

ERRATUM

Last page. Please replace final paragraph as follows:

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents commented at the meeting with parents and in writing that they felt that provision for pupils with special educational needs was unsatisfactory. After exhaustive checking of the school's records and observations of support in the school, the team concluded that the high level of provision for pupils with special needs has been maintained.

INSPECTION REPORT

FAIR OAK JUNIOR SCHOOL

Eastleigh, Hampshire

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115891

Headteacher: Mrs J Williamson

Reporting inspector: Ian Knight
23031

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th November 2000

Inspection number: 225399

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 7 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Botley Road
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Hampshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr C Russell

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Fair Oak Junior School is a very large junior school, with 581 pupils on roll. Almost all pupils are European, and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils who have a special educational need is about average, but fewer pupils than average have statements of special need. The school is a Beacon School, one of the first to be so designated. There is a range of attainment on entry, but overall pupils enter the school with higher attainment than in most schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school was described as very impressive at the time of the last inspection, and it remains a very effective one. Pupils achieve well and have very good attitudes to school. The school makes good provision for pupils, through good teaching founded on a very good curriculum. The school has made good progress from an already very strong position under strong leadership from the headteacher, governors and senior managers. All of this is achieved at a cost per pupil that is broadly average. Consequently, the school offers good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Pupils achieve well in the school, especially in music, science, and information and communication technology.
- Pupils learn well because they have very good attitudes to work and behave very well as a consequence of teachers' high expectations.
- The school continues to enjoy the very strong support of parents.
- The school promotes independent learning very well.
- Teaching is good because teachers plan well and set clear objectives that build on previous learning.
- Very strong leadership, supported by teamwork throughout the school, promotes a shared commitment to high standards by the whole school community.
- The school has maintained the high quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils are very well supported and cared for by all of the adults, including volunteers, who work in the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Fair Oak Junior School is a very effective school with no areas of significant weakness. Nevertheless, the governing body and senior management may wish to include the following minor points in their action plan:

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities for problem-solving in the classroom.
- The ends of lessons are not consistently used for pupils to reflect on their learning and consider how to improve.
- The statutory requirements for collective worship are not met.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997. Since then, it has maintained good standards across the curriculum, especially in science. Teaching has significantly improved. Both of the key issues of the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Taken together, these factors indicate that the school has made good progress since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	C	D
mathematics	B	A	B	C
science	B	A	A	B

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

The school has analysed the reasons for the drop in performance in 2000. Assessment data shows that this group of pupils overall had lower attainment on entry than previous groups. The particular area of weakness was that of writing, and the school has taken steps to address it. The general trend in recent results has been in line with the national trend of improvement. The school exceeded its targets in 2000, and has set challenging targets for its future performance. During the inspection, high standards were observed in music, information and communication technology and science. The previous inspection team reported standards that were above the levels expected in the foundation subjects. A short inspection does not make judgements on these subjects, but there is no evidence to suggest that standards have fallen in the intervening period. Pupils achieve well, when their attainment on entry and application in lessons are taken into account.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are extremely keen in lessons. They work very hard, remaining on task even when the teacher is working with another group and they are working independently.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. This enables pupils to make good progress in lessons. Movement around the school to specialist rooms takes place without fuss.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils get on very well together and work independently exceptionally well.
Attendance	Good. Above national averages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively. All teaching was at least satisfactory; 35 per cent was very good or better, including nine percent of lessons in which teaching was excellent, an unusually high proportion. Teachers manage behaviour very well and pupils respond well, persevere with their work and progress well. In addition, pupils work independently very effectively. Teachers' marking is very good. In the very best lessons, tasks are extremely well matched to pupils' needs. Teachers share the objectives for each lesson with the class, so they know what they are about to learn. However, objectives are not always referred back to at the lesson's end. Effective support is given to pupils with special educational needs so that they progress well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is enhanced by themed weeks, integrated topics and a wide range of high quality extra-curricular activities. The provision of 'challenges' for higher attaining pupils, like the production of the school's annual newspaper, has a positive effect on these pupils' attitudes and achievement.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school has maintained its high quality of provision leading to good progress for these pupils
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Moral development is enhanced by the high expectations of behaviour and trust placed in pupils. The school council allows pupils to take responsibility in the school and take part in decision making. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is enhanced by the school's link with a school in Nairobi. Some assemblies do not meet the requirements for an act of collective worship.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Appropriate procedures are in place

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and other managers share a clear vision. The provision for special educational needs is very well organised. The system of year leaders managing their teams ensures that pupils in parallel classes have the same experiences.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the school, understanding its strengths and weaknesses well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Test results are analysed and action taken, as when the results in English in 2000 were not as high as previously.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Best use is made of the school's accommodation. Staff are deployed appropriately and good use is made of their particular strengths. Specific grants are used effectively for their intended purpose so that, for example, good quality support is given to pupils with special educational needs.

The school applies the principles of best value very well in its purchases and its evaluation of its own performance.

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 teaching is good, and that the school expects their children to work hard and do their best so that they make good progress.• Behaviour is good.• The school is well managed and led.• There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few parents wrote to say they felt too much homework is set.• A handful of parents thought provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.

The inspection team agreed with parents' positive views. Homework is set within national guidelines. Inspectors exhaustively checked the school's comprehensive records for special educational needs going back several years and observed sessions in which such pupils were supported. They concluded that the high quality of provision had been maintained.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils achieve well in the school, especially in music, science and information and communication technology.

1. Pupils arrive in the school with attainment that is above the national average. Whilst in lessons, they are expected to work with considerable application and do so. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, national test results show that the school generally achieves well when compared to all schools. The school has maintained consistently high standards over the past few years. However, the results in English appear to have fallen in 2000. This was not unexpected; the school's records show that this group of pupils entered the school with lower standards than in previous years, particularly in writing. An analysis of the 2000 test results shows that it was a weakness in writing that caused the results in English to be so badly affected. Nevertheless, the school had set challenging targets for its own performance in English and mathematics based on its knowledge of the pupils through routine assessments and these targets were exceeded. A calculation of the actual gains made by the pupils in that year group showed that they made rather more progress than would have been expected in their time in the school.

2. The subject least affected by the fall in results in 2000 was science. Since 1998, when science results were barely above the national average, the trend has been one of overall improvement, which was particularly dramatic in 1999. The reason for this is the increase in teachers' confidence in teaching science, thanks to the support given by the co-ordinator and his team. This team consists of members of staff from each year group, so that they have a clear idea of how the work in the subject becomes more advanced as pupils move through the school. With this in mind, they have revised the scheme of work, to include detailed lesson plans for teachers and resource packs especially designed for each lesson. This has the effect of ensuring that all staff are able to teach the subject confidently, concentrating on the key concepts, without getting sidetracked into the minutiae of preparation. The effect of this can be clearly seen in the results. Although science suffered a little in 2000, it was to a lesser degree than the other two subjects tested. The scheme and its constituent lesson plans remain under review.

3. The school considers music to be a strength, and the inspection team agree. There are a number of teaching staff with an in-depth knowledge of music, and the school uses their expertise well. The specialist music/drama room provides a very stimulating environment and is used well. In the two days of the inspection, three music lessons were observed. The teaching was good in one and very good in the others. Teachers' confidence with the technicalities of music means that lessons are well organised and operate well. In every lesson, pupils' attainment was judged to be above the level that would generally be expected. In a lesson for Year 4, in which pupils explored pitch and rhythm, the teacher used her very good singing voice and obvious enthusiasm to encourage the pupils to sing. As a result, they did so with obvious enjoyment and in unison. Their singing was very melodic, with clear diction. The teacher had excellent musical knowledge, and used this to good effect when she used musical vocabulary and challenged pupils to read music, using the correct words. Pupils were given several opportunities to appraise one another's work. They responded well, listening carefully to each other. Very good subject knowledge was also a feature of the other

lessons observed, when musical vocabulary appropriate to the class was reinforced. The subject offers good opportunities for pupils to work in groups, as was seen in a Year 3 lesson in which they were expected to work together to make up a story and then develop sound effects. In a Year 6 lesson in which pupils were creating their own rhythmic pattern to perform to the group, the teacher's detailed planning and clear instructions enabled pupils to develop a good idea of 'feeling the beat'. As a result, they maintained their own parts whilst performing by ear or from simple notations. This led them to an understanding of how different parts interact and the need to achieve an overall effect.

4. The school also provides other musical opportunities. Around a fifth of pupils receive tuition in musical instruments, and there are extra-curricular groups in recorder playing, choir, guitar, and the school band. The choir was heard rehearsing a Christmas concert. This consisted of over a hundred pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 who sang very maturely from memory in complex two-part harmony. Three members of staff gave up part of their lunch hour to share their very evident enthusiasm. The school has achieved success outside its own confines. It took part in the 'Hampshire 2000' festival, for which pupils from this school wrote the winning song, 'Open the Millennium Door', which was subsequently performed on local radio. The choir was then selected to take part in the final concert of Hampshire 2000. The choir has also been invited to take part in concerts at Winchester College and the Youth Proms at the Royal Albert Hall.

5. The school teaches most of its information and communication technology (ICT) in its networked suite. Pupils achieve high levels of skill in the use of the software packages. Their learning is enhanced by their very good attitudes and behaviour as they move to the suite, sit down and log on to the network. A good feature of the lessons seen was the use of ICT to support other areas of learning. This is obvious when pupils are using a computer-assisted learning package, which allows them to reinforce and extend their mathematical skills individually. However, it also takes place in the context of teaching ICT itself. For example, pupils in a Year 4 lesson corrected a piece of text previously entered by a teacher. This included 'mistakes' like the confusion of such words as 'there' and 'their', the misuse of capitals for names and the omission of commas in lists. As part of its response to the fall in standards in writing, the school has been placing more emphasis on writing and on the editing process as subsequent drafts are honed. The editing task reinforced the skills of these Year 4 pupils in literacy, whilst they also learned how to navigate around a document and how to transfer it from a central area to their own on the network. The text for editing was related to their current history topic, and had been carefully prepared with the lesson's objectives firmly in mind. The pupils' very good attitudes meant that they worked well in pairs. The task was set at just the right level so that pupils were challenged; this made pupil management effectively invisible, so that no time was lost during the lesson in maintaining order. In Year 3, pupils' ICT lessons are linked with mathematics as they used a piece of software very effectively to describe the patterns when the multiples of two, five and ten are marked on a hundred square. The use of a software package for this meant that pupils did not waste time colouring the square and were able to move to the main task quickly. That was to write a short report on the patterns seen using the word processor, importing the image of their hundred square into it. The level of details and sophistication of vocabulary expected were different for pupils of different abilities, ensuring all were appropriately challenged. Year 6 learned how to interrogate databases. This was linked, somewhat tenuously, with other work as the database they interrogated concerned the monarchs of Great Britain. In this lesson, the introduction was rather short and not all pupils initially realised that

searches could be done more speedily by the computer rather than by stepping through all of the records. However, the teacher and curriculum support assistant both had good subject knowledge that allowed them to intervene and direct pupils back on track. The school's decision to employ a curriculum support assistant permanently in the suite has been an effective one, as her knowledge of the network allows her to set up tasks before classes arrive as well as help pupils individually with problems and allow them to progress well.

Pupils learn well because they have very good attitudes to work and behave very well as a consequence of the teachers' high expectations.

6. In the lessons observed, pupils' learning was never less than satisfactory. It was judged to be at least good in three-quarters of lessons, and very good in nearly a third. This closely mirrors the quality of teaching. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were judged even more highly, being almost invariably good or better, and very good or better in nearly two-thirds of lessons seen. These very good attitudes are a major factor in enabling pupils to achieve as well as they do. However, they do not occur in a vacuum. Teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate, expectations that are clearly communicated to their classes. This is a consequence of the behaviour policy, which has the clear expectation that all staff share the responsibility for the behaviour of pupils at all times and everywhere in the school.

7. These high expectations were seen in a physical education lesson for Year 3. The teacher had good relationships with the class, which allowed the lesson to move at a very good pace. The consequence of this was that pupils' interest was maintained and they behaved very well. For example, when asked, they split into pairs and worked very sensibly without any squabbling. As a result, their performance improved noticeably, and their ability to make constructive comment on their own or others' performance was enhanced, as nominated pupils commented on their own performance. In a Year 4 art lesson, pupils designed a mosaic in Roman style while a smaller group worked with the teacher, forming plaster casts of clay tiles they had previously made. The teacher had high expectations of how pupils would behave as they moved around the room between the activities and used the wet plaster. As a result, the movement took place without fuss, maintaining the lesson's pace. A Year 3 mathematics lesson really flew as pupils took up the teacher's challenges, which were carefully matched to their ability. The teacher made clear his expectations that pupils would be able to complete even the difficult questions, and pupils set to with a will as a result. In this lesson, pupils' behaviour was exemplary, and they were really excited about the task, which concerned identifying sequences of numbers. This was because of the outstanding relationships within the class and the extremely well judged level of challenge. As a result, all groups had an outstanding sense of achievement by the lesson's end. Of course, not all lessons can be this exciting, but even when they are not, pupils still stay firmly on task.

The school promotes independent learning very well.

8. The school places a high priority on pupils' ability to work and learn independently. One obviously successful strategy is the award of 'Independent Worker' status. Pupils of all ages have the opportunity to demonstrate that they are reliable and trustworthy. When they have done this, they are rewarded with independent worker status, which allows them to work at times with minimal adult supervision. The success of this had been partially eroded by the expectations in the national

strategies for literacy and numeracy for significant amounts of whole class teaching. However, the school has recognised this, and is taking steps to ensure that the scheme continues to operate effectively alongside these strategies.

9. It is not just the recognised independent workers who show the ability to work sensibly without constant supervision. In all classrooms, there is the clear expectation that pupils will work hard, even when the teacher is with another group. This is realised so that pupils work really hard in lessons, which is a major factor contributing to their good learning. A particularly good example was seen in a Year 6 lesson, in which pupils identified spelling errors in their own writing. Prior to the lesson, each pupil had drawn up an individual list of spellings to be learned based on errors they had made, topped up as necessary with words from a bank provided by the teacher. In the lesson observed, the organisation and routines were such that the pupils were able to organise themselves completely: in pairs, they tested one another to the rhythm of another pupil calling out the question numbers. The whole procedure was excellently organised and very slick in practice. This meant that each pupil was tested at their own level very accurately, promoting their skills in an excellent manner. Pupils commented that, when they write independently, they are increasingly careful to check spellings and use dictionaries to avoid errors.

10. The ability to work well without constant supervision is not confined to older pupils, however. The routines and expectations are set in place as soon as pupils enter the school. The inspection took place in November, but already pupils in Year 3 were able to work sensibly when the teacher was elsewhere in the room. For example, in an art and design lesson focussing on the completion of a collage, pupils listened closely and made suggestions as to where, for example, the eyes are positioned in the oval face shape. Later in the lesson, they worked well at their individual artwork. Throughout the lesson, behaviour was very good in terms of following instructions and working together. A notable feature was the care pupils took of the equipment they used so that they made no mess! They placed glue sticks carefully on paper towels and nothing was dropped on the floor. This was helped by the very good relationships in the class.

11. Further provision for independent learning is made for higher attaining pupils through the challenges that they are given each term, linked to their work in the classroom. Nominated pupils complete these tasks independently in their own time, including any necessary research. In addition, the school newspaper, produced annually and distributed to local homes, allows older, higher attaining, pupils to practise the skills of organisation, editing and layout. This makes useful links for these pupils to mathematics as they organise each page. The result is a very professional publication of high quality.

Teaching is good because teachers plan well and set clear objectives that build on previous learning.

12. A valuable feature of all of the lessons observed was the use of the 'Focus Board'. At the beginning of each lesson, that lesson's objectives are written on the board, in a form that the pupils can understand. In all of the lessons observed, the objectives were drawn to pupils' attention so that they had a clear idea of the purpose of the lesson and what they were expected to learn. There was also clear evidence in teachers' record books that the foci for some lessons had been amended in the light of what pupils had previously attained. This is further reinforced by the teacher's recap of

previous lessons, reminding pupils of the work and challenging them to recall facts and skills. For example, in a Year 3 ICT lesson, the teacher's introduction and recap enabled the pupils to suggest that the appropriate software for report writing might be the school's usual word processor. This also happened in a Year 4 design and technology lesson, which was supported by a member of staff from the adjacent secondary school. In this lesson, pupils were designing and making an alarm system. The objectives for the lesson were clearly stated to the class, and the teacher made links to their learning in science.

13. Through the use of clear objectives, pupils are clear about their learning needs. In the very best lessons, the objectives are reviewed again at the end, with a clear emphasis on what pupils have learned, what they found easy or difficult, and what will need further reinforcement. The inclusion of the class in discussions like this raises their self-esteem. This was seen in an excellent Year 3 mathematics lesson. As is usually the case, the objectives were clearly stated. Pupils received well prepared and challenging work that accurately matched their particular needs. The work included some very tricky questions; for example, one included a sequence in which each number was nine less than the one preceding it. Pupils were asked for the tenth term in the sequence, which was a negative number. To their credit, none of the class was flustered by this, and gave some very well thought through suggestions. At the end of the lesson, they were able to agree that the objectives for that lesson had been met, that they had worked hard, and that they had reinforced their understanding of number bonds.

The school continues to enjoy the very strong support of parents.

14. Prior to the inspection, a questionnaire was circulated to the parents of all children at the school, and a meeting was held for interested parents. For each question, agreement represents a positive response. The detailed results of the questionnaire analysis are appended to the end of the report. There was a high return of questionnaires. It is worth noting that there were no areas in which there was significant disagreement, and agreement levels were 95 per cent or higher in the majority of cases. These included: 'My child likes school', 'My child is making good progress in school', 'Behaviour in the school is good', 'I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on', 'I would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem', 'The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best', 'The school is well led and managed', 'The school is helping my child become mature and responsible' and 'The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons'. Ninety-nine per cent of parents agreed that teaching is good. The only question with a disagreement level greater than ten per cent concerned the amount of work pupils are expected to do at home. However, a number of parents wrote to the team directly to say that they felt that the school was following external guidelines and so no blame should be attached to the school.

15. A number of parents wrote further comments with their questionnaires, and over forty such responses were received. Many made the point that they felt the school was excellent overall. Areas singled out for praise included the variety of clubs, the standard of music, the pastoral support and the leadership of the new headteacher. The only areas of disagreement mirrored those aired in the meeting held prior to the inspection. A small number of parents felt that the

provision for pupils with special needs is unsatisfactory, though a similar number wrote in praise of the provision. The meeting held with parents was extremely positive in its overall tone. Some parents also spoke with the team during the inspection period, and all spoke highly of the school and its provision.

16. Parents were very positive about the school at the last inspection; this has been maintained.

Very strong leadership supported by teamwork throughout the school promotes a shared commitment to high standards by the whole school community.

17. The aims of the school are appropriate and clearly stated in the prospectus. Most are visible in the school's day-to-day work. The governing body and headteacher share an understanding of what makes a good school. This is assisted by the governors' clear understanding of the school, gained through visits to it and the reports received from the headteacher. A key element in the school's structure is the system of year leaders. These postholders manage large teams, including support staff for their year. Much of the day-to-day management and communication falls on their shoulders, and it is their responsibility to ensure the consistency of approach throughout the school. The facts that different classes in the same year group complete the same work and that the approach to, for example, discipline is consistent throughout the school indicate that this approach is effective. Subjects have a named co-ordinator, who works with a team drawn from all year groups to ensure consistency of approach in teaching. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well organised and efficiently run. The upshot of these factors is that the staff works as a coherent team so that the entire school runs in a consistent manner with a clear vision for higher standards. This vision can be seen, for example, in the detailed analysis of national test results, which is carried out each year by the co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science, the value added analysis completed by the deputy headteacher and by the action taken to remedy any shortfalls as they are identified.

The school has maintained the high quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs.

18. The last inspection report found that the provision for pupils with special educational needs was excellent and, as a consequence, such pupils made good progress and achieved good standards for their abilities. Because a few parents aired some very different views at this inspection, the evaluation of the provision for special needs became a priority for this inspection team. Files and individual education plans were all scrutinised closely, and as many teaching sessions as practicable were observed. The overall conclusion was that high standards have been maintained, and that these pupils continue to make good progress.

19. The work of the curriculum support assistants is co-ordinated by the curriculum support co-ordinator. Part of her role is that of special educational needs co-ordinator. Good quality detailed records going back many years are kept, and these are completed in accordance with the expectations of the special needs Code of Practice. Support in class is effective, and targeted on those who need it most. Some pupils are withdrawn for good quality support as necessary; the school is careful that this withdrawal has the minimum impact on learning in other subjects. The use in mathematics of groups formed by ability allows pupils to be effectively supported. In English, all

pupils are integrated for the first half of the 'Literacy Hour', which is taught to the whole class. For the parts of the hour when pupils work in groups, those pupils who need it are withdrawn to be taught in a smaller class and receive good support in small groups. This was seen operating extremely successfully. In Year 6, for example, a session was exceptionally well prepared. An excellent questioning technique was used, so that individuals received questions closely tailored to their particular needs. The teacher had very high expectations of these pupils' ability to articulate their thoughts. This led them to answer confidently, follow instructions very well, and identify, for example, past and present tenses. They went on to make very good use of the skills they had been taught, that is, the use of a green pen to indicate changes in later drafts of a piece of work.

Pupils are very well supported and cared for by all of the adults, including volunteers, who work in the school.

20. Parents strongly approved of the school's pastoral system and spoke positively of a 'village school' atmosphere. This was evident in the inspection. Support staff are used well to support pupils, as noted above. The school has appropriate procedures in place and sufficient qualified first-aiders. Administrative staff make a valuable contribution to the school's work, taking some of the load from teachers and allowing them to concentrate on the job in hand – to teach. This was reflected in the good teaching observed. In addition, considerable care is taken when a pupil feels unwell or has had a minor accident. Good procedures exist to deal with this, but procedures alone cannot show the human dimension of true caring for another that was observed as pupils were treated for a variety of minor injuries.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Pupils do not have enough opportunities for problem solving in the classroom.

21. The school makes good provision for the most able pupils to solve problems through the three challenges issued per year to each year group. Nevertheless, it is not always the case that pupils have the opportunity to tackle new problems in the classroom as a matter of routine. This was particularly noticeable in the observations of science lessons. Whilst the school makes good provision within the scheme of work for pupils to carry out experiments, these are very controlled, with the result that pupils' contribution to the planning and design of the experiment is minimal. For example, in a Year 6 lesson about resistance in wires, pupils were presented with a bare wire and asked to see what effect varying its length had on the brightness of a bulb. Although the pupils understood what is meant by a fair test, they had no real opportunity to pose questions themselves or to consider other possible factors like the thickness of the wire. Consequently, although they learned, in a practical way, that the resistance of a wire increases as its length increases, they had not reinforced the skills of actually asking the questions, 'On what factors does the resistance of a wire depend?' and 'How can we find out?'

The ends of lessons are not consistently used for pupils to reflect on their learning and consider how to improve.

22. It has already been noted above that a very positive feature of teaching is the use of focus

boards, so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. In the best lessons, these are used again at the end of the lesson to review what has been learned, if the objective has been achieved, and whether further work is needed. However, in many lessons, this section was not used effectively. In some, the focus for this section was 'show-and-tell', in which pupils' work was celebrated and they described what they had done. Whilst the celebration of good work is of value, these sessions concentrated on the tasks completed rather than the learning that had taken place. The question 'Now that you have done that, what have you learned?' was rarely asked. In other lessons, the end of the lesson seemed to take the teacher by surprise, so any such review was either very rushed or took place amid clearing up. This meant that the atmosphere of reflection necessary to consider how work can be improved was absent, and so the closing session was of little value. In other lessons, it was absent entirely. Consequently, some opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work frankly and honestly are missed.

The statutory requirements for collective worship are not met

23. During the inspection, the team attended three assemblies. Of these, two failed to comply with the regulations for collective worship, as they did not include the recognition of a supreme being or deity. In addition, whilst it is recognised that parents have the option of withdrawing their children from collective worship, some pupils whose parents had not exercised that right were also withdrawn to receive special needs support or instrumental music lessons, contrary to requirements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

24. Fair Oak Junior School is a very effective school with no areas of significant weakness. Nevertheless, the governing body and senior management should consider including the following minor points in their action plan:

- Ensure that the planning for lessons, especially science, includes appropriate opportunities for pupils to set questions and then consider how to answer them.
- Build on the good practice already in the school to ensure that the ends of lessons are used effectively to allow pupils to reflect on what they have learned, what was easy or hard, and how they might improve in future.
- Ensure that the statutory requirements for collective worship are met.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	26	38	26	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	581
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	94

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	86	69	155

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	71	70	85
	Girls	59	54	66
	Total	130	124	151
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (90)	80 (85)	97 (96)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	70	73	81
	Girls	58	57	62
	Total	128	130	143
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (74)	84 (76)	92 (86)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	580
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	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	31.1

Education support staff:

Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	312

Qualified teachers and support staff:

nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	978809.00
Total expenditure	960226.00
Expenditure per pupil	1636.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	21662.00
Balance carried forward to next year	40245.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	581
Number of questionnaires returned	318

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	41	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	48	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	54	11	1	0
The teaching is good.	58	41	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	48	4	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	35	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	30	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	50	6	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	36	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	45	4	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	35	3	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents commented at the meeting with parents and in writing that they felt that provision for pupils with special educational needs was unsatisfactory. After exhaustive checking of the school's records and observations of support in the school, the team concluded that the school the high level of provision for pupils with special needs has been maintained.