

INSPECTION REPORT

Great Kimble CE VC Infant School

Great Kimble

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110430

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Holman-Smith

Lead inspector: Mr Rod King

Dates of inspection: 7 – 8 June 2004

Inspection number: 256260

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	59
School address:	Church Lane Great Kimble Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	HP7 9TH
Telephone number:	01844 346189
Fax number:	01844 346189
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Howgate
Date of previous inspection:	8 – 10 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small infant school. Most pupils are white British and are fluent English speakers, although a small minority have language and communication difficulties.

The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average but some families which are entitled to receive this benefit do not choose to claim it. The school is in an area of higher social advantage.

Around five per cent of pupils have special educational needs and this is below the average for schools in England. The range of individual needs includes specific learning difficulties, physical disabilities, sensory impairment and communication.

Children enter the school in September each year, with those having birthdays in January or later attending part-time in their first term.

The school is very popular and there is a little movement of pupils before they transfer to the next stage of their education at seven years of age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1742	Mr R King	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History Physical education
11096	Mrs M Davie	Lay inspector	
4343	Ms S Billington	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Art and design Music Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school in which every learner matters. Standards are above national expectations by the time pupils leave although some do not achieve as well as they might. There is a very strong commitment to promoting pupils' personal qualities and they develop very good attitudes and values as a result. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. The quality of learning is good because pupils are taught well. The curriculum meets the learning needs of pupils, but unsatisfactory accommodation has an adverse effect on the teaching of some subjects. Care systems in school are good. The school is well led. Whilst satisfactory overall, some areas of management and governance are underdeveloped. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is well led
- National tests show that performance is high; pupils' work shows that they are attaining above national expectations by the time they leave the school
- Pupils do not achieve as well as they might in writing
- Good quality teaching results in good levels of pupils' learning
- Opportunities for pupils to solve problems and investigate for themselves are underdeveloped
- All pupils, including those with special needs, are involved fully in the life of the school and benefit from the education and range of activities it provides for them
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they have very positive attitudes as a result of the school's very good attention to these aspects
- Accommodation is inadequate and does not allow for the full curriculum to be taught effectively
- Learning is enhanced by the links the school has developed with parents and the wider community

The school has responded well to the issues in the last report. Detailed recording systems have been established which lets teachers know how well pupils make progress as they move through the school. In addition, a considerable amount of work has been undertaken to improve the health and safety of the temporary classroom.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	A	A	A	B
Writing	A	B	A	B
Mathematics	A	A	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Achievement throughout the school is variable but, overall, it is **good**. Attainment is above national expectations by the time pupils leave year 2, but there is some variation in the achievements of different groups. Achievement in the reception class is good in most areas of learning¹, but some achieve less well than they might in their written work. By the time they reach the end of year 2, pupils have made good progress, but some higher attainers have not done as well as they might in writing and problem-solving. Working to improve the achievements of higher attaining pupils is one of the school's priorities for improvement.

¹ Areas of learning for under fives include: personal and social development, language and literacy development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development

The development of pupils' personal qualities is **very good**. Pupils' awareness of right and wrong and their social development are very strong features. They have good self-knowledge and spiritual awareness and a secure appreciation of their own cultural traditions and those of others.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. The main reason for this is that pupils learn well as a result of good teaching. They benefit well from the skills of their teachers and the high quality support from other adults who work in the school.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils and the good range of additional opportunities, such as clubs and educational visits, enhances it. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop their thinking skills through problem-solving and investigation. Some aspects of the school's accommodation make it difficult for all subjects to be taught effectively. Good systems of care ensure that pupils are looked after well and their achievements and personal development are tracked. Every child knows that there is always an adult available to turn to if they need help. Useful links with parents and the community help to improve pupils' learning and personal development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school benefits from **good** overall leadership and management.

There is a sense of purpose and direction that underpins the work of the school. The headteacher is very highly respected by pupils, staff, governors and parents. She provides good leadership.

The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis but, whilst satisfactory overall, some aspects of management and governance are underdeveloped. Insufficient use is made of assessment data to identify how well the school is doing and determine what it should do to improve. The school complies with statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The very high number of parents who made their views known are very pleased with the school and feel that their children are happy and doing well. Pupils are also very positive. They enjoy school very much and feel that they are encouraged to work hard to do their best.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Secure further improvements in pupils' writing
- Increase provision for pupils to develop their thinking skills so that they have more opportunities to solve problems and investigate for themselves
- Take all possible steps to improve accommodation so that it allows the full curriculum to be taught effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils are attaining very well by the time they leave. Achievement is good in the reception class and this good progress is maintained as they move towards the end of their time in school. Nevertheless, some of the higher attainers do not do as well as they might in their writing and some aspects of mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make a good start to their education
- Pupils reach high standards by the time they leave the school
- Higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as much as they could
- Pupils are doing very well in their speaking and listening and in their reading by the time they reach the end of year 2, but this is not matched in their writing

Commentary

1. The 2003 national test results show that standards are broadly in line with those of 2003 and that pupils have performed consistently above the national average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.3 (17.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.2 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.2 (18.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 12 pupils who entered for the tests in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2002.

2. Over the period from 1999 to 2003, the school's performance has exceeded the national average each year. School trends over this time in reading, writing and mathematics show that the school is performing very slightly below the national figure. However, with the small numbers involved in a school of this size, data has to be interpreted with caution.
3. Children in the reception class are achieving well in most of their areas of learning, with many of them achieving beyond national expectations by the end of the year. This is especially the case in their speaking and listening skills and in their personal and social development, where achievements are well above national levels. A minority of children do less well than they might in their writing skills.
4. The progress that children make in their first year in school is built on effectively during years 1 and 2. Good quality teaching ensures that good progress is made in English, mathematics and across the curriculum as a whole. The very good levels of speaking and listening are maintained and make a significant contribution to pupils' overall achievements within all subjects. Evidence from the national tests shows that whilst the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics are very high in comparison with the national benchmark, those attaining the higher levels in writing are in line with the national figure. Boys and girls do equally well throughout the school.
5. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above the national expectation. This was also the case for all other subjects inspected.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

This is a significant strength of the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and their behaviour is excellent. Their personal development is very high because of the good overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is well above the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent behaviour contributes significantly to the high quality of learning
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good because they enjoy lessons
- Provision for moral and social development is particularly strong
- Levels of attendance are very high because the school monitors this well and takes effective action

Commentary

6. Behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. Pupils respond positively to the very high expectations all adults have of them and as a result they are happy, courteous and co-operative. They can be relied upon to behave sensibly, be it while working in lessons or returning to their classrooms from break times.
7. Pupils of all ages have an excellent understanding of how to get on with each other and a good awareness of the impact of their behaviour on others. This is because of the strong emphasis that is placed on their social and moral development. This is underpinned by a behaviour policy, which encourages high self-esteem and the confidence to be assertive when necessary. Conflict and misunderstandings are quickly diffused because pupils are taught to say "stop that I don't like it" as a first step, rather than retaliating. They know that adults are there to help them if needed.
8. There were many examples of how well pupils supported and helped one another during the inspection. In the reception class, for example, a child gently suggested to a friend that it was 'tidy up time' and that they might be reminded if they did not stop playing. On the playground, a group of boys rallied round and helped one of their friends who had started to cry because he was not doing well in the game that they were playing; this quickly put a smile back on his face!
9. Year 2 pupils are mature and take a strong lead, conscientiously rearranging their classroom when it is needed for different purposes, such as assembly. Pupils say that they are happy in school and that there is no bullying. There have been no exclusions.
10. Pupils are very keen to learn and are highly motivated. They speak about their lessons enthusiastically and enjoy working hard. This was shown clearly in a year 1 mathematics lesson when pupils' very good listening and thinking skills helped them to make good progress when practising counting.
11. Links with local churches, religious education (RE) lessons, prayer and assemblies all make a positive contribution to pupils' good spiritual development. Pupils respond very well to opportunities for prayer and reflection.

Attendance

12. Rates of attendance are well above the national average. This is because of very good monitoring systems and good communication with parents, making them aware of how important good attendance is to their children's education. Parents make good efforts to ensure their children's attendance. However, a small number of children regularly arrive just a few minutes late in the morning, disrupting the start of assembly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of learning and teaching are good. The school's curriculum is satisfactory; it provides well for the experience and interests of pupils and gives them a good range of additional activities to enrich their learning. Pupils are provided with good levels of care. The school's links with parents are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of pupils' learning is good because teaching is good. All lessons are at least satisfactory and most are good or better.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and other adults know pupils well and have a good working relationship
- Support staff make a very good contribution to pupils' learning
- Insufficient challenge results in lack of progress in pupils' writing and the development of thinking skills
- Adults have high expectations of behaviour
- Good use of questions promotes learning
- The quality of assessment is satisfactory but not enough use is made of the information to plan future work
- Pupils show good levels of interest and concentration. They work very well independently and in pairs or groups

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 13 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	10	1	0	0	0

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

13. All pupils benefit from the good quality teaching they receive at the school, which makes a good contribution to the standards achieved.

14. Teachers and experienced support staff know pupils well and provide focused support for pupils' learning. Pupils are aware of the range of support available to them and benefit from it without becoming dependent on it. Where support staff are present to focus on the learning needs of individuals, other pupils also gain from their presence. This was frequently the case in outdoor lessons for reception children, where support staff were very effective in promoting pupils' learning within the teacher's overall plan for the class.

15. High expectations of behaviour, coupled with good well-understood classroom routines, lead to pupils developing good work habits. For example, they are able to get on with their work productively when their teacher is concentrating on helping other pupils in the class. They show

independence, as well as the ability to work together well, focusing on the task in hand. When group discussions take place in their groups without an adult present, they are nearly always work-related. This was the case in a year 1 literacy lesson where pupils were clear about their work, organised themselves quickly and shared and discussed their work amicably with very good application. This enabled the teacher to support another group without interruption.

16. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory but they do not always use this as well as they might to plan the next stage of work for their pupils. Whilst their expectations of what pupils can do and are capable of learning are generally high, this is not the case with regard to writing and to the development of thinking skills through problem-solving and investigation. This has resulted in some underachievement, particularly for higher attainers. When investigation was used in a year 2 science lesson about preferred habitats of woodlice, it resulted in very high levels of understanding about how animals move and use their senses.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. There is good enrichment through a range of extra activities. Resources for learning are satisfactory but accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of visits, special events and clubs extend opportunities for learning
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) means that pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their learning
- Limitations in accommodation restrict provision for some aspects of the curriculum

Commentary

17. The curriculum is broad and well balanced and includes all national curriculum subjects for pupils in years 1 and 2. National guidance is used well as the basis to plan for areas of learning in the reception year and for subjects in years 1 and 2, with some adaptations to take account of the interests of the children. The best planning is very detailed, with clear learning objectives that underpin effective teaching. However, some plans are largely a list of activities with a lack of focus on what pupils should learn, as a result, pupils do not always achieve as well as they might.
18. A variety of visits supports learning in a range of subjects. For example, pupils have visited the flight museum in connection with work in science and technology and the Roald Dahl museum to extend learning in literacy. The local environment is used well for studies for pupils to learn about the world of work. For instance, they recently had the opportunity to watch a thatcher re-thatching a nearby cottage. Pupils participate in special events, including productions at the Swan Theatre in Wycombe and harvest and Christingle services at the local church. Events, such as world book day, celebrate pupils' interest in stories; recent history is brought to life through a 'swinging sixties' day. Pupils have opportunities to have football coaching after school and all year 2 can attend a music club.
19. For pupils with special educational needs, detailed individual education plans (IEPs) include clear targets for the next stage of development. All staff working with pupils have a very good awareness of these targets and activities are well organised to promote their progress. Teaching assistants play a key role in supporting pupils and ensuring they take a full part in all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils benefit from well-targeted support and thrive in a particularly caring environment.
20. Throughout the school, there is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' self-esteem, confidence and an understanding of their place in the school community. PSHE is promoted well through

incidental discussion and specific teaching, such as circle time. Pupils develop excellent skills as learners and are very well prepared for the move to the junior stage of their education.

21. Unsatisfactory accommodation affects several subjects across the curriculum. The library area that also serves as a makeshift staffroom is very small, with no space for a computer; this limits opportunities to develop pupils' skills in independent research. The temporary classroom does not have immediate access to running water so organising practical activities, such as science, is time-consuming. The reception classroom houses the 'computer suite', which means that equipment is not readily accessible to other classes and direct teaching of skills is difficult. The temporary classroom for the year 2 class is also used for assemblies and PE; this requires regular re-arranging of furniture and limits the organisation of resources and displays for the class. The reception class has no designated outside play area. The playground is used well for a variety of activities, but it is not possible to link indoor and outdoor activities easily; this inhibits learning across all subjects and areas of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Care for pupils is good. The support that they are given, as a result of monitoring their work, is satisfactory. Their involvement in the work of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils and their families are very well known by staff
- Pupils with disabilities are fully included in all aspects of school life
- There are some unresolved health and safety risks
- Procedures for child protection and to deal with sickness and emergencies are very good

Commentary

22. The friendly, family atmosphere in the school makes pupils feel cared for and listened to. Parents say that staff are very approachable. As a result, concerns are dealt with quickly and efficiently. They also believe there are many adults within the school that their children feel they could turn to if they got stuck with their work or had a personal problem. They consider all staff dealings with children to be equal and fair. When they have problems with their work, pupils say that they are encouraged to try to work these out for themselves, but know they can ask for help if they get stuck. They like getting stickers and beans in a jar as a reward for good achievements and this motivates them to work hard.
23. The headteacher is central to ensuring that all children are included in all aspects of school life. Staff have learned 'Makaton', which is a sign language, to help some pupils with hearing impairments. Many pupils have also used it naturally and unobtrusively, as was observed during an assembly when the pupils sang and signed 'happy birthday'.
24. Procedures to ensure child protection are very effective. Staff see this as a very important aspect of their work. They are shortly going to take part in a National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) distance-learning programme to improve their knowledge. Pupils are very well supervised at all times and have very good relationships with the meals supervisors who are friendly and caring. A good number of staff have had training for the administration of first aid and an *epi-pen*, which is used to help some children with severe allergic reactions.
25. Whilst the school has sorted out the health and safety issues pointed out by the last inspection report, there are now additional concerns. Some of these are to do with the building and cannot be rectified without permission from the church trustees who are responsible for it. For example, the garage at the front of the school is in an unsafe state, virtually collapsed, and is very

unsightly. Although the school is aware of the risks it presents to passing children, parents and visitors, it is still waiting for action to demolish it.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other local schools are good and make a positive contribution to pupils' development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents get good information about school
- Information about what pupils are learning could be better
- The school is at the heart of the community and enjoys strong support

Commentary

26. The school values and welcomes the support and involvement of parents. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed about what is happening and there are very good opportunities for informal chats between staff and parents at the beginning and end of the day. Relationships are warm, personal and friendly.
27. Parents are supportive of the school and their children's learning. Many are actively involved with helping in school and there is a very successful and highly supportive Friends' Association. This has recently raised funds to provide the school with an adventure playground. It is very popular with the children and provides added opportunities for their physical development and education. Parents are not routinely provided with information about what their child will be learning and this means that they do not always know how they can provide support at home. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and responded to the questionnaire felt that the school could be clearer about expectations and about how they could help their child at home. Year-end reports are detailed and personal, but targets for improvement are not always clearly linked to weaker areas of performance. For example, a pupil with some weaknesses in mathematical skills only had targets for English. Parents of pupils with special needs benefit from good communication and are kept fully informed of their children's progress.
28. The school enjoys a high reputation in the community and it plays a full part in village and parish life. This contributes significantly to pupils' very good personal development as well as their achievements. Regular use is made of the local church to celebrate festivals. Relationships with local businesses, such as the neighbouring inn, which allows parents to use their car park, are very good. Pupils take part in local village festivities, such as maypole dancing and the local annual fair. They also took part in a local study as part of their geography work which gave them the chance to really get to know their community and its history. Good links with other local schools provide opportunities for pupils to interact with other children of their own age for sporting activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher is a good leader whose presence and principles are reflected in the life of the school. Management is satisfactory and the governing body fulfils its role satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides the school with a clear sense of purpose, focusing strongly on the importance of meeting the needs of every learner
- Governors and staff share a strong commitment to raising achievement and making further improvements in the quality of education

- The school has rightly identified that some pupils are underachieving and overcoming this is a priority in the forthcoming improvement plan
- Procedures for analysing assessment results and the involvement of governors in school self-evaluation processes are underdeveloped
- The school is managing a deficit budget well

Commentary

29. The headteacher provides strong leadership. She has a clear sense of vision that is based on her desire to help pupils achieve through being confident individuals with a sense of high self-esteem. There is a strong ethos of care and concern for pupils' well-being and an emphasis on the development of personal qualities. The direction offered by the headteacher helps to turn these aspirations into reality for all learners. The headteacher has a large teaching commitment. As such, the combination of teaching and leadership roles often leads to conflict of priorities in which the most pressing needs are usually determined by the class.
30. There is strong teamwork within the school. All adults play an important role regardless of their position or job. All undertake a range of formally allocated tasks very effectively. They show a strong sense of corporate commitment to the work and life of the school and share responsibilities between them at informal levels so that all pupils benefit. There are very high levels of consistency in the ways in which adults relate to and treat pupils. Members of the governing body share this spirit. They show concern for the school and are regular visitors to it. The school office is run very effectively and efficiently and provides an important source of support both to the school and the governing body.
31. The school is well-placed for the statutory requirements of workforce reform, with all of the administrative and other tasks identified by the government being delegated to very capable support staff. However, the requirement for the school to enable teachers to undertake planning, preparation and assessment within contracted hours is severely constrained by lack of accommodation and resources.
32. The governing body and staff share a commitment to raising the achievements of all pupils. The school has rightly identified overcoming underachievement as a priority in the forthcoming school improvement plan. However, there has been no rigorous analysis of the reasons for this to inform action to secure improvements through specific management and teaching strategies. This has arisen due to a combination of reasons. One of the more significant is that governors are not sufficiently involved in developing strategies for school self-evaluation.
33. The school is managing a proportionately small deficit budget and governors are very clear about the justification for this being based on its educational priorities. Part of the reason for the deficit is that some parents choose to remove their children from the school before the end of year 2 because they have concerns about securing places in other local primary schools at year 3. The number of pupils withdrawn during the current school year goes some way to account for the budget shortfall.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	170 501
Total expenditure	179 971
Expenditure per pupil	2 950

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	3 263
Balance carried forward to the next year	- 6 207

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The majority of children are on course to attain expected levels in all areas of learning at the start of year 1. In some areas, children achieve well to exceed the levels expected, for example, in personal and social development, speaking and listening and knowledge and understanding of the world. Achievement in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall, but more could be expected, particularly of higher attainers. Children's progress is assessed regularly, but the information is not used enough to ensure that learning moves in the right direction and that expectations are sufficiently high.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal and social development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children form good relationships and collaborate well in groups
- Children work with a good level of interest and application
- Children are aware of the needs of others

Commentary

34. Teaching in this area is very good. Adults are very good role models, always interested in what children have to say and the ideas that they put forward in discussion or practical activities. This means that children become confident learners, eager to try out new experiences and to talk about their activities. They relate well to adults and to others, discussing their work, sharing equipment and understanding the need to 'take turns', for example, when using the wheeled vehicles in the playground. Almost all children work with a remarkable degree of concentration, for example, maintaining interest throughout a story and working on individual tasks until they are completed. Children are very sensitive to the needs of others. They understand, for example, the need to give some extra time to those who have difficulties expressing their ideas.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking skills develop very well and they use language effectively for practical and imaginative purposes
- Children make a good start in reading but do not do as well as they should in writing

Commentary

35. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. There are some aspects which are very good, particularly the strong emphasis placed on extending children's speaking and listening skills. As a result, children use talk well to organise and clarify their ideas, for instance, as they work together to construct a 'rocket car' and discuss the best way of securing the wheels. The majority of children speak clearly and confidently and show good awareness of the listener, often saying "excuse me" when they want a turn to speak. They are attentive listeners, showing good understanding of stories, instructions and explanations by asking relevant questions or making comments.

36. Children develop good awareness of early aspects of reading, for example, they have good knowledge of letter sounds. Most recognise a good number of commonly used words and have made a start on reading simple books; some more able children are reading at a good level. The majority write their names and simple phrases, using their knowledge of sounds to make plausible attempts at words. However, provision is limited for children to write independently and to extend their skills as much as they should.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a good awareness of number and ways of calculating but recorded work does not reflect their good skills
- A good range of practical activities extends children's understanding of mathematical ideas

Commentary

37. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. During the inspection, a good lesson was seen in which children engaged with some challenging activities. Some ordered numbers to 20 and others organised a counting system that involved grouping objects into sets of 10. Their recorded work, by contrast, often does not reflect their competencies. For example, children of average ability work with grouping and matching number to five although their understanding is at a higher level. More able children have spent a lengthy time on recording addition and subtraction facts to 10 – all of which they are getting right - but they have not moved on to work with higher numbers or more challenging calculations. Practical activities, such as building models and working with sand and water, are used well to support learning of mathematical ideas. Children learning to steer a remote control car began to get a good view of directionality and turns as they tried to keep it on a set route.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good knowledge of aspects of the environment and their place in the world
- Children's skills in technology are very good

Commentary

38. Teaching in this area is good. A very good range of experiences is planned to ensure that children have a good base of skills in early aspects of science, history, geography and technology. They grow sunflowers and beans, learn about signs of spring and think about the process of change, for example, as caterpillars change into butterflies. Children's observational skills are very good; they draw plants with recognisable features and add appropriate symbols to simple maps. Stories are used well to support learning in this area; after reading 'The Train Ride', a group of children drew a series of pictures to show the environmental features represented in the book.

39. Children have good skills in designing and making models using construction equipment and recyclable materials. They understand how to shape and join materials. They are confident users of ICT, operating the listening centre independently and using computers to support their learning in a range of areas. They make good use of the mouse to control and manipulate images and respond readily to instructions on the screen, for example, as they work through a program to consolidate their number skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop good skills in using small tools and equipment
- Children move with good control and co-ordination, despite the limitations in provision for PE lessons

Commentary

40. Teaching is good. Children have good experiences of using equipment such as scissors, paints and glue brushes. As a result, their skills in finer movements are very good. They cut and colour carefully and produce pictures with good detail. Regular use of small-wheeled vehicles and the play area ensures that they are confident in moving in a variety of ways and have a good awareness of space and each other. They enjoy PE; in a good lesson in the playground, they moved with good control in the warm up session and responded readily to the signal to change movement or direction. The main part of the lesson focused on throwing and catching skills; again the children worked hard in this session but the sloping ground led to some frustrations, particularly when equipment rolled through the railings!

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

41. No direct teaching was seen in this area and it is not possible to judge the quality of provision. Planning, displays, children's work and incidental observations indicate that children are given good opportunities to express their ideas and observations in a variety of forms. They explore colour and form through activities such as printing and painting. Music is used as a stimulus, for example, to depict a scene from 'Peter and the wolf'. Children take on roles in imaginative play, for example as the driver and passenger on a train.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening are very good
- Pupils achieve well in reading but do not achieve as well as they should in writing
- Some good use is made of big books to teach key literacy skills

Commentary

42. Overall standards are above average, but there is some variation in different aspects of the subject. Throughout the school, pupils develop very good skills in speaking and listening. Standards in reading are generally above average, although the current year 2 pupils are attaining broadly average standards. However, a significant proportion of year 1 pupils are already reading at the levels normally found in year 2, indicating that standards are set to be above average by the time this year group leaves the school. Standards in writing are broadly average, but too few pupils attain above average levels.

43. Most pupils are careful listeners, demonstrating good understanding of the main points in a discussion. They have a good vocabulary and many speak confidently in a range of situations. A minority of pupils are very assured as they explain or justify their ideas, for example, in

suggesting how a task might be organised. The majority of pupils in year 2 read accurately and with understanding and are beginning to express preferences for specific types of stories or authors. A minority reads fluently and with good expression, using a wide range of strategies to establish meaning. Pupils learn to write in a variety of forms, but rarely undertake extended pieces of writing or edit their written work to improve the quality. Written work is usually well structured and comprehensible, but the vocabulary used rarely reflects pupils' very good speaking skills. Handwriting is generally consistent and legible but spelling skills are very variable: pupils who are reasonably competent writers make basic errors in spelling commonly used words such as 'was' or 'see' and these mistakes are rarely corrected.

44. Teaching is satisfactory, with some good features. There is a strong emphasis on teaching strategies such as recognition of letter sounds and word building, which are successful in supporting the development of reading skills. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening through structured discussions and collaborative work in pairs or small groups. The teaching of writing is the weak area: an over-emphasis on skills practice results in limited opportunities for pupils to develop quality pieces of written work. Throughout the school, good use is made of a variety of books, particularly 'big books' to teach key skills. In a lesson in year 1, for example, the teacher encouraged the pupils to use the pictures to make sense of the story and drew their attention to the bold print in the text and discussed what that indicated to a reader about expression.
45. The need to improve standards in writing has been recognised by the school. Some helpful systems have been introduced to assess writing skills at regular intervals and targets are being set to try to ensure that pupils make satisfactory or better progress. There is still some work to do in this area to identify the strategies that need to be taught to improve individual pupils' skills and to make pupils themselves aware of how they might improve.

Language and literacy skills across the curriculum

46. Pupils' very good speaking skills support their learning across a range of subjects. They are very competent in reasoning, explaining and justifying their ideas, for example, in selecting the colours to use for observational drawings in art. The use of literacy skills is satisfactory. In science, pupils write captions, labels and simple explanations of their findings. In history, they note key facts about famous people. Research skills are limited because of the small library area but pupils have reasonable understanding of how to extract information from non-fiction books.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High standards are reached by the time pupils reach the end of year 2
- Pupils achieve well in the subject, but their abilities to use and apply mathematics in order to solve problems are underdeveloped
- National guidance has been used well and adapted effectively to meet the aptitudes and needs of pupils
- Pupils have very good attitudes to mathematics

Commentary

47. Pupils have performed consistently well in mathematics in national tests over time but there are less pupils achieving at the higher levels in tests than might be expected. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated that they are particularly good at manipulating number and show good aptitudes in their work with shapes and handling data. They do less well in problem-solving because they have fewer opportunities to undertake this kind of work.

48. High quality learning is due to good teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are particularly skilled at questioning pupils to challenge them and deepen their learning. Pupils benefit from routine mental mathematics 'warm up' sessions and participate with enthusiasm and enjoyment. These sessions help to ensure that they are well prepared for the main part of their lessons. In a year 1 lesson, designed to improve understanding of competence with number sequences to 100, the teacher began the lesson briskly with some well-focused questions about number sequences and patterns. These ensured that pupils were very clear about their group work tasks before they started, thereby enabling maximum benefit from this part of the lesson without wasting time. Throughout, pupils learn well and work at a good pace. Teachers make effective use of national guidance to support their planning and adapt this well to meet the interests and aptitudes of pupils. Learning support assistants also give well-directed help during lessons.
49. Work samples, discussion with pupils and teachers' planning show evidence of insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematical skills and knowledge. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to solve mathematical problems or in using a variety of different approaches and this means that they do less well in this aspect than in other areas of the subject.
50. Pupils' good behaviour, positive attitudes and real enthusiasm for their work all make a strong contribution to their mathematical achievements. They respond well to the high expectations of behaviour. Pupils work well without supervision and show responsibility for their own learning; they are confident and willing to take initiative.
51. The subject is co-ordinated by a teacher who has recently undertaken this work. She has made a good start, compiling a mathematics file, auditing resources, observing lessons of colleagues and feeding back. In addition, the school is benefiting from her attendance at local co-ordinators' meetings through the implementation of ideas shared with colleagues beyond the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Mathematics contributes well to pupils' learning in other subjects. Their work shows that they have used measurement in science to observe the growth of seeds and produced tables and graphs to show the results. In history, they use time lines to measure and indicate the passage of time. There are many examples of collecting data into tally charts and to using ICT to convert the information into graphical forms.

SCIENCE

The quality of provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well by the end of year 2
- Provision is good in many areas, but there is insufficient provision for pupils to experiment and investigate
- Teaching is good
- Pupils enjoy their lessons

Commentary

53. Pupils achieve well and make good progress. They are provided with good opportunities to learn about life processes and living things, materials and physical processes. A good range of practical activities also enables them to learn about the properties and processes of things they experience in their everyday lives. Pupils enjoy science, behave well in lessons and show care and respect for the resources and materials they are using.

54. Overall, teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that generally there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to engage in experimentation and investigation. However, in one very good year 2 lesson which was concerned with investigating and finding out from first hand experience that animals move, feed, grow and use their senses, pupils acquired a great deal from their work. In pairs, they worked well to create four different habitats for woodlice: bark chips, sand, soil and stones using different conditions of light and dark, damp and dry. They were asked to predict the woodlouse's preferences and write reasons for their choices. The adoption of this investigative approach made a considerable impact on pupils' achievements.
55. Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about science. This is communicated well to pupils through enthusiasm and knowledgeable explanation and demonstration. Teachers' good use of scientific terminology results in correct use by pupils. Lessons have a good structure based on clear learning outcomes which are always shared with pupils. The purpose of the lessons are set out clearly and good instructions enable pupils to understand very well what they will be doing and why. At the end of each lesson, key learning points are summarised and good use is made of assessment at this time to check pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

56. No ICT lessons were seen. However, samples of pupils' work and discussions with them show that standards are above the levels expected nationally and that pupils are achieving well. Pupils are able to generate ideas and manipulate data using a variety of ICT programs. They are adept at using the mouse and keyboard and can amend and save files. They talk knowledgeably about how technology affects their everyday lives. Pupils have easy access to a computer within their classrooms, but the siting of the school's very good networked suite in the reception area, because of lack of any suitable alternative, restricts access.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. There are very good examples of ICT being used within other subjects. In English, for example, year 2 pupils have designed a front cover for story books that they had written, using a variety of fonts and symbols. Pupils have converted a range of data into a variety of graphical representations, which has enhanced their mathematics work. They have used computer programs in geography for map work. Not enough use is being made of word processing programs for pupils to draft and re-draft their writing.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Insufficient evidence was seen in this subject to form any judgements.

History

Insufficient evidence was seen in this subject to form any judgements.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

58. No direct teaching was seen in any of the subjects which fall into this area so it is not possible to judge the quality of provision. Planning, displays, children's work and incidental observations indicate that children are given good opportunities to express their ideas and observations in a variety of forms.

Art and Design

59. Work on display, photographic evidence and incidental observations indicate that pupils learn to use a variety of media to express their ideas and observations. Some work is of a good standard; for example, year 2 pupils engaged in studies of flowers paid very good attention to detail and worked hard on line and tone. Pupils have opportunities to work in the style of famous artists such as Mondrian and Turner. They have been involved in some good collaborative projects, such as creating 'stained glass windows' in the reception area. They have recently made ceramic tiles to create a striking mosaic, every child being represented by a colourful, smiling face.

Music

No lessons were seen. In assemblies, pupils sang tunefully, clearly and enjoyed their singing.

Design and technology

60. No design and technology lessons were seen. However, discussions with pupils and teachers, photographic evidence, samples of work and teachers' records provide secure evidence that achievement in this subject is good and standards are above those expected. Pupils have good experience of designing by producing ideas and representing these through simple pictures and sketches. They can explain their designs and the rationale behind them. There are many examples of artefacts that have been produced to a good standard using a variety of tools and materials. These include:

- clay models and tiles (working with an artist in residence – the tiles are hung as part of the welcome at the entrance to the school);
- a working model of a lobster using a range of materials;
- production of working hot air balloons at Hendon Air Museum;
- construction of three dimensional shapes using templates as part of a mathematics project; and
- a variety of food technology work.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

61. The very caring school ethos supports pupils' personal development very well and this is an important aspect of their education. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily by having fruit or vegetables at morning break. Regular circle time provides good opportunities for teachers to bring up issues such as behaviour and taking responsibility. All the staff work closely to ensure they have a good understanding of pupils' needs. Community links, for example with the school nurse and local police constable are used well to ensure that required aspects such as drugs and sex and relationships education are taught in an appropriate manner. Citizenship was addressed as an assembly theme during the inspection; pupils were asked to reflect on the rich collection of backgrounds of the Great Kimble school family. A 'Healthy Schools Award' is currently being sought which is designed to formalise the provision.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).