

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S RC INFANTS' SCHOOL

Carshalton

LEA area: Sutton

Unique reference number: 102995

Headteacher: Mrs A Juster

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Rowe
1695

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th July 2001

Inspection number: 240091

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	West Street Carshalton Surrey
Postcode:	SM5 2PT
Telephone number:	(0208) 647 5711
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Gerald O'Callaghan
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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1695	Brian Rowe	Registered inspector	Physical education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (results and achievements) How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9465	Elizabeth Cooke	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (attitudes, behaviour and personal development) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2245 2	Mary Farman	Team inspector	English Music Art Foundation Stage	
2743 6	Terence Aldridge	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
3121 8	Tom Allen	Team inspector	Science History Geography	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8 - 10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	10 - 11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11 - 13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	13 - 14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14 - 15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	15 - 18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19 - 22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23 - 36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's RC Infants' School is situated in Carshalton, a residential area of the London Borough of Sutton. It takes pupils aged three to seven years, mostly from the four parishes in the surrounding area. There are 202 pupils on roll, 94 boys and 108 girls, grouped in eight classes. The school is about the same size as an average sized primary school. In addition, the school has a nursery unit for 52 children. The children attend for either a morning or afternoon session. The vast majority of pupils are of white UK heritage; 10 speak English as an additional language, but none are at the early stages of language acquisition. This profile is close to average for primary schools. There are 26 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; this is well below the national average. There are two pupils with statements of special educational need and this is broadly in line with the average. Five pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is well below the national average. Children enter school with standards that are just above average for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a highly effective school. Pupils achieve very well and, by the time they leave school, attain standards that are well above the national average. Standards in comparison with those in similar schools are also well above average. Teaching is very good, and is a key factor in pupils making very good progress and enjoying their education. In the Foundation Stage, 53 per cent of teaching is very good or excellent and the remainder is good, ensuring the children make a very good start to their education. The school takes into account the needs of all groups of pupils and enables them to play a full part in the life of the school; relationships between the pupils themselves and between pupils and staff are excellent. The quality of management is very good and the outstanding leadership of the headteacher has resulted in the school making very good improvement since the last inspection. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress and attain standards that are well above the national average throughout the school.
- The quality of education in the Foundation Stage ensures children make a very good start to their education.
- The very effective teaching contributes to pupils' learning and their all-round development.
- The outstanding leadership by the headteacher has led to the development of a shared vision amongst all staff and very good improvements since the last inspection.
- It provides a very high level of care that promotes pupils' personal development so they behave extremely well and establish very positive relationships with staff and each other.
- It establishes strong relationships with parents.

What could be improved

- The provision and opportunities to use information and communication technology.

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 June, 1997. Since then it has made very good improvements. The previous key issues have been successfully addressed. In addition, the school has achieved considerable development in other important aspects. For example, the school has ensured substantial improvements to the buildings and site that have considerably enhanced the environment for learning. It has successfully introduced the national literacy and numeracy strategies, and improved the systems for reviewing and monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' work. The standard of pupils' attainment has risen in several subjects, and the quality of teaching and learning has markedly improved due to regular monitoring of teaching. The resources for information and communication technology have been enhanced, but still need further development. The school has introduced several curriculum initiatives and improved the systems for assessment in order to set pupils targets for improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A*	A*	A	A
Writing	A	A*	B	C
Mathematics	A	A	B	C

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

Similar schools are those with up to 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Inspection findings judge that, by the age of seven, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above the national average. The results of the recently taken 2001 national tests are a considerable improvement on the previous year and confirm the quality of work seen. There have been notable improvements in the standards of writing, mathematics and science. A significant strength is that the percentage of pupils who achieve the higher Level 3 (the national expectation is to achieve Level 2 or above) is well above the national and similar school averages in reading, writing, mathematics and science. There has been consistent year-on-year improvement in the standards achieved and the school is sustaining very high levels of performance.

Pupils apply their literacy skills successfully in other subjects; the quality of reading is outstanding and the quality of writing now very high. Pupils are set clear, realistic and achievable targets in literacy and this helps both the teachers and pupils to focus on the areas for individual improvement. Numeracy skills are very well developed and used effectively in other subjects, including science, geography and design and technology. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their learning. They are supported effectively by class teachers and other support staff.

By the end of the Foundation Stage, children exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. In their personal, social and emotional development the children's development far exceeds these expectations. Pupils achieve well and make very good progress throughout Key Stage 1. The school sets itself appropriate academic targets and is successful at meeting them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. The pupils have exemplary attitudes to work and school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. The excellent behaviour is a major factor in the very high standards in the school.
Personal development and relationships	The excellent standards of personal development have a very beneficial effect on learning because pupils are interested in their lessons and concentrate extremely well. Relationships are excellent between pupils and between pupils and adults.
Attendance	Good. The school is rigorous in making sure parents complete request forms and only allowing less than 10 days holiday in the year. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very 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.

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was very good in 49 per cent of lessons observed, good in 34 per cent; 15 per cent of lessons were excellent. The one remaining lesson was satisfactory and none of the teaching was unsatisfactory. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good, with many examples of very good and excellent practice in each year group. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The quality of teaching is a significant strength of the school and has contributed to the high and continually rising standards in the school since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has a very positive impact on the attitudes and excellent behaviour of the pupils. In addition, the nursery nurses and teaching assistant make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and attitudes to their work.

In literacy, the quality of teaching is extremely effective. A very high proportion of lessons is very good and nearly 40 per cent are excellent. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the literacy strategy and teach the basic skills of reading and writing very well. They plan effectively and have very high expectations of what the pupils will achieve. Teachers recognise the primary importance of literacy and at times create effective links between English and its application to other subjects, such as history and geography.

The quality of teaching in numeracy was very good or excellent in 67 per cent of lessons, with the remaining lessons being good. This very good teaching is linked to teachers' understanding and effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils and evaluate carefully to see what pupils have learnt. In addition, as a result of teachers' high expectations, the quality of pupils' response is extremely positive and they enjoy the work.

The quality of teaching for the children under six is frequently very good and sometimes excellent. This consistently high quality of teaching reflects high levels of progress in learning that children make in their early years at school. The teachers and members of the support staff work very closely together to promote learning. They have a clear understanding of the needs of young children and realistically high expectations of achievement and behaviour.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Pupils are provided with a rich curriculum, which includes good provision for personal, social and health education and extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils	Very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator,

with special educational needs	teachers and assistants support pupils effectively. Individual education plans are written in consultation with teachers and parents and most contain useful targets for improvement.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	None of the pupils are at early stages of learning English and all have good access to the curriculum and every aspect of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. Pupils' moral and social development is excellent. Their spiritual and cultural development is very good. The emphasis on personal development and the evident Catholic ethos have a very direct impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school has very good arrangements for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils. Pupils' learning benefits significantly from the very good care and support given by the school, as they feel secure and happy. This enables all groups of pupils to settle quickly and learn very well.

The staff work hard and successfully involve parents in supporting the school and in their children's learning. The quality of information sent to parents is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership that permeates all aspects of school life. She is very well supported by the deputy head and other key staff. Developments have been ensured by very effective teamwork amongst all the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities; they show a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has an effective system of monitoring in place, which allows it to identify its strengths and weaknesses. The school meets its targets.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Particularly good use is made of specific funding, including those for pupils with special educational needs. Staff are managed well and they all make a valuable contribution to supporting the quality of education provided.

The school has very good staffing levels to meet the learning needs of all pupils. Accommodation is very good, and together with the very high quality displays of pupils' work provides a stimulating learning environment. The school has good resources to teach the National Curriculum, with the exception of information and communication technology, where they are satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value effectively in all purchases.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Children make good progress. • The teaching is good. • Children behave well. • The school has high expectations of the pupils. • They feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well managed and led. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about their children's progress. • The number of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.

Forty five parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection. Of the 200 questionnaires distributed to parents, 111 (55 per cent) were returned.

The inspection team definitely endorses the positive views of the parents. It does not agree that extra-curricular clubs are insufficient for an infants' school of this size. The information provided to parents is good and teachers are readily available for consultations about individual children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter the nursery class with standards that are just above the expectation for their age in most areas of learning. They respond positively to the provision in the nursery and make very good progress, particularly in the development of their personal, social and emotional development. This ensures that the children's levels of attainment on entry to the reception classes are above the expectation for most children of this age. Children make rapid progress in developing their skills in the reception classes. They are likely to exceed the level of attainment they need to meet the expectations of the early learning goals¹ in all areas. The exception is in children's personal, social and emotional development where their skills are very high and well above expectations.

Key Stage 1

2. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were well above the national average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. In comparison with those in similar schools nationally², the results were well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. In the teacher assessments for science, results were close to the national average for all schools, but below average in comparison with those in similar schools. The school's results in 2000 dipped in comparison with previous years and confirm the ability of the cohort. The most recent 2001 results are a considerable improvement on the 2000 results and reflect the overall trend of the previous four years, where standards were mostly well above the national average. It is most likely that the 2001 results will be well above average compared with similar schools. There is no significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls or pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
3. Inspection findings show that standards are now well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards have risen as a result of the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, improvements in the quality of teaching and a focus on writing and using assessment information to set individual targets for pupils in English.
4. Standards of reading are well above expectations. Pupils know the mechanics of reading, and many can talk knowledgeably about a range of books. The quality of expression in pupils' writing has improved due to a focus on developing writing

¹ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

² Schools with up to 8 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

skills and good standards in spelling. The range of vocabulary used in speaking and listening and in pupils' written work is well above expectations.

5. In numeracy, pupils read, write and order numbers to 100 and the more able to 1000. They know their 2, 5 and 10 times tables. The majority of pupils know the names of common two- and three-dimensional shapes and recognise and use coins to £1 in shopping activities. Most understand simple bar charts and can explain their findings.
6. In science, pupils discuss their work and use simple but appropriate scientific terms to describe their experiences. They learn to use equipment to make investigations and how to observe carefully and then record their results in a variety of ways.
7. In design and technology, geography, history, art and design, music and physical education, standards are above expectations for pupils of this age. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and at a rate that is similar to that of other pupils in the class. Most receive very good support from teachers and additional learning support staff. Their confidence and self-esteem grows, improving their willingness to tackle tasks. Individual education plans are in place for all pupils. For the vast majority of pupils, targets are clear and specific and are regularly reviewed at least termly. Annual reviews for those pupils who have statements are reviewed in accordance with legal requirements.
9. The school has demonstrated that it can meet its targets and this is reflected in the year-on-year improvements. Inspection findings confirm that the school has teaching and management systems in place that will allow it to meet its future targets.
10. Progress since the last inspection has been very good, particularly in raising standards in writing at Key Stage 1 and generally for the higher-attaining pupils throughout the school. This is a direct result of a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, more rigorous monitoring systems, improved curriculum plans and using assessment results to inform lesson planning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The previous inspection report judged this aspect of the school's work to be very good. Since then, standards have improved further and are now excellent. Parents are rightly very pleased with their children's behaviour and attitudes to school. They informed the inspectors that their children enjoy school and they are taught exemplary attitudes and values. The inspection team agrees with these very positive views. The excellent standards of personal development have a very beneficial effect on learning because pupils are interested in their lessons.
12. Pupils are very keen to learn and show enthusiastic attitudes to their lessons. They work independently and co-operatively from the start of their time at school. Pupils' ability to manage their own learning and to concentrate on their lessons is

excellent. Pupils respond readily to teachers' instructions and work hard throughout lessons. This was seen in a Year 1 physical education lesson when pupils practised ball skills and devised games together. They were highly focused throughout the lesson and showed a very positive response to the clear teaching, co-operating well together and remaining on task. Also, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils worked sensibly in the library, carrying out research tasks purposefully. They worked hard developing their skills, challenged by the interesting tasks in a very well planned lesson.

13. At playtimes, pupils get on extremely well together and their play is enhanced by appropriate equipment and effective supervision. No evidence of bullying or racist behaviour was found or reported during the inspection. There have been no exclusions from the school in recent years.
14. Children in the nursery and reception classes quickly develop positive attitudes to work and learning. They enjoy their work and concentrate for increasing lengths of time. All children rapidly develop the ability to relate very well to each other and to adults. As they move from the nursery to the reception classes, children increase their ability to become independent, enthusiastic and eager learners. They are sensitive to the feelings of others and respect each other's work.
15. Relationships are excellent between pupils and between pupils and adults. All adults in school provide very positive role models; this includes a good number of parents who help out regularly. The school is a harmonious community, closely reflecting a distinctive Catholic ethos. At a meeting with the registered inspector, parents stressed the school's place at the heart of the local community.
16. Pupils take very good care of the school's resources, artefacts, grounds and work on display. They also show respect for the buildings and each other's property. Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility in running errands, participating in group and team events and organising themselves in lessons. For example, in a Year 1 geography lesson, pupils engaged co-operatively during group tasks very enthusiastically and responded to the teacher's questions confidently. Children in the nursery are exceptionally good at selecting equipment and keeping their room tidy. Parents are pleased that the school helps their children to develop responsibility and maturity.
17. Most pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to school and are usually interested and enthusiastic in their lessons. They are fully involved in the range of activities that the school provides. Most pupils behave very well in lessons and in small groups when they receive extra support from the teacher or teaching assistants. Their behaviour is very good at lunch times and in the playground. They show good respect for each other's work and feelings and are positive about each other's efforts. They are willing to talk about their work and develop confidence in speaking, reading and writing.
18. Attendance at the school is good. Most pupils attend regularly and promptly each day and this has a positive effect on learning because pupils miss few

sessions. Registers are taken efficiently at the start of each session. Time is used exceptionally well as teachers use registration as an opportunity to practise literacy and numeracy skills or to organise pupils, for example, by changing for physical education lessons. The school has successfully maintained the previously reported good standards.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good in 34 per cent of lessons, very good in 49 per cent, excellent in 15 per cent, and satisfactory in the remaining one lesson. Consequently, there was no unsatisfactory teaching; this represents a very good profile of teaching. The quality of teaching is a significant strength and has contributed to the raising of standards in the school since the last inspection. In addition, the very good teaching has a positive impact on the excellent attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. The previous inspection report judged the quality of teaching to be satisfactory or better in all the lessons and good or very good in 60 per cent. Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection.
20. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in each year group. Excellent lessons included English and mathematics in Year 1 and English and physical education in Year 2. Examples of very good and good teaching were seen in all subjects. Teaching in the Year 1 and 2 classes is very good, with 69 per cent of lessons being very good or excellent.
21. The quality of teaching for the children under six is consistently very good. This consistently high quality of teaching reflects the level of progress in learning that children make in their early years at school. Teachers and members of the support staff work very closely together to promote learning. They have a clear understanding of the needs of young children and realistically high expectations of achievement and behaviour. They give children challenging and interesting tasks to consolidate and develop their knowledge and understanding. All members of staff use language carefully to develop children's speaking skills. They encourage children to work independently and make choices. The quality of teaching is an improvement since the previous inspection. This is a significant strength of the school and contributes to the very good start and progress made by children in the Foundation Stage.
22. In literacy, the quality of teaching is very good in each year group. Three excellent lessons were seen in the Year 1 and 2 classes. All teachers have secure knowledge of the literacy strategy. They plan thoroughly, identifying clearly how expectations for different abilities are to be covered. Teachers give clear explanations and set clear targets for the work to be done. Teachers recognise the primary importance of literacy and create effective links between English and its application to other subjects, such as history and geography.
23. The quality of teaching in numeracy was very good or excellent in nearly 67 per cent of lessons, with the remaining lessons being good. This very good teaching

is linked to teachers' understanding and effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils and evaluate carefully to see what pupils have learnt. They give good support to individuals and groups of pupils. In addition, as the result of teachers' high expectations, the quality of pupils' presentation of work is of a very high standard.

24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Tasks are well matched to pupils' needs and they make good progress. Class teachers make a strong contribution to the progress pupils make. Clear, precise explanations and carefully targeted questioning ensure that levels of understanding are high and potential learning difficulties are minimised. As well as good teaching of specific strategies to improve skills, emphasis is appropriately placed on increasing confidence and self-esteem. Pupils with statements are very well supported by teaching assistants and this ensures they make very good progress towards meeting their targets. Teaching assistants are suitably briefed and trained, provide good support and play a significant part in this provision. The supply of appropriate resources enables the pupils to concentrate on their tasks without becoming distracted. Thorough half-yearly reviews and assessments identify the progress that has been achieved and the future development needed.
25. In the best lessons, teachers show good subject knowledge, which is passed on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. The purpose of the lesson is shared with pupils and contributes well to their understanding of their own learning. Planning is very good, matching the scheme of work and ability of the pupils. Teachers use demonstration and explanation skills well to put across key teaching points. For example, in Year 1 during a physical education lesson, pupils made significant progress as a result of the teacher showing them the technique for hitting a ball. Lesson introductions are challenging and require pupils to think and give answers to teachers' questions for example, in numeracy, where they are expected to explain how they find answers to mental arithmetic problems.
26. A significant strength of teaching is the successful management of pupils' behaviour. This is a result of very high expectations and pupils knowing exactly what is expected of them. In particular, pupils take great care and pride in their work. Teachers' effective planning means that work is matched successfully to pupils' learning needs and pupils are challenged in their learning. Relationships are excellent, with pupils being confident and secure with their teachers and support staff.
27. Teachers use resources well to support pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are used effectively in lessons to support individuals or small groups of pupils. They work closely with class teachers and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Time is used extremely well and there are few occasions when pupils are not purposefully engaged in learning or worthwhile activities.
28. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and guide pupils in their future learning through constructive and helpful comments. Teachers use the results of marking to plan future lessons as well as the assessments they make of pupils' learning.

Homework is used well to support the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of literacy and numeracy.

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

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are very good. The school provides a broad and appropriate curriculum that is effective in promoting the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. Statutory requirements are met for all subjects of the National Curriculum. In all subjects, except information and communication technology, the relevance and breadth of provision are very good and the rich and varied experiences offered to the pupils lead to good progress being made. All subjects have an appropriate allocation of time and the school makes good use of resources from within and outside the school to enrich the curriculum. Curricular planning is good overall, and policies and schemes of work in all subjects provide continuity in pupils' learning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It fully meets the requirements of the national Code of Practice³ for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans accurately identify pupils' targets and these plans are well supported in classes.
30. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills is excellent. Both National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are very well implemented. High priority is given to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and, as part of a focus on raising standards, the skills are applied methodically across the curriculum.
31. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of learning in the nursery and reception classes is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The basis for this curriculum is the recently implemented initiative for the Early Learning Goals. The curriculum is very effective in meeting the needs of children in the Foundation Stage. It provides children with a broad, firm and secure base for their work in the National Curriculum in Year 1.
32. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Pupils have the opportunity to join the gym club, lunchtime choir, football and French club. All of these activities are well supported. Their participation is encouraged, as for example, when the choir performs in assemblies.
33. Equality of access and opportunity is good and girls and boys, and the different ethnic groups within the school, are valued equally throughout the school. Teachers ensure that all pupils regardless of ability are given equal opportunities to participate in all classroom activities. Because of the caring ethos of the school, the pupils themselves also ensure that all pupils are treated equally. They show care and concern for one another.

³ Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

34. The school places a high priority on personal, social and health education and its provision is very good. There is an effective and detailed programme that provides for developing awareness of the need to be safe. Emphasis is placed on the development of social skills from the time that children enter school in the nursery, and this is admirably demonstrated in their excellent attitude and behaviour towards each other and to adults.
35. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The pupils make good use of the *Ecology Centre*. They visit local churches, and a good range of visitors, such as the parish priest, governors, students and parents, helps to broaden pupils' awareness of the world and enriches the curriculum. Good use is made of educational visits within the local environment, and visitors from the wider community, such as the *Science Theatre* and the school's police liaison officer, give valuable support to the curriculum.
36. The school has a very constructive relationship with the adjacent junior school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 2.
37. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in lessons ensuring equality of access to all subjects. Provision for these pupils is very good and fully in accordance with national recommendations. The curriculum provided is good and teachers plan appropriate work to match the pupils' ability to ensure they have full access to the National Curriculum and other activities. The special needs co-ordinator ensures that pupils identified as having special educational needs have relevant individual education plans with specific targets. Annual reviews for those with statements of special educational needs are carried out appropriately. The school gives due regard to the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

38. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent overall and a strength of the school. The provision made for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Spirituality is central to the life of the school and there is a strong sense of caring and mutual respect so that all are valued. Assemblies are well planned and delivered to engage and involve all pupils and provide very good opportunities for thoughtful reflection. Prayers are said at the beginning and end of the day and at lunchtime, which reinforces the ethos of the school and the pupils respond with reverence. Each class has its own altar area and pupils are encouraged to write and display their own special prayers. Very effective displays, for example of art, provide opportunities for pupils to reflect and value each other's work. The school celebrates Mass along with the nearby Junior School at certain times during the year and the priest visits at least once a term. Seated areas are provided in the playground for pupils to sit quietly and the garden area provides a further quiet area.
39. Provision to promote moral development and the principles that distinguish right from wrong are excellent. Behaviour of the highest quality is an expectation of the school. Clear rules are displayed in all classrooms and pupils respond to these extremely well. They are given rewards to recognise good work and behaviour that is celebrated in assemblies. All staff have high expectations and encourage the highest standards of behaviour by following the school's discipline policy and all pupils react extremely well to this. The Catholic Diocesan religious education syllabus 'Here I am' includes very clear moral teaching.
40. Provision for social development is excellent. The school provides a very wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop socially and an understanding of living in a community. Within

each class, pupils have a good range of tasks and responsibilities to encourage them to take responsibility and help each other. Pupils are encouraged to work harmoniously together during lessons, for example, in mathematics, science, art, and physical education. There is good provision for extra curricular activities that provide further opportunities for pupils to work together and these are well supported. All adults in the school provide good role models and work positively with pupils. Fundraising activities such as 'Jump Rope for Heart', Catholic Action for Overseas Development (CAFOD) and The Catholic Children's Society arouse pupils' awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves and they give generously.

41. Provision for cultural development is also very good. Pupils undertake a range of visits within the area to support their learning beyond the classroom such as to the *National Gallery*, *Polka Theatre* and *Carshalton Heritage Centre*. A range of visitors includes musicians and actors which extends pupils' learning. Food from other cultures is prepared and shared during a *Food Day* and festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year are celebrated. Pupils learn about other religions and faiths through their religious education lessons which give pupils an insight into the diversity of cultures in this country and a preparation for living in a multi-cultural society. In literacy lessons, they hear stories from other cultures and from history lessons they learn of times past such as the Elizabethans and Victorians. Very good use is made of both devotional and secular art in displays around the school and pupils study and imitate the styles of a range of Western artists.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school makes very good provision to ensure the care, health and safety of all pupils. It has successfully addressed the key issues of concern identified in the previous inspection report. The high standards reported previously have been improved still further. Parents state that the school provides a caring and safe environment for their children. In addition, they receive very good co-operation from the school to ensure their children are well looked after. For example, the cook notes children's dietary preferences and tries to ensure that every child has a meal they enjoy each day.
43. The school has good procedures in place for child protection. The headteacher is the named person responsible for these matters and she receives relevant training from the local authority. The information from training is shared with staff and then incorporated into the staff handbook. The school receives good co-operation from outside agencies when working with children identified in need of additional support.
44. The school is clean and safe and provides a very attractive learning environment for young children. There have been significant improvements to the school buildings since the last inspection and classrooms are beautifully arranged to provide accessible and stimulating areas for learning. The site supervisor plays a significant role in ensuring that the school is a safe and pleasant place in which to work, learn and play. He is supported very well by the cleaning staff.
45. The personal development and pastoral care of pupils is supported well by all adults in the school. Very good communication and co-operation by the whole staff team ensure that information is recorded and passed on to the appropriate person.
46. The special educational needs co-ordinator is fully aware of the sources of support for pupils with special educational needs. Support services are

appropriately involved in the identification and assessment procedures. Although the main focus of special needs support is for literacy and learning difficulties, there is also good support for pupils with behavioral difficulties.

47. Assessment procedures for pupils with special needs are good. There is appropriate help from outside agencies, such as, speech and language specialists, the medical services, the educational psychologist and the behavioural support services. Individual education plans are drawn up and reviewed in consultation with class teachers, teaching assistants and parents. They are written by class teachers and the teaching assistants in consultation with the support staff. Baseline assessment takes place in Foundation Stage and the results are used effectively to identify pupils with special educational needs. Regular assessments in English and mathematics are undertaken on all pupils and the information is used to identify pupils with learning difficulties, to provide suitable support and monitor progress. The school makes very good use of the learning support service to undertake formal assessment procedures when necessary. The provision for those pupils with statements and arrangements for annual reviews is good. Parents are fully involved and kept completely informed. Review procedures for those pupils without statements are carried out half-yearly or sooner if necessary and parents are invited to be involved in the review process. Updated targets are shared at parent interviews.
48. Procedures for the assessment of children on entry to the nursery and reception classes are very good. The school has very good procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, and these are very well established for the core subjects. Foundation subject procedures are in place but some are in need of refinement in order to improve the system of tracking pupils' progress. The school has identified this as part of ongoing development. Monitoring of work through work sampling and the production of portfolios of work help in the process of planning for change and improvements.
49. Apart from statutory tests and teacher assessments the school uses a range of standardised tests as an additional guide to pupils' attainment and progress. Published national test results are analysed for differences in performance between boys and girls, and for different minority groups and the results are used to guide future planning.
50. Class teachers use assessment to help them plan new learning and to prepare work matched to the varying abilities of the pupils. The quality of teachers' marking is good and this provides encouragement and guidance on how to make improvements. The assessments are used by the school management team to monitor standards in English, mathematics and science, to check progress, analyse strengths and weaknesses within the school, and set challenging targets for improvement.
51. There are very good procedures to promote good behaviour and prevent any bullying and oppressive behaviour. All adults in school manage pupils in a very positive manner. Everyone shows great respect and care for each other. This aspect of school life is a strength of the school.

52. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and punctuality are good. They are carried out effectively by teachers and administrative staff. The registers are correctly marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon. The school receives a regular visit from the education welfare service to support any issues arising from pupils' attendance or punctuality.
53. Lunchtimes at the school are a pleasant social experience with all children eating in the dining hall together. Lunches are of good quality and cooked on site by the school's kitchen staff. Play and lunchtimes are well supervised with games and simple equipment provided to encourage purposeful play. There is plenty of space for pupils to play outside in the pleasant grounds.
54. Pupils' learning benefits significantly from the very good care and support given by the school, as they feel secure and happy. This enables all groups of pupils to settle quickly and learn very well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. The parents of pupils are very pleased with the positive relationships established with the school's staff and the ease with which they can gain access to them. Parents are confident that their children are very well cared for and are developing positive attitudes and values. They state that their children enjoy school and that they are encouraged to do their best. They feel the school is very well organised and managed efficiently. Parents in particular stressed the importance of the school as the centre of their community. A high proportion (over 50 per cent) of parents responded to a questionnaire issued by the registered inspector and the views expressed were very positive indeed. Parents' opinions of the school have improved since the last inspection and the inspection team shares their positive views. A minority of parents reported that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities available to pupils. However, the inspection team disagrees and judges provision to be good for pupils of infant age. Communication with parents is very well addressed by the school and there are many opportunities available for them to deal with queries and concerns promptly. The headteacher ensures that members of the school community are kept well informed about school arrangements and forthcoming events. The school is welcoming to parents and visitors. This is a strength of the school and has a very positive effect on attitudes and learning because pupils feel secure and settled.
56. The school provides a useful prospectus, newsletters and notice boards for parents. These provide good information on the school's work. Annual reports to parents on pupils' progress are good and give parents useful information on attainment and the work covered. However, there is insufficient information in some reports on what pupils need to do to improve. The headteacher takes care to be available at the beginning and end of the school day to talk with parents. Parents are welcomed to classrooms by the 'open door' approach of the school. Overall, the information to parents about their children is good.

57. The opportunity for parents to be involved in the identification, assessment and review of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents are invited to reviews and share and contribute to targets. They receive copies of targets so that they can support pupils at home.
58. Parents are interested in their children's progress and regularly attend consultation meetings at the school. They are keen to support their children at home with reading and appreciate the information the school provides on the curriculum. Homework set is appropriate and comprises reading and mathematical games. Many parents take the opportunities offered by the school to come into classes regularly to work with pupils.
59. The strong relationships and positive attitudes fostered by the school amongst the community make a significant contribution to learning. Parents are keen for their children to attend, they feel confident about becoming involved in school life and consequently the children themselves value learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher provides positive and outstanding leadership, which is committed to raising standards and ensuring continual improvements. This has ensured a clear educational direction to the work of the school. The headteacher receives very good support from the deputy head, a very able team of teachers and the governing body. A regular pattern of meetings has been established which involves key personnel in various capacities. Through these meetings, the headteacher and governors are kept well aware of issues impacting on the effective functioning of the school in all its aspects.
61. Clear aims and high expectations are established and there is a strong sense of shared purpose to the work of the school. The quality of working relationships is very good and staff work well together at all levels to contribute towards achieving the declared aims. As a result, the school provides a supportive and effective learning environment appropriate to the needs of all its pupils. There is a strong Catholic ethos that pervades all aspects of school life.
62. There are clear systems to delegate responsibilities for monitoring teaching and the curriculum to the relevant post holders and senior staff. Subsequently, the headteacher and deputy have had a significant role in monitoring the performance of teachers and the standards achieved by the pupils. Procedures for monitoring are well developed and structured. They involve sharing the aspects of work to be monitored, and include formal feedback with the recording of outcomes. In addition to using the strengths and expertise of senior staff to best advantage for the school, the delegation encourages the development of good management experience for the individual staff involved.
63. The school has responded positively to national initiatives. A curriculum review has been undertaken, and policies and schemes of work have been revised.

Core subject⁴ co-ordinators have specific time allocation for regular monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching and learning. School performance data has been analysed and the results drawn together to provide considerable information. Good use of the information is made to inform target-setting procedures and the tracking of the performance of various cohorts or individual pupils. The school has used the interpretation of the analysis to focus on improving short-term lesson objectives. Co-ordinators in foundation subjects⁵ also monitor through a review of teachers' plans and a scrutiny of pupils' work.

64. The school has extensive and effective procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' long-term progress and attainment. Teachers collect information and maintain detailed and comprehensive records. The assessment information is regularly used to good effect to inform lesson planning and help set specific individual targets in literacy. As a result, most learning activities are well matched to the abilities of pupils so that all are challenged and extended.
65. The school has a very good development plan that clearly identifies relevant priorities. The plan is created by an effective process of audit and consultation, which results in an action plan for each area of focus. Targets are established and progress towards completing them is monitored by the headteacher and governors. In addition, supplementary monitoring occurs as committees hold regular meetings and report progress to the governing body. Budget proposals and staff development initiatives are closely linked to the school development plan. Monitoring for the impact of expenditure on standards is managed effectively.
66. School governors are diligent and conscientious in support of the school. They work hard to make sure that the school can function as effectively as possible, particularly with regard to financial management and improvement of the premises and environment. The chair of governors meets regularly with the headteacher and together they share a vision for the school that is firmly based on high expectations of pupil performance. The governing body is properly constituted, and roles and responsibilities are clear. Meetings, which are properly managed and minuted, are regularly held. Minutes are available for external scrutiny. A variety of sub-committees oversees different aspects of the school's work. The school has established a strategy sub-committee that is particularly effective. The committees ensure that the main governing body is kept informed of their work through regular reporting arrangements. Individual governors undertake responsibility for specific aspects of the school's work. Some visit the school regularly and provide reports for the governing body, based on their valuable first-hand observation of the school.
67. Governors have a good understanding of the overall strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result, governors' ability to present a robust challenge, for example, with regard to holding the school to account for the setting of realistic standards, is well developed. In addition to information and insight from sub-committees and individuals, the governing body is kept well informed by the good

⁴ English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education

⁵ Art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education

quality reports from the headteacher and other senior staff members. As a result, governors can contribute to the making of school policy. The school development plan is a joint endeavour that is agreed following governor scrutiny of the school's draft proposals.

68. Financial planning and budget controls are excellent. The most recent local authority audit judged the financial management as very good with only a few recommendations to be resolved. School decisions are supported through careful financial management, with budgets delegated to subject co-ordinators in accordance with agreed priorities. The headteacher, financial administrator and chair of finance create a budget profile, which is submitted for scrutiny before being approved by the governing body. The financial sub-committee monitors the budget on a regular basis with very good support from the headteacher and school administrative staff.
69. The friendly and helpful office staff manage the arrangements for the daily administration and organisation of the school smoothly and efficiently. Good use of technology supports the school arrangements and ensures that accurate information and sound budget advice are easily available. Procedures for the management of the budget and other funds, which are very clearly set out in a financial memorandum, are effective and secure. An efficient system ensures that the procurement of goods or services is properly completed and recorded. Best value is sought by a careful scrutiny of suppliers and a tendering process where appropriate. The finance sub-committee keeps contract arrangements under review. Financial activities are subject to regular external audit, and action to address the auditor's recommendations is initiated promptly. Non-public funds are managed with the same rigour as official funds, and maintained and audited regularly in line with the official requirements. The high degree of effectiveness of the administration arrangements releases the headteacher and others to focus attention on the educational priorities for the school.
70. The school ensures that all specific grants, such as those for pupils with special educational needs, are used appropriately to support the intended provision. The funds are related directly to improving pupils' learning.
71. The special needs co-ordinator performs her role well. She attends reviews and provides very good support to class teachers. Regular meetings are held between the co-ordinator and senior management team to discuss developments and update the special educational needs register. Pupils with special educational needs are recognised as early as possible and strategies are tried and reviewed. Governors discharge their responsibilities through the headteacher. There is a named governor for special educational needs who is fully aware of the responsibilities and meets regularly with the special needs co-ordinator. Individual education plans are written by class teachers after consultation with the learning support assistants, the special needs support teacher and parents. Information and communication technology is not used to manage special educational needs. There is evidence of very good practice in one class where computers are used to write individual education plans.

Staffing

72. The school is very well staffed by appropriately qualified teachers. There is a good balance of age, experience and service within the school. Currently there are no male teachers to act as positive role models. Teachers are effectively deployed to meet the needs of pupils and the curriculum. The school employs well-qualified nursery nurses and teaching assistants who are used very effectively to give extra help to pupils in a variety of learning situations. Additionally, the site supervisor and cleaner are extremely diligent and help maintain the accommodation to a very high quality. The canteen staff and lunchtime supervisors all play an important part in caring for and supporting the pupils. The school is a harmonious community where all parties work together for the benefit of the pupils.
73. Performance management arrangements are in line with statutory requirements. The policy is a development of the good arrangements for staff review previously managed by the headteacher. Review of the headteacher's performance is complete. Staff development is closely linked to the school development plan, but individual staff also have access to development opportunities identified as part of their personal professional training needs. Arrangements for the induction of new members of staff are good. There is a clear policy and a member of staff has this specific responsibility to mentor and support new staff. The school successfully supports the continued development training of teachers new to the school and is a contributor to initial teacher training.

Accommodation

74. Through major construction work the school has made substantial improvements to the buildings and grounds since the last inspection. They now provide very good accommodation and improvements include additional classrooms, attractive library and design and technology spaces, a refurbished hall area and a refitted kitchen. These improvements have had a significant and positive impact on learning because areas of the curriculum such as physical education and design and technology now have a specialist space allocated to them. In addition, the library offers safe opportunities for pupils to research independently and for teachers to teach library skills effectively. The classrooms are arranged to allow the younger pupils very good access to a range of resources and, as a result, they develop excellent independent learning skills. Careful planning by the governors has accomplished these improvements very efficiently and the school has greatly benefited from significant financial support from the *Parent Teacher Association* for these works. The provision for teaching information and communication technology is restricted as computers cannot be grouped together to facilitate whole-class or group teaching. This is an issue that the school intends to address.
75. There are very good displays around the school which celebrate the pupils' achievements. The displays are arranged very effectively to enable pupils to see and learn from them. This has a positive effect on learning because pupils can see that their work is valued and appreciated.

Resources

76. Resources for learning at the school are good. They are good for English, design and technology, art, mathematics, science, geography and history. There are particular strengths in resources for the nursery class where equipment is plentiful and is of very good quality. There is, however, no immediate access for reception children to outdoor balancing and adventure equipment. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are generally good, accessible and effectively support pupils on the special educational needs register.
77. There is satisfactory provision for music and physical education. In information and communication technology, there are satisfactory resources overall, but an inadequate provision for computers and software. Specific weaknesses noted in information and communication technology are restricting pupils' attainment and progress. There is only one computer for each class and these are different models using different software, therefore it is difficult to share and move resources around. It is very difficult for discrete computer skills to be taught effectively to a class on one machine. The mixture of equipment also affects how staff can work on administration tasks as they cannot move discs and software across areas easily. The school is aware of these shortcomings and has made efforts to solve them by purchasing Alpha Smart keyboards for pupils, but these are essentially to develop word processing skills and cannot fully address the full curriculum requirements. There are informal plans to provide a computer suite to tackle whole-class teaching, and the school is fully aware of this issue.

Value for money

78. Taking into account:
- the progress made by pupils and high standards achieved;
 - the improvements, including teaching, since the previous inspection;
 - the excellent arrangements for personal development;
 - the excellent behaviour and attitudes of the pupils; and
 - the very good leadership and management;

the school is judged to give very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- Increase the provision and use of information and communication technology by:
 - providing more computers and software for pupils to use; *
 - placing computers together to create a computer suite to facilitate class teaching;

- raising the confidence and competence of all staff.*

(paragraphs: 7, 29, 71, 74, 77, 104, 110, 123, 131, 133, 134, 139)

* *Already identified in the school's development plan*

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

Governors may consider including the following less important issues in their action plan:

- provide more opportunities for all reception aged children to have access to outdoor balancing and adventure equipment.

(paragraphs: 76, 87)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
15	49	34	2	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	202
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	23

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	36	35	71

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	33	34
	Girls	35	33	35
	Total	69	66	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (97)	93 (97)	97 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	33	30
	Girls	35	34	34
	Total	67	67	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (97)	94 (97)	90 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	2
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	185
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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: Y R – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	25.25

Education support staff: Y R – Y 2

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	142

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	512,881
Total expenditure	499,857
Expenditure per pupil	2192
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,822
Balance carried forward to next year	28,846

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	111

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	20	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	26	2	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	80	20	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	42	6	3	5
The teaching is good.	73	22	2	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	38	10	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	13	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	22	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	62	33	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	86	13	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	78	20	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	37	18	1	14

Other issues raised by parents

- Parents would like a bigger playground.
- The school is inclusive, achieves very good attainment, and benefits from strong leadership.
- Children are fortunate to attend the school.
- The transfer arrangements between the infant and junior school is a concern as there is a disparity in the admission numbers.

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

80. The arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage⁶ of their education are very good and a strength of the school. The school admits children to the nursery in the September and Easter after their third birthday. Children transfer to the reception classes in the September and Easter after their fourth birthday. Not all the children in the reception classes are able to attend the school's nursery before they enter full-time education in the school. The nursery makes very good provision for the children's all round development and education. The reception classes build very effectively on the work of the nursery. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of learning promotes the early learning goals⁷ successfully in all areas of development. This includes the young reception children in two Year 1 classes. There is a secure and specifically designated outdoor area for use by the children in the nursery. The children in the reception classes also have access to a covered outdoor play area. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, the reception children do not have immediate access to climbing and balancing equipment. This restricts their ability to develop skills learnt in the nursery.
81. Teachers and nursery nurses in the nursery and reception classes plan very closely together. This ensures there is no unnecessary repetition of work. It gives children a very firm foundation for their future learning. Children have a smooth transition to work in Year 1 when they begin working to the requirements of the National Curriculum. All members of staff who teach children in the Foundation Stage of learning have a clear commitment to raising standards. They attend in-service training courses to improve their knowledge and skills, plan lessons together and liaise very closely with parents. They build links with the Year 1 teachers in order to continue and develop the current very good practice in the nursery and reception classes. The record keeping system is clear and informative, and gives all members of staff a well-informed base to plan work for individuals. They set clear and specific targets for individual children and revise them on a regular basis. The nursery and reception classes provide a very good and effective level of support for children with special educational needs. All members of staff ensure that children have full and equal access to the areas of learning.
82. Many children enter the nursery classes with standards that are just above the expectation for their age in most areas of learning. They respond positively to the provision in the nursery and make very good progress, particularly in the development of their personal, social and emotional development. This ensures

⁶ The **Foundation Stage** curriculum is made up of six areas – personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. Standards are measured by the **early learning goals** – what children are expected to know, understand and be able to do in the six areas by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1.

⁷ QCA (Qualifications Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'early learning goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

that the children's levels of attainment on entry to the reception classes are above the expectation for most children of this age. Children make rapid progress in developing their skills in the reception classes. They are likely to exceed the level of attainment they need to meet the expectations of the early learning goals in all areas. The exception is in children's personal, social and emotional development where their skills are very high and well above expectations.

Personal, social and emotional development

83. Children settle very quickly into the security of the nursery and make very good progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills. The members of staff encourage parents and carers to come into the nursery at the beginning and end of each session. This, along with the caring attitudes of the teacher and nursery nurse, makes the children feel secure. They are self-possessed and confident when moving around the nursery and outside. Most children share and take turns happily, for example, when using outdoor equipment. The children concentrate hard on their tasks, for example, two children practised throwing and catching a ball for over twenty minutes. Children clearly enjoy their work in the nursery. They co-operate cheerfully with each other and adults. Children take care of classroom equipment and soon learn to tidy up after themselves. They continue this level of progress in their personal development as they move into the reception class. Children work very well independently and together. For instance, children co-operate very well together when they use mathematical games. All children persevere to finish their tasks and talk eagerly about their work. Children quickly understand the routines of school life and move quietly and sensibly around the school. They walk confidently to the main hall for assemblies and play happily together at break times. Children are likely to achieve well above the expected levels in the development of their social skills. This is very good preparation for their move into Year 1. It is a significant level of improvement since the previous inspection.

Communication, language and literacy

84. The provision for the development of language and literacy is very good. Children have a rich range of stimulating experiences in the nursery and reception classes. This ensures they develop a love of books and interest in reading. They make very good progress in developing enjoyment of books and stories. All children quickly learn how to handle books correctly and understand that pictures and print convey meaning. They listen to well-known stories and rhymes and join in enthusiastically. An example of this is the enthusiasm with which children read the 'bee' poem in the nursery. All children receive a very effective level of support to increase their speaking skills. This enables them to speak clearly and confidently to an audience. All children learn to use pencils correctly. They increase their early writing skills in a range of activities that encourages their hand and eye control. This very good rate of progress continues as children move into the reception classes. Children with special educational needs continue to receive very effective support. They progress at a similar rate to their classmates. The reception class teachers use the literacy

strategy very effectively to develop further children's listening, speaking and reading skills. All members of the reception staff extend these skills very well through their careful selection of books and stories. They use precise and clear diction and read stories expressively. Children enjoy this work and make rapid progress in learning letter sounds. They have many opportunities for role-play. For example, the space ship area gives the children opportunities to increase their speaking and listening skills and to develop their writing abilities. All children in the reception classes listen carefully and attentively to stories. They re-tell them, enjoy talking about the pictures and join in with familiar sentences. This is a direct result of the enthusiasm and interest that members of staff show. It makes children eager to look at books and try to read them. Most children make very good progress. They are likely to exceed the standards necessary to reach the end of the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Mathematical development

85. The provision for children's mathematical development is very good. Most children make very good progress in consolidating and developing their number skills. They are likely to exceed the standards necessary to meet the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. The members of the nursery and reception staff develop children's early learning skills very effectively through a carefully structured programme of work. This includes the use of construction activities to develop children's control skills. There is a very good and effective level of support for children with special educational needs. They make very good progress in developing their knowledge of numbers. In the reception classes, the more able children are already working at Year 1 levels. They understand the concept of giving change to 10p and relate this to subtraction. When they enter the reception classes children have a session of structured number work each day. All children know and recognise the place of numbers on a number line. They confidently recognise and know how to add on one more to a given number. Children use suitable mathematical language to describe processes, such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'. An example of this is when two children build towers of bricks saying, "This one's as tall as me but shorter than you". Children consolidate, build on, develop and increase their early mathematical experiences in the Foundation Stage. Their above average achievement is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. The nursery and reception classes make very good provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make very good progress throughout the Foundation Stage of learning. They have many opportunities in the nursery and the reception classes to explore the natural and man-made world. For example, children in the nursery investigate the effects of force. They blow balls along a semi-circular length of piping to see how far they go. This is beginning to develop awareness of different forms of movement. Children continue to consolidate and increase their learning as they progress through the reception classes. They develop a very good understanding of how

materials change as they mix water with sand. For example, a child said, "I have to make the sand wet so it will hold together. Otherwise the castle would fall down". The discussion moves on to talking about safety at the seaside. This gives children an increased awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Children use computers and listening centres as a matter of routine. They use a mouse confidently to control movement on the computer screen. This enables children to develop a good level of understanding of how to use a mouse for accurate control. Most children are likely to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Physical development

87. The Foundation Stage classes make very good provision for children's physical development and children make very good progress. They have access to pencils, crayons, scissors and glue from the beginning of their time in the nursery. The direct teaching of techniques enables them to increase their fine control skills. The vast majority of children reach the expected standard when they enter the reception classes. Teachers continue to develop children's skills and they become increasingly competent. For example, most children cut accurately along a given line when making shell collages. Children in the nursery develop their climbing and balancing skills very effectively. They have opportunities to run, jump, skip and balance and use wheeled toys with an increasing awareness of space. There is a secure area for outdoor activities for nursery children. Children in the reception classes have access to their own veranda area. The school has a suitable selection of large apparatus for children to use in the school hall. There is, however, no immediate access to outdoor balancing and adventure equipment. This restricts the development of adventurous skills from the nursery. The school is developing this area of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Most children are likely to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Creative development

88. The provision for children's creative development is very good. Children make very good progress throughout the Foundation Stage as they learn basic techniques. This enables them to use and control materials effectively. They hold brushes correctly, apply paint to paper with increasing confidence and use printing materials effectively to create repeating patterns. Children mix paint to achieve different tones. One child was delighted with the different shades of blue. She explained that, "My hands are lighter than the blue on the paper. That's because there's more white on them". As they progress through the reception classes children show a very good awareness of shape, pattern and colour. They enjoy experimenting with materials when, for example, they try out the wax resist technique to create seaside pictures. Children sing a variety of songs from memory and show a suitable awareness of melody and rhythm. They take care to select instruments to match different seaside sounds. For example, a child chose coconut shells to represent a donkey on the beach. Most children

are likely to exceed the level of skill necessary to reach the outcomes of the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

89. The quality of teaching for the children under five is overall very good. No teaching is less than good. Over half of all teaching is very good. There is some outstanding teaching in the nursery. This consistently high quality of teaching reflects the level of progress in learning that children make in their early years at school. There is a strong sense of teamwork throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers, nursery nurses and members of the support staff work very closely together to promote learning. They have a very clear understanding of the needs of young children. Their expectations of behaviour and achievement are realistically high. All members of staff give children stimulating, challenging and interesting tasks. These consolidate and develop their knowledge and understanding very effectively. They use language carefully to develop children's speaking skills and speak precisely and clearly. This ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress. All members of staff provide a careful balance between the direct teaching of specific skills, such as how to use pencils and scissors, and the promotion of independent learning. They encourage pupils to work independently and make choices. The quality of teaching is an improvement since the previous inspection.

ENGLISH

90. By the age of seven, most pupils achieve standards in reading, speaking and listening and writing that far exceed those expected for pupils of this age. This reflects the recent results of the 2001 national tests and tasks. It is a significant improvement from the 2000 national tests and tasks in writing. It is likely that the most recent results are also well above average in comparison with similar schools. In writing, the school is achieving standards that are much better than at the time of the previous inspection. This represents a very good level of improvement.
91. Inspection findings show that pupils' standards in English are well above expectations for their age. The pupils speak fluently and have a very good understanding of English. They write lively, interesting and informative accounts with legible, well-formed and joined script. Pupils have well above average standards in reading. This is a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The school has achieved this by carefully analysing results and trends of the results of pupil assessments. It uses the results very effectively to identify strategies to raise standards. This is particularly evident in the improvement in pupils' writing. Carefully structured monitoring of teaching is ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning remains high throughout the school. Pupils make well above average progress in developing their ability to speak, read and write. This results in the continuing increase in achievement throughout the school. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
92. When pupils enter the school many have above average skills in speaking and understanding English. They make rapid progress because of the skilled teaching. By the time they are seven, pupils achieve well above the expected standards. They have many opportunities to develop their speaking skills through carefully planned discussion sessions. An example of this was when pupils in Year 1 discussed the possible feelings of insects. Skilful questioning enables pupils to extend their understanding of moral issues. For example, a pupil replies, "There won't be any more of me if you keep on killing us". This follows much discussion on the use and purpose of insects and grubs. It provides very effective links with work in science. The older pupils continue this rate of progress and achieve very high standards in their speaking skills. By the time they are seven, most pupils achieve standards well above those expected for their age. They speak very confidently in assembly to the whole school. The teachers encourage pupils to speak and read aloud to audiences wherever possible. This has a positive effect on their speaking and understanding. For example, in Year 2, pupils discuss the structure of books very confidently. They give well thought through reasons for their answers. An example of this was when pupils discussed why a book was fiction rather than non-fiction. These experiences make a positive contribution to developing the pupils' confidence in speaking in English to an audience.
93. Standards in reading show the school is continuing to maintain the very high standards from the previous inspection. By the age of seven, pupils achieve

standards that are well above those for most pupils of this age. This is a very good level of improvement in understanding from when pupils enter the school. All the teachers work hard to give pupils an interest in and love of books. An example of this is the visit from an author. This has given pupils a deeper awareness of how books are written and increased their interest in reading. Each classroom has a stimulating and interesting reading area. This enables pupils to explore books of their own choice independently. Pupils have further opportunities to undertake independent research during library lessons. They receive skilful direct teaching that gives them knowledge of how to access information from books. This leads to pupils becoming confident in locating and using books. They know the purpose of contents, index and glossary and use these correctly. Teachers constantly promote understanding of English. This is evident in Year 2 where pupils are taught how to skim and scan books to find facts. As they progress through the school, pupils read with increasing accuracy and understanding. Many seven-year-olds are able to talk about different authors and say what they like about their books. For example, one girl says she likes books by Dick King-Smith because “they are interesting and well written”. Teachers ensure pupils develop an interest in poetry and drama. They give them an effective level of support to enable them to tackle new texts confidently. The library is in constant use. It gives pupils a quiet space in which they can reflect as they work. Pupils’ computer skills are developed in the library by access to finding information from the Encarta program. This has a positive effect on learning.

94. By the age of seven, standards in writing are very high. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school has developed carefully structured and successful procedures to improve standards. Pupils write confidently for different purposes. They use word processors confidently to draft and re-draft work and transfer it to computers. All pupils use their writing skills very effectively in other curriculum areas. For example, factual accounts in history give very clear pictures of life in Victorian times. By the age of seven, pupils have a very good understanding of story structure. They use this accurately in their writing. These pupils know how to use a range of punctuation correctly and make their stories more interesting by using adventurous vocabulary. They have a clear understanding of the use of grammar and of the need to spell words correctly. This is a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
95. Handwriting standards are consistently very good throughout the school. Virtually all seven-year-old pupils use joined up writing with correctly formed letters. They write clearly, neatly and fluently. Their work is legible and easy to read. Pupils’ spelling is well above average. The younger pupils spell simple words correctly and attempt more difficult words by using letter sounds. The older pupils use dictionaries to help in their spelling and spell most words correctly. This is having a positive effect on raising standards in writing. It reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
96. The quality of teaching in English is very good. There is no significant difference between classes. Teaching is excellent in just under half of all lessons seen. It

is very good in just under half of all lessons. No teaching is less than good. This is a significant level of improvement since the previous inspection. The very high quality teaching has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve and the very positive behaviour they exhibit in lessons. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly. They choose the content carefully to make sure it is relevant to pupils' needs. This ensures that the pupils remain interested and extremely enthusiastic in their work. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the pupils wrote letters in the character of an alien. This provoked much interested discussion and high quality work from all the pupils. At the beginning of each lesson, teachers share with the pupils what they are expected to achieve. As a result, the pupils have a good understanding of the purpose of their work. At the end of lessons, the teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their work. This enables them to realise how well they are doing and whether their work is good enough. These sessions are very valuable in making pupils aware of their learning.

97. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in developing their understanding and use of English. They receive a good level of very effective support within the classroom. There are some occasions when pupils work separately in small groups. There is very good quality support enabling them to learn and develop basic English techniques. It enables them to work alongside their classmates, thereby increasing their self-esteem. Teachers ensure that all of the pupils have suitably challenging work that meets the requirements of their individual education plans. Each pupil is given a set of literacy targets, recorded on a card and kept on their desks. These literacy targets provide both the teacher and pupil with a clear focus on the areas for improvement. The school is maintaining standards similar to those at the previous inspection. All the pupils with English as an additional language use it extremely competently and fluently.
98. The subject co-ordinator manages the English curriculum very effectively. She has a clear vision for the future of the subject and works hard to raise standards further. This work is proving to be very effective. Lesson observations, analysis of work and reading and the national test results confirm this. The careful analysis of trends in results is used very effectively to improve attainment. The subject co-ordinator is closely involved in monitoring English through the planning, teaching and learning. Teachers have verbal and written feedback. All members of staff discuss the findings and seek ways to improve. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is outstandingly effective. The school has adapted it to meet pupils' identified needs and abilities. This is making a positive contribution to the improvement in standards.

MATHEMATICS

99. The results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 show standards were above the national average, although the number achieving the higher level was similar to that found nationally. Pupils' performance was average when compared with the results achieved by schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The results of tests over the last four years represent a good year-on-year improvement, although attainment dipped in 2000. There is no significant

- difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Unconfirmed results for this year show that standards are likely to be well above the national and similar school average and this is a significant improvement since last year. Most pupils identified as having special educational needs make very good progress and achieve well.
100. Evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work shows standards by the age of seven are well above average and confirms the 2001 results. In particular, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher grades has improved considerably. The improved standards are due to the very good teaching that promotes positive attitudes and gives pupils a high level of challenge in all aspects of the subject. In particular, the emphasis on mental arithmetic, discussions of how to solve mathematical problems and using correct mathematical language, is leading to higher standards.
101. By age seven, most pupils count confidently to 100 in steps of two, five and ten and have a good understanding of place value to 100. They complete grids accurately with missing numbers to 100. Higher attaining pupils understand place value to 1000 and confidently halve and double numbers within 100. Lower attaining pupils are confident in identifying and working with numbers to 50. Most pupils are familiar with mathematical operations and use the vocabulary associated with them confidently. For example, most know that multiplication is 'repeated addition' and division means 'sharing'. They use signs correctly to write number sentences and then make up number stories, which they clearly explain to others in the class. Most pupils have good mental arithmetic skills because of the many opportunities provided by teachers, and are confident in recognising odd and even numbers and adding 10 and 100 to numbers. The majority of pupils know the names of common two- and three-dimensional shapes and recognise and use coins to £1 in shopping activities. Most understand simple bar charts and can explain their findings. Throughout the key stage, emphasis is placed on providing interesting practical activities such as the use of a parachute and the local environment for extending number recognition and simple addition seen in a Year 1 lesson.
102. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and often very good so that teaching and learning is very good overall. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of numeracy and teach basic skills very well. Lessons are very carefully planned to ensure tasks are challenging and appropriate to the needs of different groups within the class. Teachers share learning intentions with pupils very well so that they understand what they will be learning. Lessons usually begin with a vigorous challenging mental activity which makes pupils think. The main activity is then introduced and the lesson proceeds at a brisk pace providing very good motivation and interest so that pupils approach tasks enthusiastically. Teachers have very high expectations and pupils respond well so that behaviour is usually very good and they work at a good pace showing high levels of concentration and persistence. Relationships are very positive and all work very well together. Lessons are usually purposeful, focused and very well organised with resources used well to support and extend pupils' learning. Lessons usually end with a review of what has been learnt when pupils are given the opportunity to explain their thinking. Teachers ensure pupils

use correct mathematical words and terms and this extends their understanding and vocabulary.

103. Mathematics is very well managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who gives very good support to colleagues, which is much appreciated. Her enthusiasm and interest in promoting higher standards of teaching and learning over the past fifteen months has helped in developing a positive attitude to teaching mathematics amongst staff. She has observed teaching in all classes and comments have been perceptive and aimed at raising standards. National assessments are carefully monitored to look for weaknesses so that these can be addressed. Teachers have been well trained in the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy and this is firmly embedded. The mathematics curriculum is well planned so that pupils have the opportunity to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding through a range of practical activities. Teachers plan carefully together in year groups to ensure that pupils in similar aged classes receive a comparable range of learning activities. These plans are carefully monitored by the co-ordinator and positive verbal feedback is given. Assessment procedures are firmly established using national recommendations to monitor pupils' progress and there is a useful portfolio of pupils' work. The co-ordinator has developed a useful document suggesting links with other subjects so that the use of numeracy to support work in other curriculum areas is strong. There are many examples of this, such as in science where pupils draw graphs and charts, geography where they use co-ordinates and history timelines.
104. There is a good range of carefully purchased quality resources to support pupils' learning. These are readily available and used very well although there is limited use of the computer and this is an area for development. However, very good use is made of a programmable toy to develop pupils' understanding of direction and finding positions on a grid. A library of mathematics games has been established and these will be available for parents to loan from the beginning of next term. The importance of mathematical games in developing pupils' understanding is emphasised well to parents as each child receives a die on entry to school.
105. Improvements since the last inspection have been good. The quality of teaching and learning has been improved, a wide range of new well-organised resources has been purchased, and the numeracy strategy firmly established.

SCIENCE

106. Standards attained in science are well above national expectations by the time pupils reach the age of seven. The 2000 teacher assessment results show the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was slightly above the national average, but the percentage reaching Level 3 was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools, assessments for science were below average. The results for 2001 show very good improvement over the previous year with over a 100 per cent increase in the proportion of pupils reaching Level 3. These results are likely to be well above the national average and those for similar schools. The reasons for the difference between the 2000 and the 2001

results are the difference in the ability of the cohorts being assessed and the under-estimation of teacher assessments. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress throughout the school as a result of the very good teaching they receive.

107. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards of attainment have risen considerably. The quality of teaching has improved with very good teaching overall observed during the inspection. Greater emphasis is now being placed on investigative science and the skills of enquiry are being developed. A scheme of work based on the QCA recommendations is now in place and this makes a valuable contribution to planning. The quantity and quality of resources are very good. Procedures for assessment are now consistently used throughout the school although the system in operation requires refinement.
108. Younger pupils are beginning to use scientific vocabulary with increasing confidence and understanding, and to develop their investigative skills. Older pupils test a number of different solids to find out which will dissolve in cold water and discuss the effect of hot water on tea. They predict the possible outcome and record their findings methodically on a proforma. They identify many different types and sources of sound. They understand that sound travels away from its source reducing in intensity as it moves away. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils investigated the properties of a range of materials and substances and noted the effect of heat on them. They understand that some changes are reversible and others are not. They investigate the growth of plants ensuring that they apply the principle of fair testing. Higher attaining pupils know that plants require different conditions for best growth and perform experiments to show that plants need light, warmth and water to grow satisfactorily. They observe and name plants and animals in the local environment, discuss habitats and understand some of the adverse effects of pollution. They study life processes and consider the factors contributing to healthy living. They use the five senses appropriately when performing scientific investigations. They discuss the need for a balanced diet, the function of different types of food, and understand the effect of exercise on the body. By the time pupils leave school at the age of seven, they know that there are different sources of light and power and understand how an electrical circuit is achieved. They are familiar with each area of the National Curriculum in science and are ready for the next stage of learning. However, greater use could be made of data collection and the recording of observations in different ways, including the use of computers.
109. The quality of teaching and learning, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is very good. All lessons seen during the inspection were good or better. Teachers have a secure understanding of the science curriculum and there is now a clear emphasis on experimental and investigative science. Teachers' planning and the scrutiny of pupils' work show that tasks are related to the prior attainment of pupils and take account of ongoing assessment that informs planning. Resources are very meticulously prepared and very appropriate for the lesson. Questions are used well to make the pupils think for themselves and to apply previous learning. As a result, pupils are very

enthusiastic in their lessons and work hard to complete their assignments. Their behaviour in lessons is exemplary. They work well together, take turns, listen to the views of others and help one another. They show respect for property and handle equipment with care. Teachers have an excellent relationship with pupils and this helps to create an environment that is conducive to learning.

110. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable, energetic and dedicated co-ordinator who is committed to raising standards even further. The QCA scheme of work has been adapted to suit the needs of the school. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are monitored and there are, currently, systems in place for recording assessment and tracking the progress of individual pupils. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and comments provide guidance to pupils as to how they can improve their work. Resources are very good in both range and quality and fully support the teaching and learning of science throughout the school. Cross-curricular links are being developed in other areas of the curriculum. In English, a variety of science big books are used. In geography, the study of fruits of the rainforest emphasises the factors which affect plant growth and how new plants are produced. The use of the school's wildlife garden contributes to pupils' interest and enjoyment of the subject. Visits to the *Carshalton Ecology Centre* and *The Grove* provide enhancement to the science curriculum. A theatre company, *Kinetics*, extended pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the science of sound and living and non-living things. Areas earmarked for development include the refinement of assessment to enable better tracking of pupils' progress, the use of information and communication technology to enhance the curriculum and the production of portfolios of pupils' work.

ART AND DESIGN

111. Observation of artwork on display around the school, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussion with the subject leader forms the basis for judgements about standards in art. This shows that standards, by the end of Year 2, exceed those expected for most pupils of similar age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum that covers all elements of the National Curriculum for art. The school is beginning to use structured procedures to measure pupils' progress in the development of skills and techniques. This includes a portfolio of pupils' work and gives a clear picture of progress. Artists visit the school and all pupils have opportunities to visit art galleries. This enhances and enriches their experiences.
112. By the age of seven, standards exceed those expected for this age group. Pupils have opportunities to evaluate their own work and that of well-known artists. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Work on display around the school provides clear evidence that pupils understand the properties of a range of media such as pastels, paint and pencils. They link their work effectively with work in subjects such as geography, history and science. For example, pupils have created a colourful collage to illustrate the school's nature garden. They produced skilful and detailed paintings and collages of King Charles in the style of Holbein. Their three-dimensional work is of a high quality and they use a wide range of modelling materials. All the work is carefully presented and builds very

effectively on the work done in the Foundation Stage of learning. Pupils talk confidently and with justifiable pride about their work. They have clear understanding of the techniques they use and give increasing attention to detail and accuracy in their work. They draw and paint with confidence. Pupils use computer-generated art to produce designs. This aspect of their work meets the expected standards for their age.

113. It was not possible to see any direct teaching of art during the course of the inspection. The quality of work and the level of progression in work around the school indicate knowledgeable and thorough teaching of skills. Teachers' planning indicates clear knowledge and understanding of the need to develop skills and techniques steadily. There is no apparent difference in standards between pupils who have special educational need and those who do not. It is clear that all pupils have opportunities to use a suitably wide range of media and materials. This enables them to make good progress in learning about the properties of materials and in how to use them effectively. Pupils' work shows they find art interesting and stimulating.
114. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of art within the school. This is making a significant contribution to the improvement in pupils' progress and techniques. The co-ordinator checks the curriculum and the provision of materials and equipment regularly. This ensures that the school identifies areas for development and improvement. An example of this is the need to widen the pupils' experiences in using modelling materials. It is proving effective in enabling the pupils to design and create large sculptures. The school makes very effective use of parents' skills and talents to support pupils' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. During the inspection, there was limited work on which to make judgements. Evidence from two lesson observations, displays around the school, pupils' work, teachers' planning and conversations with pupils indicates that by the age of seven, pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are above expectations. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report.
116. Teachers' planning indicates that a good range of activities is planned. Sufficient emphasis is placed on the stages of designing, planning, making and evaluating finished products and how they can be improved. The school tries hard to link activities in design and technology with other subjects so that it is more meaningful to the pupils. For example, in a Year 2 class, when designing a sandwich, there is a clear link to mathematics, where pupils undertake a survey and complete grids of favourite types of bread and fillings, and to healthy eating in science. Pupils enjoy design and technology lessons, are extremely enthusiastic and show very good concentration and perseverance so that their attitude and behaviour is very good. They clearly understand the need to wash their hands when handling food. They know that they must handle tools with care and demonstrate this when cutting sandwiches they have made into quarters. Other pupils design and make packaging and labels for the completed sandwiches and talk about how these could be improved to make them more attractive and appealing. In Year 1, pupils use a sliding mechanism in different ways to make a pop-up device linked to their work in history. They use their imagination well and produce exciting ideas. Other Year 1 pupils design and make a moving vehicle using wheels and axles. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to evaluate their work and to identify possible improvements. Progression is clearly evident in their knowledge and understanding of materials and how things can be joined. For example, by the age of seven, pupils extend their knowledge into designing a simple moving puppet using various joining and linking techniques. They show enjoyment as they work well together in their groups. Emphasis is correctly placed by teachers on small focused tasks and skills so that pupils have the necessary knowledge to produce quality items. Pupils respond well in lessons; they are keen to produce their best work and concentrate well. They use equipment safely and work collaboratively sharing suggestions and strategies.
117. Only two Year 1 lessons were observed during the inspection, one where teaching and learning was good and the other where it was very good. Teachers' planning is very good and provides very effective guidance for lesson delivery. Teachers begin lessons by clearly explaining what pupils will be learning which raises their interest and ensures they know what is expected. Teachers have very good subject knowledge that is effectively communicated to pupils. Lessons proceed at a quick pace that ensures pupils are interested and well motivated and behaviour is very good as pupils apply themselves to tasks. Relationships are very good and pupils enjoy their lessons and the challenge that teachers set. Teachers use a good range of materials and teach a range of construction techniques to develop pupils' understanding of the subject and this improves their knowledge and understanding. They make very good use of group work,

and classroom assistants are used very effectively to teach skills and allow pupils to discuss and evaluate their work. Very good use is made of available resources and teachers have high expectations of the pupils' achievement. For example, the older pupils have created a moving shadow puppet that is well made. Clear classroom displays give good guidance on joining techniques and sliding mechanisms and the opportunity for pupils to show what they have made.

118. The subject is well managed by a conscientious and knowledgeable co-ordinator who provides good support to colleagues. Although she carefully monitors planning, there is no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and this is an area for development. There is a long-term plan in place to ensure curriculum needs are soundly met and this is effective. The school has adopted national guidance as a working draft and this is used well by teachers to plan their lessons and provides sound progression of skills and knowledge. Teachers with similar aged pupils plan carefully together to ensure pupils in similar aged classes receive comparable lessons. Assessment procedures have recently been introduced to ensure progress is carefully monitored. There is a good range of tools and resources available and these are used well to support the subject. There is a special area for food technology and this is well used.

GEOGRAPHY

119. The standard of attainment in geography at the age of seven is above expectations nationally. By the time pupils leave school, they show confidence in differentiating physical and human features and appreciate the reasons for differences found in contrasting environments. Pupils of all ability, including those with special educational needs, make good progress due to good planning and lesson organisation.
120. There have been good improvements since the last inspection. There is now a scheme of work based on the QCA guidance and resources have been increased. A wildlife garden has been developed and is used effectively for the extension of work on geography topics, for example, comparing rainforest vegetation and animal life with that seen in the school area. The Internet is beginning to be used to enhance the teaching of geography. However, the computer resources available are limited. Planning has improved and assessment procedures are in place.
121. Pupils gain experience in using maps to locate places in and around their school and the local area. They study houses and correctly identify different building materials used in their construction. In their survey of the Carshalton shopping centre, they discuss the different types of buildings; shops, supermarkets, terraces, detached houses and blocks of flats and note their uses. They learn about different methods of travel to school as well as to faraway places. They use globes, atlases and maps of different scales to locate places visited on holiday. They share the first-hand knowledge of pupils who have experienced travel to different parts of the world and extend their knowledge and understanding of how climatic and other factors affect people's lives. For example, they discuss aspects of geography using pupils' experiences of holidays to Egypt. They learn about the River Nile and the Sahara Desert. Other places studied include Florida, France, Ireland, Cyprus and Thailand. These holiday destinations provide the pupils with a rich insight into a wide range of geographical environments. Pupils learn about physical geography and illustrate their understanding through the three-dimensional model of a volcano displayed in the classroom. Environmental conditions are observed when they maintain daily diaries of weather conditions. They know the countries of the United Kingdom and can show their relative positions on a map. They describe the geographical features associated with the rainforest and make a model of the vegetation to illustrate the canopy and the undergrowth.
122. The teaching of geography is good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and are therefore able to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of both physical and human geography. The pupils are well managed and work in a very pleasant atmosphere where all pupils make maximum efforts to complete the work set. They show real enthusiasm for the subject reflecting the level of interest stimulated by the teachers. Teachers use good questioning skills to enable the pupils to think logically about cause and effect, for example, when discussing evaporation and condensation in the water cycle. The pupils have a very positive attitude to the subject and speak with

enthusiasm about what they have learnt. They make good progress as they move through the school.

123. The subject is managed by an enthusiastic, recently appointed co-ordinator. There is a clear vision for the development of the subject. The QCA guidelines have been adopted and assessment records of pupils' progress have been introduced but these are in the early stages of implementation and are not sufficiently developed to inform planning. There are plans to use information and communication technology to aid studies in geography by retrieving information from the Internet. There is a good supply of resources that are used effectively. Planned development includes greater use of computers and the refinement of assessment procedures in order to enable improved tracking of pupils' progress.

HISTORY

124. During the inspection, only one lesson of history was observed, due to the way the school organises the curriculum by alternating geography and history each half-term. Evidence was gathered from a scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display, reviewing teachers' planning documents and by talking to teachers and pupils. The standard of attainment is above national expectations for pupils of a similar age.
125. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. For example, the QCA schemes of work have been adopted and changes incorporated to better meet the needs of the school. The policy has been updated and planning has taken account of wider links with all other areas of the curriculum. New strategies are being used in the teaching of the subject and this is raising interest as well as improving standards of attainment and the quality of pupils' learning.
126. Pupils develop an awareness of time scale by comparing then and now. For example, they assemble photographs of themselves from babyhood and comment on the changes taking place. They compare the experiences of their parents and grandparents when they were children with their own experiences. In their project on the lives of children in Victorian times, they discuss the differences between schools then and now and examine artefacts used on wash days by women a hundred years ago. They show special interest in the use of candles and oil lamps before electricity was available and flat irons heated on an open fire. They learn about the life of Henry VIII and the links Anne Boleyn had with the local area. Assuming the role of a history detective, they know that history is reconstructed using a variety of sources such as Pepys' diary, newspaper reports and information books. They understand that things and circumstances change over time and know some of the reasons why people acted the way they did. They show enthusiasm for the contribution of Neil Armstrong in landing on the moon as an important event in world history.
127. All pupils make good progress. From a simple understanding of the passing of time, through changes in the life of familiar adults, family and themselves, pupils can sequence some major events in history. They gain confidence in the use of

different sources such as photographs and artefacts in reconstructing historical events.

128. Pupils enjoy history. They are keen to share their knowledge of the life and experiences of their parents and grandparents about past events with their teacher and the class. They speak enthusiastically about the science workshop demonstrating sounds in Victorian times and enjoy making models of medieval castles. They also study steam trains and aeroplanes to demonstrate changes in transport. They work co-operatively in pairs and groups and show respect for property. They take great pride in the quality of work on display.
129. The history curriculum is enriched by visits to the local Heritage Centre and by the visits of parents to talk about events in the past. In planning, steps are taken to establish links with other curriculum areas, for example, combining history and English, where role play and the use of historical literature focus on report writing. The quantity and quality of resources are good for the teaching of history.
130. The subject is competently managed by the co-ordinator who keeps up-to-date with developments in the subject through regular meetings with co-ordinators in the borough. Areas planned for improvement include the refinement of assessment to enable better tracking of pupils' progress, increasing the amount of recorded work in Year 2, extending the range of educational visits and increasing the use of computers when available to enhance the teaching of history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

131. Pupils' attainment by the age of seven in information and communication technology is broadly in line with that expected. This is similar to the findings at the time of the last inspection although curriculum requirements are now more strenuous. Progress since then has been good, with standards being maintained, new computers and software purchased and intensive staff training undertaken, although this is not yet complete. During the inspection, there were few occasions when pupils were observed using computers to support their learning. Information and communication technology has rightly been identified by the school as an area for development. Although there is a modern networked machine in each classroom, the computers do not share a similar operating system which means software does not always function properly.
132. By the age of seven, most pupils have a sound knowledge of the keyboard and use of keys and enjoy computer activities. They show good concentration and perseverance when using the computer or portable units as they write simple text, and use the shift and delete keys and the spacebar confidently. They usually work in pairs and show very good respect for the equipment, taking turns and supporting each other well. Most have a good understanding of how to change font, colour and size of letters and print out work independently. When using a programmable toy, they show very good concentration, working and co-operating very well with a partner, and show particular enjoyment and excitement

as the robot responds to their commands. They use CD-ROMs such as an encyclopaedia to find information and use an art program effectively to draw designs and pictures, for example, as castles as part of their history topic on Henry VIII in a Year 1 class. They have a sound understanding of using information and communication technology to explore what happens in real and imaginary situations. Their knowledge and understanding of the benefits of using information and communication technology inside and outside school is similar to that expected. Several pupils have access to computers at home and display more knowledge and understanding of the keyboard and are more confident in exchanging and sharing information, as they receive good support at home. Those pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress and generally achieve well.

133. Computers were not always in use during the inspection and only two lessons were observed where information and communication technology was being specifically taught. In these lessons, the quality of teaching and learning was very good. Teachers clearly share the purpose of the lesson with pupils, which provides very good motivation and raises their interest. Very clear explanations and demonstrations are given so that pupils are keen to learn and know what they are to do, which means they quickly settle to their tasks. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good because lessons are very well planned and delivered. Teachers' knowledge varies, but all are keen to deliver high quality lessons and receive good support from the enthusiastic co-ordinator. This ensures pupils are keen and interested because lessons proceed at a brisk pace and are interesting and challenging. Teachers ensure that information and communication technology is used to support writing, geography, history and art, but support for mathematics and science is less well developed.
134. The subject is managed very well. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and supportive and has clear vision and understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards as shown in the thorough action plan. She has provided very good motivation that has been much appreciated by colleagues. The recently introduced curriculum map, based on national guidance, provides a good structure for teachers to follow. They use the draft scheme of work very effectively to plan lessons in year groups so that pupils in parallel classes receive a similar entitlement and this is carefully monitored by the co-ordinator. Assessment procedures have recently been introduced and a useful portfolio of work is being developed. However, across the school, there is an inconsistent approach as to when pupils use computers, how teachers record this and what pupils can do in lessons. Insufficient account is taken of previous skills and knowledge and pupils usually undertake the same tasks. Procedures for ensuring pupils have regular access vary and with only one computer in each classroom, the school needs to think carefully about how the curriculum can be delivered and managed so that pupils get regular access and standards are raised further. Although the school makes good use of the 11 portable machines, these are limited to word processing activities and are restricted in what they can do. Teachers' knowledge and understanding varies and some teachers are more confident than others, but all are keen to learn and computer skills are improving with government-sponsored training and support from the nearby secondary

school. Teachers make good use of other information and communication technology resources, such as tape recorders, CD players and television and video recorders, and these are sufficient and accessible. However, although they are used effectively to support other curriculum areas they are not always linked to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology. Most teachers use computers very effectively to generate labels and text and this enhances the importance of the subject and quality of classroom displays. A few use word processing effectively to write plans and manage special educational needs documentation.

MUSIC

135. Standards in music, by the age of seven, are above those expected for pupils of similar age. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. The scheme of work covers all elements of the National Curriculum and provides clear support and guidance for teachers. The school assesses the achievements and progress of pupils effectively. It records their performances and uses the recordings for pupils to evaluate and improve their work. This assists in improving the curriculum and is an improvement since the previous inspection.
136. All pupils sing well, with enthusiasm and enjoyment, in school assemblies. They receive careful teaching that enables them to develop correct posture and breathing techniques. This increases pupils' awareness of how to phrase music and sing with expression. They maintain accurate pitch and rhythm in their singing. By Year 2, pupils perform syncopated rhythms confidently and correctly. An example of this is when the pupils sang 'Thank you Jesus' in readiness for the Bishop's visit. Pupils are well aware of the need to practise and improve their performance. They work hard to make school performances successful. Teachers ensure that pupils learn how to hold and play instruments correctly. This makes a positive contribution to the pupils' ability to compose and play rhythmic accompaniments to familiar songs. All pupils listen carefully to music by famous composers and reflect on the meaning and effect of the music. Teachers develop pupils' critical skills further by recording their performances. Pupils evaluate their performances and look for ways to improve their work. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
137. All pupils make good progress in their learning. This reflects the high quality of teaching. Teachers ensure that the pupils consolidate and develop their musical knowledge and skills to a high standard. They teach pupils skills and techniques that enable them to build on their singing skills and polish them to a suitably high level. The pupils enjoy the challenges that their teachers give them and work hard to improve their ability to play instruments. They make good progress in maintaining a steady beat against rhythmic singing. By the age of seven, pupils have well-developed skills in listening to and critically appraising musical compositions.
138. All pupils show much respect for the efforts of others. They have very high levels of perseverance. This ensures that they work with determination to produce work of a high quality. The teachers make learning fun. As a result of this, pupils

develop enjoyment and enthusiasm for music. They co-operate exceptionally well together in lessons. An example of this is in Year 1 when pupils work together to select and play instruments that represent different sound effects. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have opportunities to consolidate their skills in, and understanding of, music.

139. Teaching throughout the school is very good. All teachers have high expectations of what the pupils will achieve. This has a positive effect on pupils' standards in music. This is evident in lessons and in the lunchtime choir. It is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers provide a very carefully balanced range of activities and assess pupils' progress systematically. This assists in the above average standards that pupils reach. The school does not yet make full use of information and communication technology to support work in music. It has plans to develop this area of the curriculum.
140. The subject co-ordinator manages music very well. She has a clear vision for the future direction of the subject. For example, the school is in the process of providing a range of CDs to support pupils' development in listening and appraising music. The school gives pupils opportunities to develop their interest in music. Examples of this are the music workshops and the use of outside performers in school. These enrich and enhance the curriculum very effectively. All pupils have the opportunity to join the school choir and to take part in concerts and performances.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. By the time pupils reach the age of seven, standards in physical education are above expectations. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress in their acquisition of knowledge, practical skills and understanding of physical education. The high standards identified during the last inspection have been maintained. During the inspection, it was possible to observe lessons of gymnastics, dance and games being taught.
142. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the importance of a warm-up at the start of lessons. They understand the need for exercise to keep their bodies fit and healthy. Pupils' basic skills in ball games are well developed for their age and many can strike a ball consistently with confidence, as was demonstrated in a Year 1 lesson. Most move with sound athletic ability and show good co-ordination in throwing, catching and fielding skills. They play fairly and show good co-operation, particularly at the end of lessons when taking part in small-sided games. The quality of skipping throughout the school is very high as the school has made a focus on this aspect of developing a healthy body.
143. In Year 2, pupils show good skills in gymnastics, as the result of some very good teaching. In one particular Year 2 lesson, pupils were confident in planning and performing short movement sequences using mats and benches. The higher attaining pupils had good body control and used their flexibility well to make good quality jumps, landings and rolls. Pupils in Year 1 were observed in a dance

lesson making imaginative movements to a range of music stimulus. They pretended they were waking up on the moon, one group making angry movements while the other group had to gesture being frightened. In this lesson, the teaching assistant made a very effective contribution to the lesson.

144. Pupils enjoy the subject and take pleasure in improving their skills and performance levels. They show a high degree of co-operation and enthusiasm. They demonstrate skills above expectations for their age. They show an understanding of rules and work together co-operatively.
145. The quality of teaching is very good, and it is sometimes excellent. Teachers are skilled at planning work. Expectations are high and lessons conducted at a lively pace. This was demonstrated in a Year 2 gymnastics lesson when pupils had to sustain rigorous activity for several minutes. The organisation of lessons ensures good progress in learning and teachers are particularly skilled at building pupils' confidence using example and enable pupils to improve their performance. Lessons have objectives, which focus on developing skills then using them to secure improvement. Learning is effective because good attention is given to warm-up activities, safety issues are raised and extended questioning is used to develop pupils' thinking. Very good relationships between the teacher and pupils are also a positive feature of lessons.
146. The subject's curriculum is broad and balanced and physical education contributes well to pupils' personal development as it promotes self-esteem and teamwork. The subject has a clear policy and scheme of work, based on the QCA schemes of work. Overall, medium- and short-term planning is good with lesson objectives clearly stated and good opportunities for the consolidation and development of skills. Assessment is a developing feature through observations of pupils in lessons. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities that includes well-attended gymnastic and soccer clubs. The school makes good use of a newly created hall that provides a stimulating area for physical education, a large playing field and a hard court area with useful markings appropriate for infant-aged pupils. Resources are satisfactory overall, but the school needs an even greater range of bats, balls and other small games equipment. Overall, provision for the subject has improved since the previous inspection.
147. Physical education has a prominent place in the life of the school and this contributes positively to the standards achieved. The school benefits from a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator who is well supported by other colleagues. Patterns of staff training are established in the school and this too has a positive effect on standards and teacher confidence.