slow to answer. The main teaching activities generally involve pupils practising their skills and in this part of the lesson teachers manage pupils and resources effectively. However, in a few lessons, teachers have not accurately identified how far pupils have reached in their learning. As a result, even where work is provided for pupils of differing ability, it is sometimes either too easy or too daunting, and does not meet their needs. Teachers use informal observations and tests to assess pupils' attainment and some use the information well to revisit the lesson objectives on another occasion but it loses some of its effectiveness, as staff are not always clear about the next appropriate step in pupils' learning. Teachers use marking to praise and correct, but they rarely indicate what pupils need to do to improve either their skills or their presentation. In all key stages pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make satisfactory progress

71. Pupils' ability to use information technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is very limited. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities in lessons for them to do so. The use of mathematics to help learning in other subjects is not well developed. For example, pupils' only method of analysing data in the science and geography work seen was by using a block graph.

72. Although the school uses non-statutory test materials in Years 3, 4 and 5 the results are not used to track pupils progress from year to year or set individual targets. There is no moderated portfolio of work in mathematics to guide teachers in judging which levels pupils are at in the subject. However, the newly appointed co-ordinator has identified areas of weakness, particularly at Key Stage 2 and used this to set targets for improvement in standards for each year group.

73. The newly appointed coordinator is very enthusiastic. She has already provided more resources for mathematics that now accurately support the national numeracy strategy. The coordinator regularly monitors the subject and has undertaken lesson observations and scrutinised teachers' plans and pupils work. The coordinator has a good appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has developed appropriate priorities and action plan to address the concerns, particularly those in Key Stage 2. As a result all year groups have been set targets for improvement. The school uses non-statutory test materials in years 3,4 and 5 but the results are not, as yet, used to track pupils progress from year to year. Under the leadership of the coordinator the school looks well set to improve its performance in mathematics in Key Stage 2.

SCIENCE

74. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 were below the national average. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were working at a satisfactory level. This was a result of good teaching and the appropriate emphasis on investigative skills and the recording of conclusions. In Year 2 pupils have a sound understanding of the dangers of the acid in electric batteries. They use their knowledge of electric circuits to describe how to light a bulb and to build a circuit. Standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 were well below the national average, and well below average in comparison with similar schools. This results in part from the disrupted education that this group of pupils has experienced. Over the last three years standards in science at the age of 11 have improved in line with the national trend but remain below national expectations. In the present inspection, however, pupils in Year 6 were observed to be working at a satisfactory level of attainment due to the quality of teaching. They conducted a thorough investigation into sound and air resistance and wrote up clearly their scientific explanation for these phenomena. By the time pupils leave school in Year 7, their attainment is well below national expectations for their age due to their lack of skills and knowledge, which is partly the product of their disjointed education. In the lessons observed, however, standards were higher than in the national tests of 2000 due to the high quality of teaching. Pupils devised a game in which they used their home-made magnets. In doing this they had to consider carefully the strength of the magnetic field.

75. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good. There were examples of excellent teaching in both Key Stages 1 and 3. Teaching of the highest quality was based on carefully chosen and enacted introductions, as in the case of the first lesson on light in Year

1. The story of 'Funny Bones' and the highly entertaining manner in which it was told immediately captured the pupils' imagination. As a result pupils were deeply involved in their work and gave detailed descriptions of man made light sources. In the Year 7 lesson on magnets the very good questioning by the teacher encouraged pupils to offer and explain their understanding of magnetism; building upon and extending their existing knowledge. The very good and excellent lessons stressed clear scientific language and provided pupils with a good foundation of recording skills. Good teaching gave the pupils plenty of opportunity to investigate and explore for themselves, thus enhancing their learning. In many lessons, the promotion of investigative work always elicited positive responses from the pupils. Year 4 pupils, in their work on muscles and skeletons, made hinged joints powered by elastic bands to give clear demonstration of how muscles and bones work together. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work. Pupils reflect these high expectations by the careful and accurate work in their books. They work efficiently and quickly though keeping pace with the teaching. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the quality of support they receive from assistants and by the planning of work to meet their individual needs. In the satisfactory lessons, investigations and demonstrations were mainly led by the teacher and did not give the pupils enough opportunity to become physically or intellectually involved. In a few lessons the pace of activities was sometimes slow due to over-long introductions and inactivity among pupils.

76. The newly appointed science coordinator is effective. The new policy and the national guidelines on the teaching of science provide staff with clear direction. There is a good monitoring programme that includes lesson observations and the scrutiny of plans and pupils work. The current assessment of pupils achievement has been recognised as unsatisfactory and a new approach is now being trialled.

ART

77. The school teaches art every other half term, alternating it with design and technology. Teachers make excellent use of this time allocated with a series of very well structured activities. These are identified in the curriculum plan and quickly build on pupils' knowledge and understanding. During the half term of the inspection only one year group was following the art curriculum. There was, however, a plethora of art on display and an art portfolio from which standards could be judged.

78. Standards in art are above national expectations at the end of both key stages and at the end of Year 7. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils make good adventurous use of colour in their watercolour and poster paint paintings that reflect the work of Klee and Kandinsky. At end of Key Stage 2 pupils produce fine pencil sketches of the River Arun showing a good understanding of light and shade. By the age of 12 pupils demonstrate an extravagant confidence in their work on collage, while maintaining a highly polished finish. Throughout the school, all pupils maintain very good sketch books in which they make detailed notes and sketches. Pupils' understanding of a range of artists and different artistic styles is good due to the emphasis placed on this by the teachers in the lessons.

79. Although only one lesson was observed in Year 2 during the inspection it was of a good quality. The teacher's knowledge of Kandinsky's style of work and the pace of the lesson motivated the pupils so that they concentrated hard on developing their own ideas. Well-

timed and probing interventions by the teacher engaged the pupils in lively discussions that clarified their thoughts and developed their skills. The structure and direction pupils were given provided all pupils with a safe environment in which they explored their ideas. They enjoyed the activity and acted sensibly at all times. Relationship and behaviour in the class were very good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. Pupils in Year 2 exceed the expectations for their age. Pupils know that their puppets have to be bright and colourful so that others would wish to play with them. They choose the materials they wished to use to make the features and labelled diagrams naming the different tools that they would use. All pupils thought carefully about the size and shape of the puppet and how they should join the various types of material together. Although no lessons in design and technology were seen in Year 6, evidence of past work indicates that standards of work are broadly in line with national expectations. Working in groups, pupils made a working alarm and clearly communicated their choice of materials, tools and sequence of events using words, models and labels. Pupils' endeavours in Year 7 to make jigsaws are broadly in line with the expectations of their age.

81. The teaching of design and technology was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed. In the majority of lessons teachers plan their lessons so that pupils develop their skills while enjoying the making process. All lessons start with well-paced questions that enable pupils to focus their thoughts on their previous work while preparing them for the next stage of their learning. The majority of teachers have at least a sound understanding of the different stages involved in this subject and the associated skills required. This gives the lessons a sharp focus and ensures that all pupils are steadily introduced to, and acquire new skills. In all lessons there is a very good learning atmosphere that encourages pupils to be responsible and have the confidence to try, and be adventurous. In nearly all the lessons, teachers' choice of activities captures the imagination of their pupils. In a Year 4 lesson, after the pupils had studied the mechanisms in a book provided by the teacher to make moving illustrations, they were eager to start making their own prototypes. Class teachers' organisational skills are good and all lessons are well prepared; this was particularly true in the Year 5 bread-making lesson. This organisation ensured that time was used productively and the lesson developed smoothly. Teachers give consideration to health and safety issues so that pupils work in a safe environment with due respect for others and their equipment. In the good teaching, teachers use every opportunity to extend pupils' learning by linking the activity to other subjects. In Year 5 the scientific concept and practice of 'fair testing' are used. In Year 2 good teaching was evident when teachers set high expectations and encouraged pupils to think and explore different possibilities. Pupils respond very positively to the opportunity to choose their own materials. On a few occasions, however, it was the excessive control and involvement in practical activities by the teacher that limited both the enjoyment and the impact of the lesson on pupils' learning. In a minority of lessons, however, teachers lacked detailed assessments of their pupils and planned activities that developed skills that did not consistently match pupils' prior abilities or needs.

82. The coordinator of the subject has developed a very interesting portfolio of pupil work and has recognised the need to establish formal approaches to assessing and recording pupil's level of attainment. Though a lesson observations, the monitoring of termly planning and evaluating pupil work and responses the coordinator has a good knowledge of the subject. These have enabled her to adapt national guidelines to meet the needs of the pupils at 'The Oaks'.

GEOGRAPHY

83. Standards of work in geography are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good knowledge of places further afield, such as the island home of Katie Morag on Sturay. They use their knowledge quickly to identify both physical and human features on the island, closely linking them to their relative importance to the islanders. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the water cycle, through their study of the River Arun, and accurately name the physical changes in the river from its sources to its mouth. Standards of attainment in Year 7 are above national expectations in the lessons observed, due to very good teaching. Through their study of the Amazon rainforest pupils have a good understanding of people's interaction with the environment. They vicariously took on the roles of villagers who were facing changes in their livelihoods due to eco-tourism and cash cropping. Pupils used these characters to help them develop their own opinions, which they willingly contributed and coherently argued about in group and class discussions.

84. All teaching was at least satisfactory and the majority good, with a few elements of very good and excellent. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are well planned, and resourced, drawing effectively on pupils' previous work. Pupils use of maps and photography in Year 4's study of the Indian village linked jobs, people and locality as it did in Year 2's lesson on the island of Sturay. The use of such visual resources encouraged pupils to willingly share their impressions of village life. Teachers explain clearly and carefully, giving praise and encouragement that encourages pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding of their work. This promotes good learning and enjoyment. Teachers' choice of activities, such as the role play in Year 7 appealed directly to the pupils and instilled in them an enthusiasm and enjoyment for the subject while also promoting good reasoning and argument. In the good lessons, teachers set homework directly linked to class work, and often in preparation for the next planned lesson. In many lessons, questions at the start of the lesson were used well to review previous learning and prepare pupils for the lesson by sharing the key ideas to be covered. Again, in the Year 7 lessons on eco-tourism, pupils were confident to take on the roles on different characters, because of their previous knowledge and understanding of native Indian life in the Amazon rainforest. In a minority of lessons there was a lack of clarity in the summing up of the main aims of the lesson and opportunities to assess pupils' level of understanding were missed. In Year 5 the review of local traffic and environmental issues lacked sufficient clarity to draw together and reinforce the main aims of the lesson. Where teaching is satisfactory, the pace of the lesson is slow with over-lengthy explanations and the work does not meet the needs of all pupils. Restless pupils then disturbed a few lessons and in a small minority of lessons teachers' skills in classroom control were found to be lacking.

85. The coordinator of this subject was new in post in September. However, some teaching has already been observed, plans monitored and a portfolio of pupil work is being created. Identified improvements in the subject include the development of assessment procedures that would inform short and medium term plans.

HISTORY

86. Standards of work in history at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations. Pupils have a sound sense of chronology. They sequence pictures to show the story of the Great Fire of London, adding their own informative notes and drawings. Standards in work are above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 6 have a good factual knowledge of conditions in Britain during World War II. They understand the many varied ways the past can be represented and empathise with the life of Anne Frank. Pupils consider carefully what would be the most appropriate and revealing questions to ask her if she was still alive. By the time pupils leave the school standards continue to be above expected levels. Using both their knowledge of medieval England, and information and communication technology, they imaginatively create newspaper headlines and articles for the 'Medieval Times' of December 10th 1170, under the banner, 'Beckett Killed in Church'.

87. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen ranges from satisfactory to very good. At the beginning of lessons most teachers effectively recall earlier work that supports and develops pupils' understanding. In Year 3, pupils use their previous knowledge to research the Ancient Egyptians' life style, some using a CD-ROM. Where practice is good, teachers make good promotion of historical enquiry or empathy with historical figures or situations. Pupils successfully considered and understood many of the emotions that the settlers felt as they went ashore to establish 'Roanoke Colony' during the colonisation of America. All teachers have at least a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and use this to emphasise and encourage pupils to use important historical skills. In Year 5's study of the discovery and settlement of America, pupils were successfully introduced to the differences between facts and opinion, and the teacher's artful role play as a museum curator led the pupils to a sound knowledge of the wide range of historical information that is available. Teachers use a good range of resources such as books, videos and artefacts to enliven the subject, add to pupils' enjoyment and raise standards. In Year 6, the teacher made very good use of the visual impact made by seeing the amount of food civilians had to eat in a week, when rationing was introduced during World War Two. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs well and promote good progress, providing appropriate formats of the work to meet their needs.

88. The coordinator is very new and has already brought good organisation and enthusiasm to the post. Planning is coherent and the need to review the scheme of work has been recognised. The subject has good links with literacy and geography. A good range of resources, including artefacts makes useful contributions to the teaching of the subject. Formal systems to assess pupils attainment are currently unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

89. Standards of work in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, and by the time pupils leave the school. In Year 2, pupils respond to a monster's letter and accurately type a cake recipe in response and enliven their work further inserting graphics created earlier in a paint program. By the time they are 11 pupils are familiar with spreadsheets and understand that information can be amended or added to, and regular searching of the Internet supports work in subjects such as geography. In Key Stage 3, pupils use spreadsheets to analyse the constituents of a healthy diet.

90. Across the school, the quality of teaching in lessons seen is satisfactory. Through their informative and supportive approaches teachers provide positive learning environments in which pupils gain skills and confidence. For example, in a Year 2 art lesson pupils were both competent and confident in accessing and using a paint program and successfully communicated their art ideas in the style of Paul Klee. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and mostly motivate them well through the appropriate choice of resources and activities. In Year 4, ICT was used to motivate and catch the imagination of the pupils, who word processed arresting newspaper headlines like 'Grandma Robs Bank'. Teachers' planning builds effectively on pupils' own experience and knowledge of ICT; the use of spreadsheets and word processing skills are developed systematically, as pupils move through the school. Teachers give clear instructions that enable pupils to grasp quickly the steps necessary to access information on CD-ROMs, when researching the Ancient Egyptians or healthy diets. However, the quality and the number of opportunities provided to teach and develop ICT skills are sometimes unsatisfactory for two main reasons. Firstly, large groups or whole classes around a single computer are inappropriate, as there is insufficient access to keyboards for pupils to see the teacher's demonstration clearly. Secondly, on a few occasions, computers were not turned on, even where lesson planning indicated their use.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

91. Year 7 pupils are working within level 1 of the Key Stage 3 curriculum for French. They are making steady gains in their learning through the good level of support given by the specialist teacher for French and their classroom teacher. Most pupils count to 10, and some to 20 in French and they read the number words accurately within this written work. In the lesson seen they were developing their knowledge of France as a country and of the countries of the world, which speak French as a first language. For example, they discovered that in Montreal in Canada the first language is still French. They made good use of the information gained to translate the questions on their worksheet and provide the correct answer. They used their knowledge of 'numbers' to translate questions and identify 10 countries of Africa where French is spoken. They copied words correctly in French and were willing to attempt speaking simple phrases or sentences.

92. Only one lesson was seen and this was good. The teacher had good subject knowledge and communicated this to the pupils in an interesting manner, which they enjoyed. Pupils were keen to develop their knowledge. They settled well to their individual tasks and answered the questions sensibly. The main weakness in the lesson was that the pupils had limited opportunities to practise using the French language.

MUSIC

93. Pupils make good progress in music and attain standards at or better than those generally found in pupils at the age of 11. The provision for music in the school is good and there is a real commitment to developing pupils' musical appreciation and skills. Pupils in Year 6 use taped music, and their knowledge of World War I songs, to develop an appreciation of styles and of how music and song can affect mood and emotion. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use the language of tempo, pulse and beat. They sing familiar songs to illustrate how rhythm and beat can vary, then they apply this understanding to playing percussion instruments in time to the music. Throughout the school pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm and confidence. During the year pupils use their musical ability to participate in a local schools' festival, and at Christmas the school choir sing to the elderly and for the school Christmas performance.

94. The quality of teaching is mainly good or very good. Teachers plan lessons well and ensure that skills develop. The school uses teachers with expertise in teaching music to great effect in Key Stage 2 to develop pupils' knowledge and skills. Their confidence greatly enhances the learning experience. Teachers carefully build on pupils' understanding and skills such as music appreciation. Year 4 pupils listen to Peter and the Wolf, to appreciate how animals are represented through music, and begin to compose their own sequence of sound for a chosen animal. In the majority of lessons there is a good pace to teaching. In the best lessons pupils are all involved and teachers carefully and sensitively support their musical talent. Pupils in Year 5 developed their confidence in using their voices to make texture in music, varying volume and the type of sound. The richness of the music curriculum is extended by many pupils taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the school to learn a musical instrument in lessons given by peripatetic teachers. The choir and recently introduced recorder club also add to this good provision.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

95. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory with some good features. All pupils show a good understanding of the healthy development of the body. Year 6 pupils worked particularly hard in lessons and demonstrate a good knowledge of the effect each exercise has on each body part. All pupils moved between activities safely, showing due regard for other people's space, in a series of activities that included static jumps, skipping and running. Attainment at Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations. By developing a series of body shapes, pupils balanced their bodies using different body parts with a sound level of precision and stability. At the end of Key Stage 2 the great majority of pupils can swim 25 metres. At the end of Key Stage 3 attainment is satisfactory. Pupils have developed interesting dance routines, interspersed with movements of contrasting speed; rhythm is good but timing is lacking.

96. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some elements of very good and excellent teaching. One lesson observed was unsatisfactory. In an excellent lesson in Year 6 the teacher developed the pupils' learning very well. Pupils were kept constantly informed about the effect of each exercise on the different parts of the body and the teacher set them appropriate targets that challenged them and encouraged the development of their skills on an individual basis. All the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the challenges they were set. Good teaching was characterised by very good warm up sessions and clear planning. In Key Stage

1, teachers introduced the warm ups in novel ways, either musically or by using games such as 'Simon Says'. The majority of teachers are very secure in their knowledge and understanding and give pupils good fitness exercises such as skipping, standing jumps and bench step ups, that build up stamina. With the positive encouragement of their teachers, pupils willingly try harder. In the majority of lessons the well-rounded evaluation of pupils' performances encouraged pupils to value others' efforts and contributions. The teacher's use of demonstrations by pupils in Year 2 provided good opportunities for all pupils to evaluate and develop their own routines. In the majority of lessons, teachers give clear instructions and used questions well to establish whether pupils understand the activities and are aware of health and safety issues. This was very evident in the Year 6 basketball lesson where, due to the clear instructions, pupils immediately understood the task and started activities eagerly. Unsatisfactory teaching lacked sufficient reinforcement of skills for pupils to make good progress and many opportunities for pupils to demonstrate or evaluate their work were missed. Pupil's eagerness and response in such lessons mirrored the quality of teaching.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

97. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with the locally agreed syllabus, and above at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 6 understand how religious beliefs affect behaviour. They use their knowledge of Christian Lent and the Islamic Hajj to exemplify this point and compare the two religions. Pupils in Year 2 have a good factual knowledge of the Christian Ten Commandments and of the Five Pillars of Islam. They use this knowledge to identify the similarities of the two religions in terms of belief and prayer. Attainment in Year 7 is below age related expectations. Weak literacy skills hinder pupils' ability to express their ideas formally, although previous work demonstrates that they appreciate that the '5 K's' are important symbols of belonging to the Sikh faith.

98. The quality of teaching is good, particularly in Key Stage 1 where all lessons at the end of that key stage were good or very good. The only unsatisfactory lesson observed was in upper Key Stage 2. In lessons where teaching was good or very good there was a perceptible eagerness to learn. In the majority of lessons, teachers' plans were good and followed the locally agreed syllabus. Lessons are systematically planned to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Lessons start promptly and the aim of the lesson is shared with the class so that pupils focus their thoughts. The majority of teachers are artful in their questioning of pupils, drawing out their understanding and extending their learning. A minority, however, did not use questions to target consistently pupils of different abilities. High-attaining pupils were not, therefore, continually challenged. In the good and very good lessons, teachers use a range of discussion of activities, role-play and literature to involve all pupils. In Year 3 a group role-play reinforced both the knowledge and understanding of miracles and the concept of sharing as related to the Christian story of the 'Loaves and the Fishes'. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils and their interests and use this to great advantage. The beginning of a lesson that started with brightly wrapped gifts in Year 2 left the class spell bound and eager to proceed. In a minority of lessons, teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of world religions is insecure and slow the pace of the lesson. In the unsatisfactory lesson, although the planning, content and the delivery were broadly secure, behaviour management techniques were not; pupils became restless and failed to concentrate on their work. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an

additional language acquire skills and knowledge at the same rate as their peers. In the scrutiny of pupils' work, past and present, there is evidence of a heavy reliance on the use of photocopied sheets, especially in Key Stage 2. Many of these are uninspiring and do not meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Presentation of much of the written work was of a poor quality and gave the impression of low levels of pride in finished pieces of written work.