

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HAROLD WOOD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Harold Wood, Romford

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102269

Headteacher: Miss Alison Dowding

Lead inspector: Mr Geoff Cooper

Dates of inspection: 26 – 29 January 2004

Inspection number: 256341

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	306
School address:	Recreation Avenue Harold Wood Romford Essex
Postcode:	RM3 0TH
Telephone number:	01708 345 473
Fax number:	01708 374 237
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Kathryn Armand
Date of previous inspection:	25 February 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Harold Wood Primary School is larger than most schools of its type with 306 boys and girls age 4 to 11 on roll. Currently its number on roll is declining, mainly because of reduction in the population locally. It is a participant school in the leadership development strategy in Primary Schools. In 2003 it was awarded a schools' Activemark. It makes community provision through a confident parenting course, out of school football skills club and 'drop-in' facilities with the school nurse for parents. It has close links with the local church, playgroups, other primary schools and the local secondary school. The school's socio-economic context is neither characterised by relative poverty and disadvantage, nor by wealth and privilege. Children enter full time schooling with a broad range of early achievement. Attainment on entry varies a great deal from year to year but overall it is about average. Currently it is a little below average. Most pupils come from a white British background, although about one pupil in ten comes from one of a wide range of other ethnic origins. Most pupils are British born but the commonest other origins are Black and Asian backgrounds. About six per cent of pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition because English is not the language of their home. At present, rather more than one in ten pupils is identified as having special educational needs and of these two per cent of the school population has a statement of special educational needs, that is, provision for those whose learning difficulties are rather more profound than usual. Most learning difficulties lie in delay in acquiring the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. One or two pupils have specific physical barriers to learning. Pupil mobility is relatively high. About one in five pupils join or leave the school at times other than the usual time of joining or leaving. Rapid turn over has also been a characteristic of school staffing, with the arrival and departure of a number of teachers on short-term contracts. However, school staffing appears to have stabilised most recently.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23647	Mr GW Cooper	Lead inspector	English as an additional language English Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Personal social and health education
9561	Mr H Akhtar	Lay inspector	
21910	Mr Gordon Longton	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Geography History Religious education
11419	Mrs PJ Underwood	Team inspector	Foundation stage Mathematics Music Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**School effectiveness is now good.** Significant improvement is being made. Achievement is good overall, and better than at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching and learning and leadership and management are good overall. The school creates a positive climate for learning. Given its standards and provision and the money spent on the education of each child, value for money is satisfactory. Particular aids to learning are the close links and mutual respect between school and home and the growing stability of staffing. The principal barrier to learning is the mobility of pupils.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The good achievement of children in the Reception Class.
- The improvement made by the school since its previous inspection; in standards and achievement, teaching and learning, overall curriculum provision and in leadership and management.
- Pupils learn well because of their good behaviour and positive attitudes to their work.
- The school is determined to include all pupils in the wide range of learning opportunities provided.
- There remain improvements to be made in the consistency of the work of the school; in standards and achievement, in the quality of teaching and in the way assessment information is used to promote the further progress of pupils.

Very good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. Improvements have been made against all the key issues of that inspection: in standards and achievement, in teaching and learning, in curricular provision, procedures for tracking progress and in leadership and management. Meanwhile, strengths identified previously in school provision have been maintained and intensified, especially in pupils' behaviour, attitudes and in the school's relationship with parents. At the time of the previous inspection the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. The wide range of improvements made mean that this is no longer the case.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	A	A
mathematics	D	D	B	B
science	D	C	B	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement in the school is currently good overall.** Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in tests in 2003 were significantly better than those found in similar schools. Where there is sufficient inspection evidence, pupils in the Foundation Stage achieve well. They are well on course to achieve, and, in some cases exceed, the goals expected by the end of the Reception Year. In the work seen during inspection, achievement is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and from Year 3 to Year 6. Standards are broadly in line with those expected for their age, especially in the subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards in geography and in design and technology are above average by the time pupils are eleven.

**Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Pupils grow in good sense and maturity. With few exceptions they behave well in and out of the classroom. Attitudes to learning are positive. Behaviour and attitudes are very good in the Reception Year and in Years 1 and 2. Attendance is average. Pupils arrive promptly to school and lessons start on time.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school,** particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. This has been at the heart of the improvements made since the previous inspection. Teachers plan well and this creates an orderly climate for learning. Because pupils are managed well, they are focused on their tasks and purposefully involved in their learning. Teachers make confident use of their subject knowledge, enabling pupils to have a clear understanding of what they need to learn, do and understand. Teachers cater well for the differing needs of different pupils. This ensures that all pupils are involved in the learning whether they find learning easy or difficult, whether they are learning English as a new language, irrespective of gender or whether they have physical or emotional barriers to learning.

The curriculum is good. It meets statutory requirements and is well enriched. Care, guidance and support are good overall. The school is a safe and healthy environment where pupils are well cared for and supported. A good partnership with parents is maintained. This has a positive effect on the quality of learning. Links with the community, especially with the community of local schools, are good overall. Links with other educational establishments have had significant impact on the quality of learning and overall school provision.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good in all respects.** Governors play a full and meaningful role in the life and work of the school, ensuring that they meet all their legal requirements. The strong leadership of the headteacher is well supported by the leadership of other key staff. The school operates smoothly and purposefully because it is well managed. The improvement in school standards and provision has stemmed from the significant developments in leadership and management since the previous inspection.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents take a very positive view of the school. In particular they express confidence in its leadership and management and in the team of teachers and learning support assistants. The inspection team agrees with their view. Pupils are also very positive about their school. They like the way they are listened to through the school council and appreciate the fact that something is done about their views and opinions. They also appreciate the range of opportunities provided out of school hours.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- In capitalising on recent improvements and developments:
  - ensure consistency in standards achieved;
  - develop strategies for challenging questioning;
  - improve the consistency of presentation of pupils' work;
  - ensure that all staff mark to the highest standard;
  - use all assessment information rigorously to support progress;
  - continue to develop the role of subject leaders, seeing that they have the opportunity to turn their action plans into reality.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good in the school overall. Children in the Reception Year achieve well. They make good progress and achieve standards that are on target to match or exceed the goals set for them by the end of the Reception Year. Standards are good in science, design and technology and geography by the time pupils are eleven. Where there is sufficient evidence to make judgements standards are average in other subjects, including English and mathematics.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Reception Year get off to a good start and achieve well.
- The results of National Curriculum standard tests for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds in 2003 were an improvement on the results of the previous year.
- Pupils achieve particularly well in science, design and technology and geography.
- Recent improvement in information and communication technology has been very good; standards are at least average and sometimes above average.
- The school provides well for its pupils who find learning difficult and for those who are learning English as a new language; these pupils make good progress and achieve well.

#### Commentary

##### Standards achieved in the Reception Year

1. When children are admitted to the school their early achievement varies a great deal. Overall, it is below that expected of children of similar age. Children in the Reception Classes are well settled and make good progress because they are taught well across a broad range of activities. They grow in maturity and create good and trusting relationships with each other and with adults. They show an eagerness to speak and listen, enhancing the quality of their learning. They understand a great deal about books and develop the expected early reading skills for their age. They enjoy practising mark making, letter creation and know that they can communicate meaning through writing. Children identify numbers up to ten confidently and some count beyond ten. Although there is insufficient inspection week evidence to make secure judgements in the full range of early learning goals<sup>1</sup>, children make the expected progress in the activities seen.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.0 (15.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.9 (14.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.5 (15.2)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

<sup>1</sup> Early learning goals: goals set for the learning of children by the end of the Reception Year.



### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (26.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.9 (26.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.8 (28.6)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

#### Commentary on standards achieved in National Curriculum tests

2. The school's standards in National Curriculum tests improved both for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds in 2003 compared to 2002. For eleven-year-olds, improvement has been considerable. Seven-year-olds achieved standards that were average in all areas tested. Although standards for these pupils vary a great deal from year to year, with a considerable decline in 2000, the trend over five years is upwards. Boys have achieved better than girls, both over three years and in 2003, although no significant difference was found in the work seen during the inspection. The school is addressing the needs of girls more rigorously and consistently. Standards have improved rapidly for eleven-year-olds. In 2003 more pupils achieved standards at or above the national level than in other schools. Few pupils did not achieve the standard expected for their age. There is no consistent trend of gender difference over the years and both boys and girls compare a little better than boys and girls nationally. The trend of improvement in results is strongly upwards and pupils are achieving significantly better than they did at this age five years ago. Compared with schools in a similar social and economic setting, the results of seven-year-olds were average in 2003. The results for eleven-year-olds show that they have made very good improvement in English and science since their results when they were seven and good improvement in mathematics.

#### Standards achieved in Years 1 to 6 in the work seen during inspection

3. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well. They acquire efficient skills in English and mathematics and use these skills well to reflect their understanding in a range of subjects. In most classes, speaking and listening give a strong impetus to their learning. Only occasionally a few pupils are restless and do not listen well. Pupils read at the expected standard, showing an enthusiasm and enjoyment for books. The skills of information retrieval are established early and show increasing maturity as pupils grow older. Although the presentation of some work is untidy and the school has no set tradition of handwriting style, writing skills are used effectively to write well across a range of subjects. By the time they are eleven, standards are above average in science. This reflects the impact of good teaching of practical and investigative skills. Design and technology standards are similarly above average. A good process of design, make and evaluate is taught well and this is a considerable factor in improving standards. Pupils' geographical knowledge is good. They are eager and interested learners. ICT is well used to support learning, especially in geography where older pupils benefited a great deal from their use of a program on the ages of a river. They achieved a great deal as they learned about the mature course of a river. Pupils achieve standards similar to those expected of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
4. Since its previous inspection, the school has made a great deal of improvement in ICT: in resources, in the confidence of staff and learning support assistants and in the curriculum provided. The subject has been very well led to create a vibrant atmosphere for teaching and learning. Pupils develop good skills across the ICT curriculum and they apply their skills very well in a wide range of activities. Younger pupils addressed all elements of the curriculum in music through a computer program. There are good examples of ICT being used to support learning in art and design. Other pupils applied well-developed skills as they manipulated and adapted a quiz using a PowerPoint presentation. Standards are average overall, but recent achievement has been very good.

5. Good provision is made for including all pupils. Teachers prepare different activities for different pupils, matching work well to their prior learning. This ensures that higher attaining pupils are stretched and achieve well. It ensures that those who find learning difficult get the work they need, matching the targets set for them. As they are well supported by teachers and skilled learning support assistants, these pupils achieve well. The small number of pupils whose mother tongue is not English make particularly good progress once they are comfortable in the language of the classroom. The support available is limited but high quality, ensuring intensive practice and giving good support to teachers through learning support programmes. Pupils learning English as a new language are kept in touch with their curriculum and progress at a rate similar to their peers. Standards and achievement overall were a particular point of criticism at the previous inspection. The school has made great strides and cumulative improvement has been very good. Much of this is the result of a better quality of teaching, well-managed delegation of responsibilities to subject leaders and effective strategies for monitoring teaching and learning and the curriculum by senior staff of the school.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

As at the previous inspection, attitudes values and personal qualities are good. These qualities are very good for children in the Reception Year and pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are now well helped to develop morally and socially. Spiritual and cultural development remains satisfactory. Cultural development was unsatisfactory at the previous inspection and is improved. Attendance is broadly satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils respond well overall, and, those in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2 respond very well, to opportunities to learn and take responsibility, helping them to achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in Years 3 to 6 and very good in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2. Any disruptions in lessons are effectively managed.
- Because the school provides well for pupils' personal development, they become respectful and form very good relationships with adults and with each other.

### **Commentary**

6. Pupils' eagerness to learn and participate in what the school offers is good and very good in the younger year groups. This is evident across activities and throughout the different groups. In lessons, they remain on task and work co-operatively, sharing resources and ideas. Pupils take responsibility for a variety of tasks around the school. They enjoy representing their class at the school council.
7. Pupils gain knowledge and understanding of different religious beliefs and values through assemblies and lessons in religious education. These, along with opportunities such as the circle time<sup>2</sup>, provide pupils with time to think, share and listen. In other curriculum areas spiritual development can take place but is not specifically planned.
8. Teaching and learning support assistants help pupils to distinguish between right and wrong. Pupils' moral development is effectively promoted through the curriculum and the reward system. Standards of behaviour and discipline are good, significantly aid pupils' progress and help to create a happy environment in which all learn well. Pupils form constructive relationships with each other. No evidence of bullying or aggressive behaviour was seen during the period of inspection. Relationships in the school are very good. Exclusions are not a feature of the school.
9. Pupils' social development is promoted effectively through a range of activities and the good standards of interaction and relationships set by the staff. As a result the majority of pupils are

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<sup>2</sup> Circle time: when pupils sit in a circle taking turns to talk about matters of personal and group interest.

pleasant and considerate in their own behaviour and care about others around them. All groups of pupils work and play together happily. A range of extra-curricular activities promotes working together out of lessons and in team activities. Because they are very well taught in this area, children in the Foundation Stage are well on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development.

10. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate different cultural traditions through studying different places in geography, listening to stories and visiting places of worship. While adequate work has been undertaken to raise pupils' awareness of diversity, this aspect of their cultural development is not consistently planned across the curriculum. More use could be made of the cultural and linguistic variety within the school and in the wider community.
11. Attendance is close to the national average. The unauthorised absence in the last school year, above the average, was primarily due to a few families known to the authorities. Since these families have gone, the unauthorised absence has considerably dropped. Authorised absences, widespread, are mostly due to illness with a little due to extended family holidays during the term time. It is because of these reasons that the attendance procedures achieve only satisfactory levels of attendance. Punctuality is good.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.8
National data	5.4	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 quality of education is good overall. At the heart of the quality of education lies good teaching that leads to good learning and achievement. Other strengths of provision are found in the curriculum and its enrichment, in the links made by the school with parents, the community and other schools and in the way the school cares for its pupils. Very good use of skilled learning support assistants is a notable strength of the school. Assessment and its use are satisfactory.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall and this leads to good learning. Because pupils learn well, they achieve well. There are individual strengths in the quality of marking of pupils' work and in challenging questioning. However, this is not consistent throughout the school.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of the support of additional help for English as a foreign language and the use and deployment of learning support assistants are particularly successful in promoting learning.
- Although a small number of restless older pupils slow the pace of some lessons, teachers expect high standards of behaviour and application.
- There are particular strengths in planning, expectation and challenge, especially but not only in the Reception Year.

- Some teachers mark and assess pupils' work extremely well and there is very good and challenging questioning. However, this is not the case in every class.
- The greater proportion of pupils work hard and concentrate and this leads to brisk acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding, especially in the Reception Year.

### Commentary

12. The table below illustrates the quality of teaching in the lessons seen during the inspection.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (16%)	28 (65%)	7 (16%)	1 (2%)	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

13. The quality of teaching seen confirms the view of parents and pupils that teaching in the school is good. It also confirms recent monitoring of lessons by the headteacher, senior staff of the school and officers of the local education authority. This quality of teaching indicates a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The invigorated quality of teaching since the previous inspection is the result of good management of continuous professional development of staff, including provision for support staff and effective arrangements for observing, evaluating and developing teaching and learning. Because learning has also improved, achievement and standards are better than at the time of the previous inspection. Very good lessons were seen in the Reception Year, Year 1/2 classes, Year 3/4 classes and in Year 5 and 6 classes. Teaching of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT was frequently good and occasionally very good. The one unsatisfactory lesson was in mathematics where restless older pupils led to unsatisfactory standards and achievement.
14. Throughout the school, teachers and support staff work hard to include all pupils in the quality of learning. Teachers plan good tasks that take account of what pupils already know. This supports the learning needs of higher attaining pupils including those with specific gifts and talents. It gives particular support to those who find learning difficult. The use of very skilled learning support assistants is frequently used to give these pupils additional help. The school makes good use of special group lessons, such as 'booster classes' and 'additional literacy support' to ensure that all pupils remain on course to achieve the targets set for them. The school is quick to identify the needs of those learning English as a new language and to give them all the support the school is able to provide. This is not often one to one learning support. However, the support available is of high quality, both in directly helping the pupils and also in giving guidance to teachers and learning support assistants.
15. A particular strength of the school is the way teachers and support staff set out their expectations of good behaviour and hard work. Adults working in the classroom are consistent and fair in the way they manage pupils. Most pupils respond to this extremely well. Very good relationships between staff and pupils are a mark of the school's success. This helps pupils focus well on their work and become well engaged in the activities planned for them. A few older pupils are less responsive. This occasionally slows down the pace of lessons, especially when the teacher has to resort to control strategies. For one or two pupils, learning is not as brisk as it is for most.
16. Teachers plan well in teams. The school has well managed strategies for this. It is particularly important where pupils are in mixed age range classes, for example in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 and 4. Teachers have clear strategies for responding to the needs of pupils of differing prior attainment and for those in different year groups. The school responds well to the potentially difficult position of having mixed age range classes. As a result, all pupils are

actively engaged in learning at an appropriate rate and this supports their good achievement. Pupils know that expectations of the quality of their work, of the way they respond to the learning challenges issued to them are consistent across the teams of adults working in the classroom. This puts pupils in a good position to be confident and self-assured learners. Strategies for marking pupils' work are clearly laid out. Some teachers mark work extremely well, especially in the comments they make that support success, give praise for endeavour and make further intellectual challenge. Similarly, some teachers question pupils with a great sense of challenge, trying to engage them strongly in the thinking and explaining process. However, this is not yet consistent. Occasionally work is not marked, occasionally work is ticked without comment and this gives pupils no encouragement or indication of their success. There is a school strategy for marking against the clearly established learning objectives but this is not always used. Some questioning encourages pupils to remember and recall but does not make pupils think and explain. There is scope to improve further the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of pupils' progress and achievement in making the good practice already in place more consistent across the school.

17. Almost all pupils become deeply engaged in their learning and this leads to their good achievement. Especially in the Reception Year, but generally across the school, pupils make good progress in their learning as they acquire and learn to use the basic skills of English, mathematics and ICT. The provision of up to date resources in the computer suite has brought about renewed confidence of staff and much greater confidence in pupils' use of the ICT skills they learn. Despite good school strategies for controlling and managing pupils, a very small number find learning difficult because they are restless, call out inappropriately and occasionally talk through the teacher's instructions. This has an inevitable effect on the quality of learning for these few pupils.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good. The school provides its pupils with a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities, successfully meeting their interests, aptitudes and learning needs. The curriculum is well enriched.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are effective.
- Provision for the support of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good.
- Good provision is made for the development of the skills in literacy and numeracy through the work of other subjects such as geography and history and religious education.
- The availability of computers and software so that pupils can use their ICT skills when studying other subjects is good.
- Ample opportunities are provided for pupils to accept responsibility for their work.
- The accommodation is good.

### **Commentary**

18. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education according to the locally agreed syllabus. A good curriculum is provided for children in the Foundation Stage, addressing all required areas of learning. Appropriate schemes of planning are in place for all subjects based on the latest national guidelines. Through Years 1 to 6 good planning ensures that teachers are provided with a range of suitable topics and guidance upon which to base their lesson plans. The planning for pupils in mixed age classes is particularly good, making sure that pupils of both ages are well provided for.

19. All pupils have access to the curriculum and this is a good feature of the school. Pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language are well supported so they can work alongside their peers to take advantage of the curriculum offered. The targets set for them are clear and they receive good support. These targets are reviewed and revised regularly to make sure they are still appropriate to the pupils' current needs. Provision for pupils with statements is good. When necessary the curriculum is carefully adapted to their needs so that their individual education programmes are met. The school moves quickly to take effective action when there is a need. Additional support is given to pupils to provide support in literacy and numeracy. The pupils attend these sessions eagerly because teachers and learning support assistants provide interesting contexts for learning.
20. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. Guided reading and writing sessions are very successful in promoting essential skills, which are now used regularly in other subjects. There is good emphasis on mental computation. The development of pupils' skills in ICT is now good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
21. The school puts a special emphasis on its policy to develop personal, social and health education and an awareness of citizenship, and the curriculum provides well for this aspect of pupils' developments. The curriculum in this area provides pupils with many opportunities to develop positive attitudes. This has a significant impact on behaviour, relationships and enhances the quality of learning.
22. A good range of sporting activities outside school lessons is provided and pupils have the opportunity to participate in local school sporting events. Through good links with the local secondary school, pupils enjoy high quality coaching in sporting activities. A good range of extra-curricular activities includes Spanish, French, The Environmental Club, RSPB Explorers Club, recorder groups and several sporting activities. Residential visits are arranged for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6.
23. The school is staffed by a dedicated and enthusiastic team of teachers and support staff. They are very effectively deployed to meet the demands of the curriculum and to support pupils' learning needs. There are established arrangements for staff development guided by the school's improvement plan. Lunchtime supervisors provide a good standard of care at midday and know the pupils well. Lunchtime at Harold Wood Primary School is a very pleasant social occasion that pupils enjoy. The caretaker and his team ensure a high standard of cleanliness at all times. The quality and adequacy of the accommodation for teaching the curriculum is good, though it would be improved with a connecting corridor to join the two buildings. The staff present very attractive displays throughout the building and this creates a very pleasant and stimulating environment. The resources in all subjects are at least satisfactory and in literacy, ICT, religious education, geography, history and the school's library they are good. Accommodation and resources for children in the Reception Year are good. Cumulatively, staffing, accommodation and learning resources ensure that teaching and learning can take place purposefully and productively. This aspect of the school's provision has been well managed since the previous inspection with significant improvements.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Overall, this aspect of school provision is good. The picture has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils' well-being is now well supported by the staff and through the curriculum. Arrangements to check pupils' academic progress and enable them to improve their performance are now satisfactory. Pupils have many opportunities to shape the work of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils, including vulnerable pupils, are well looked after and this helps them to do well in their studies.

- Staff are vigilant about health and safety matters.
- Child protection arrangements are securely in place.

- Guidance based on systematic monitoring of pupils' academic performance is developing and is satisfactory.
- Many planned opportunities are provided for pupils to air their views.

### **Commentary**

24. Relationships in the school are very good, with the result that pupils receive good quality personal care. Admission is effectively supported and pupils new to the school settle in quickly. First aid procedures are in place, equipment is well maintained and there is good awareness of safety in the school. Building-related risks are appropriately assessed. The designated teacher for child protection understands agreed procedures and keeps others informed of issues. The curriculum, for example in circle time, helpfully raises pupils' awareness of matters related to their welfare. Pupils are also well supported by relevant external agencies and the visiting specialists. Pupils are well advised about the life in secondary schools and links with the receiving secondary school help smooth transition.
25. There is a system of checking and reporting pupils' progress but inconsistencies in the use of the assessment information, particularly in planning the next stage of pupils' learning and setting and monitoring targets for improvement have implications for raising standards. Exchange of pastoral information amongst staff provides a further means of keeping pupils' personal development checked. This, along with the system of logging concern, provides a deterrent for any oppressive behaviour like bullying. Pupils learn in a stress-free atmosphere. Pupils with specific needs are well supported and their progress is well monitored.
26. The school council and use of pupils' questionnaires provide good opportunities for pupils to say how they feel about the school and to influence its work. A significant result of the school's provision in this area is that all pupils are well cared for, irrespective of gender, background or ability.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school makes good links with parents, other schools and the community. This area of the school's work has generally improved since the previous inspection. The school's partnership with parents is now effective and has a good impact on pupils' learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good links have been developed with parents.
- Overall, communication with parents is good.
- Liaison with other schools is good and productive.
- Links with industry and businesses are not fully developed.

### **Commentary**

27. Parents have many opportunities to influence their children's education at the school. They receive regular information about the school and are invited to individual and collective consultations. The school prospectus, parents' handbook given out at the beginning of the new academic year and the governors' annual reports are useful publications. Parents benefit from curriculum workshops as they gain knowledge to help their children's learning in subjects like mathematics and science. Pupils' annual progress reports to parents contain details of what pupils have been doing in curriculum subjects but do not adequately inform the parents of what pupils should have been doing, particularly with reference to the National Curriculum levels, or what they can do to help their children's achievement. However, parents have opportunities to discuss their children's progress.



28. Parents are generally well satisfied with the school's work and the school can rely on most parents' support in dealing with problems related to their children's learning and development but not that well in keeping children's absences to a minimum. Parents' attendance at formal and informal meetings is generally good. They actively support the school by organising fund raising activities, helping pupils in the classroom and accompanying educational trips. The home-school reading records are generally well supported by parents. The school is at pains to ensure that all pupils benefit from the links it makes with parents, other schools and the community.
29. Liaison with playgroups and the receiving secondary school helps smooth transition. Links with other schools, particularly the secondary school significantly support the curriculum and sharpen management skills. A local church helps with the assemblies at the school. Pupils' social development is well supported by educational trips and their welfare by visiting specialists. There are few links with industry and businesses to support the work of the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The previous report was very critical of the headteacher's leadership role. This has improved considerably. All statutory requirements are met. Because of good management and efficient organisation the school runs smoothly and calmly.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides a good level of leadership with clear intentions to raise standards and the quality of teaching.
- The governing body now has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The role of the senior management team and other key staff is having a positive impact on the running of the school and in raising standards.
- There is much data available about the school but a more rigorous use of this is needed to ensure the school continues to move forward.

### **Commentary**

30. The governing body is well organised and manages its work through relevant committees and delegated responsibilities. All statutory requirements are met. Since the last inspection, when the governing body was criticised for its limited monitoring role and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses there has been considerable improvement. The governors are knowledgeable and very aware of what the school does well and what needs to be improved, discussing with the headteacher how effectively the school improvement plan is being implemented. They are not dependent on her reports for all their information: they visit school and regularly talk to their linked subject leader about progress in that curriculum area.
31. The headteacher has worked very hard to successfully bring the school out of serious weaknesses and is to be commended for her efforts. The staff are now well focused on raising standards and in ensuring the school continues to move forward. Clear leadership has resulted in careful analysis of the relevant assessment information and setting appropriate priorities. Good action planning is having a positive effect on standards and particularly on the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6, a weakness from the previous inspection, but now judged to be good overall. The school's vision for the future is shared by everyone in the school so all have ownership of same and similar expectations.
32. The headteacher has created a team of teachers who are fully committed to evaluating and improving their work. Members of the senior management team are also the subject leaders for English, mathematics, science, information technology and the Foundation Stage. They are all having a positive impact on the running of the school and in raising standards, despite having been formed recently. The leaders of other subject areas, not a priority of the school

improvement plan, are expected to devise their own action plans and to follow them through. The creation of a positive climate for learning ensures that all pupils have good opportunities for learning, whether they are boys or girls, bright and talented pupils, have specific barriers to learning or whether they are learning English as a new language.

33. The school has good strategies for self-evaluation. The headteacher regularly observes teachers working with pupils, as do members of the senior management team and targets are set for the necessary improvements. Performance management is linked to a programme for observing teachers and other members of staff and is effective. All staff are committed to continuing professional development that is strongly linked to the school's priorities. Although there have been many changes of staff in the past, the positive ethos of the school and the constructive involvement of staff in deciding the school's priorities and the good induction procedures are helping all to be more confident and committed to the school. The school has been effective in recruiting new members of staff. The school is aware of the need to ensure the retention of its committed members of staff.
34. Financial management is good. The headteacher, chair of governors and the finance committee regularly monitor the budget. Good care goes into planning expenditure and to ensuring value for money. The school presently has a very large carry forward. The money available has been committed to capital works for improving the school building. The school's strategies for ensuring good strategic use of resources are growing in effectiveness. This results in the provision of satisfactory value for money.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	883,155
Total expenditure	886,595
Expenditure per pupil	2,805.68

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	105,371
Balance carried forward to the next	101,931

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

## **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage**

The provision for learning in the Foundation Stage is good. It is a strength of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The Foundation Stage classroom provides a welcoming and stimulating environment where children feel happy and secure.
- By the end of the Reception Year children are on course to achieve the expected levels in communication language and literacy, mathematical development and to exceed the expected levels for their personal, social and emotional development.
- Because teamwork is very good and all staff plan together, the support provided for the children is very good and helps them progress towards the appropriate levels.
- The leadership role of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator is very good. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable.
- Planning for the outdoor play area is limited and is an area for further development.

### **Commentary**

35. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. The one area for development highlighted in that inspection has been addressed to some extent, that is, access to a secure outdoor play area. Children are admitted to the Reception Class in the September of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. There are presently 32 children on roll in two parallel classes, each supported by a teaching assistant.
36. Attainment on entry is slightly below average although evidence from previous baseline assessment for different cohorts shows a great variation in standards. In some cohorts a proportion of the children achieved above average, whilst in others, more children achieved below average.
37. The present cohort is on course to achieve the expected levels in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and likely to exceed the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development. No judgements could be made about the other areas of learning, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative or physical development because insufficient evidence was available during the time of the inspection.
38. The quality of teaching overall is good with some examples of very good teaching. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children mean they are provided with a wide range of experiences in all areas of learning. This ensures they make good progress towards achieving or exceeding the early learning goals (nationally agreed levels for children at the end of the Reception Year). Planning is closely linked to these goals and is a shared activity between teachers and support staff. Questioning is used effectively to extend or reinforce learning and to develop children's speaking skills. However opportunities are sometimes missed to encourage children to reply in a sentence rather than one word. Very good relationships give children confidence to respond to adults' questions and to share their thoughts and opinions. The support given by the teacher assistants to all children, not just those identified with special educational needs, has a positive effect on their learning and helps them to understand the task and concentrate well. Regular assessments are carried out and staff have devised a quick, easy and effective method of recording day-to-day events.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in this area of learning is **good**. This is reflected in the way children are learning to respect each other, share, take turns and play together.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Every opportunity is taken to enhance the children's development and the majority are on course to exceed the expected levels by the end of their Reception Year.
- They achieve well because of the good provision and teaching.
- Very good relationships ensure children are happy, secure and settled.

### **Commentary**

39. The personal, social and emotional development of the children is already good and by the end of the year the majority are on course to exceed the early learning goals. Most children find it easy to conform to the high expectations of good behaviour set by the staff. Children know the routines well and settle to tasks quickly and quietly and with the minimum of fuss. Most are well focused and interested and even when not directly supervised sustain their concentration. A calm working atmosphere pervades each session. The very good teamwork of all adults provides the children with good role models of co-operation. All adults expect the children to listen carefully and to respect the opinions and thoughts of others. The majority of children understand this and wait patiently for their turn. Children can be seen helping each other particularly on the computer or enjoying a pretend story in the puppet theatre.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is good and provides children with a good range of experiences to develop their reading and writing skills.
- Children are given many opportunities to develop their language skills and extend their vocabulary.

### **Commentary**

40. Early indications suggest that many children are on course to achieve the early learning goals for reading, writing, speaking and listening. Children make good progress developing their language skills but occasionally opportunities are missed to develop the speaking skills of children who are less confident, when adults accept a one-word answer instead of a sentence. All staff use every opportunity to during activities, particularly directed ones to extend children's vocabulary through questioning. Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books. Books are handled with care and pages are turned carefully. The higher attaining children read accurately at an appropriate level and are beginning to develop strategies for working out unfamiliar words. Lower attaining readers answer questions about their books using picture clues and recognise a few familiar words. All children recognise their name. Children are given a variety of activities to explore writing, developing their skill through mark making and then beginning to make recognisable letter shapes. In some more formal lessons children practise letter formation, or write over an adults' writing. The higher attaining children are insufficiently challenged through this activity and suggesting they write their own sentence gives them a more appropriate task.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good so children make good progress and achieve well.
- Every opportunity is used to extend children's number experiences through songs and rhymes.
- A wide range of practical activities is provided to extend children's understanding in different areas of mathematics.

### Commentary

41. Because of very good teaching children are on course to achieve the expected levels. Many children entered school counting to ten but not able to associate a number with the correct number of objects. In other words they could count to five but could not put out or recognise five objects. Now the higher attaining children (about half the class) count confidently to ten and beyond some even in tens to 100! They understand the concept of addition and subtraction within ten (the sums are done practically not mentally). They have used two-dimensional shapes to create patterns and pictures. Children were observed using a computer program to develop their counting skills.
42. Planning for **knowledge and understanding of the world** would suggest that provision in this area is **good**. There was insufficient opportunity to observe this area of learning and to make a judgement about standards. However, from talking to the staff and looking at planning the children are provided with a range of relevant experiences. For example they visited the local garden centre and were given seeds and bulbs to plant in their garden. There was great surprise and amazement when the bulbs began to break through the earth. Children have many opportunities to use computers and those observed enjoying some programs showed good mouse control as they moved the cursor over the screen.
43. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision or standards in **physical development**.
44. Children are given opportunities to develop pencil control through specifically designed tasks. Other activities encourage them to use scissors and cut out carefully or to try paper weaving which requires some dexterity. There was no opportunity to observe the children enjoying physical education in the hall but they were very briefly seen riding wheeled toys. The outdoor play area is a recent addition. The staff are aware that planning should include a wider range of activities so it can be used more effectively as an extension of the classroom.
45. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision or standards in **creative development**.
46. Children were observed paper weaving and making finger puppets with the help of a parent. They enjoyed this activity and looked forward to making up plays and stories with their puppets. There are several role-play areas in the classroom but the one favoured by the children was the puppet theatre.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**. Achievement and standards, teaching and learning and resources have all improved since the previous inspection.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults working in the classroom do everything they can to involve all pupils in the learning.
- Standards in National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds were well above average in 2003.
- Significant improvements have been made to resources since the previous inspection.
- While there are good strategies for marking pupils' work and for assessment through challenging questioning, this is not consistent across the school.
- Pupils get very good opportunities to use the range of their literacy skills across the other subjects of the curriculum; teachers are quick to find and make good use of links with other subjects.

#### Commentary

47. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2003 pupils achieved average results in reading and writing both when compared to all schools nationally and schools in a similar social and economic setting. Overall, standards were a little higher than in the previous year. Boys did significantly better than girls in the 2003 tests. This was not a noticeable feature of work seen during the inspection. In the tests for eleven-year-olds in 2003 results in English were well above average when compared to all schools nationally and when compared to these pupils' prior attainment. The school has responded well to the key issue of the previous inspection to raise standards when pupils are eleven. The very good improvement overall is the result of better teaching and this has come about because the school has been very clear about how the subject should develop and about ensuring good opportunities for the professional development of all staff working in the classroom. Again, boys do a little better than girls in tests but this difference is not evident in the work seen during inspection. The school's trend of improvement is strongly upwards. However, in the work seen, standards are average at present. This is due, at least in part, to a higher degree of pupils with special educational needs and the incidence of English as a new language.
48. On the whole pupils speak and listen well. Because teaching is good and because pupils enjoy positive relationships with teachers and support staff, they listen well. This is a strong factor in the quality of their learning. Many have clear diction, a good vocabulary and express themselves logically in sentence form. This is especially noticeable where teachers employ strong questioning techniques that make demands on pupils' thinking and powers to explain. However, although all teachers do question pupils, this important strategy for assessing progress is not consistently used.
49. Reading skills are developed to a satisfactory point. Most pupils read with a level of competence that enables them to access the activities and tasks planned for them in lessons. The main reading strategies used are skills of instant word recognition at sight and using context to access meaning. It is rare that a pupil comes across a word they do not recognise and rarer still that pupils have to disassemble syllables or use phonic clues to work out a word. For most, it means that reading can become expressive, smooth and fluent with good attention to the use of punctuation to aid meaning. Occasionally, reading aloud becomes mechanical and devoid of expression. Pupils have good book skills. For example, Year 2 pupils eagerly explain the purpose of the publisher's 'blurb' and they know how to use contents and index to find information. Year 6 pupils are very confident about these and more advanced book features and reading skills such as the glossary and using skimming and scanning strategies for quick access to information. The school library has recently been redeveloped and pupils have a good understanding of its layout within the Dewey system of classification. Additionally,

all books have recently been catalogued using a computer database. These features are providing pupils with much better opportunities than they have previously had.

50. Pupils have good opportunities for writing, for writing for different purposes and for using their writing skills to support learning in different subjects. Writing skills are at the standard expected for pupils' ages. Pupils in Year 2 rewrite familiar stories at length with some style and imagination. Others in the year group write inventive and meaningful acrostic poems. Year 6 pupils make the distinction between formal language and informal language when creating an invitation to an event using key facts analysed from a newspaper article. While the content of pupils' work, its punctuation, grammatical structure and spelling are generally accurate, the work of many pupils is untidy. Although formal handwriting time is given, there is no clear whole school strategy for the presentation of work or a set scheme to encourage pupils in the art of stylish handwriting.
51. The teaching of English is good overall and is responsible for recently improved standards. Pupils are now achieving well across all aspects of work in English. This is particularly the case for pupils who find difficulty in learning, those pupils identified as having special educational needs. They get well-designed tasks and good, skilled support that enable them to do well given their difficulties. The same is true of those pupils learning English as a new language. They frequently make very good progress, attaining good standards once they are confident in the language of the classroom. The school is skilled at ensuring that all pupils are involved in the learning opportunities available. This is as true of boys and girls as it is of pupils in the mixed age range classes in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 and 4. Teachers make very clear and appropriate plans for different ages. Although the teaching itself is good, there are some inconsistencies in the way the quality of pupils' work and thinking is assessed. There is a good marking policy that requires marking to be done in the light of pupils' success or lack of success in achieving the learning objectives. Some of this marking is of high quality, supportive and helpful to pupils' next steps. However, some marking is not sharp and demanding enough. Again, in some classes, pupils are subjected to very challenging and incisive questions that make them think and explain. However, in some classes, questioning is restricted to knowledge of content, expecting pupils to recall but not challenging them intellectually.
52. The subject has been well led since the previous inspection. Much of the current improvement is down to subject leadership. The present subject leader is new to the post, but is experienced and well placed to continue the pattern of improvement. She has already made an impact in overseeing the purchase of new resources and has an action plan to take the subject further. Improvements to resources are having an impact on standards achieved. There are some well thought out strategies for using pupils' ICT skills to present their work.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

53. Teachers are quick to identify ways in which pupils' language skills and literacy skills can be used to enhance learning across the curriculum. This both gives pupils opportunity to practise their English skills but also to show off their learning in subjects such as geography, history, science and religious education. There are ample examples in pupils' books and on display around the school of well-designed tasks that demonstrate pupils' achievement across the curriculum. This is a strong aspect of the good teaching throughout the school that promotes a good climate for learning.

## MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**. It meets the academic needs of all the pupils including providing challenges for higher attaining pupils. Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average and improvement is broadly in line with the national trend.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving across the school, because the quality of teaching is now good.
- Planning and teamwork appropriately ensure similar coverage and range of tasks in each year group.
- The recently appointed subject leader has had limited time to impact on standards but has already implemented an approach to the subject that has the potential to raise standards further.

### Commentary

54. From the evidence seen during inspection standards in the subject are average for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. The results of the 2003 national assessments for seven-year-olds were in line with the national average when comparing the school to all schools and to similar schools. The results for higher attaining pupils were similar to the national average. The inspection evidence suggests that in 2004 these results will be duplicated except that slightly more children will achieve the expected level or above. However fewer pupils than in 2003 are likely to achieve above the expected level. The results of the national assessments for eleven-year-olds in 2003 were above average compared to all schools and when compared to similar schools. Based on their prior attainment when they took the tests in Year 2 the attainment of pupils was above average. However, standards found during inspection suggest that pupils are on course to achieve standards broadly in line with the national average. This is because of there is a significant number of pupils in this cohort identified with special educational needs.
55. There has been a significant rise in standards at the age of eleven since the previous inspection. Pupils are making good progress across the school but most particularly in Years 3 to 6: heavily criticised in the previous report for weak teaching and planning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Individual plans for their learning needs are now more specific and relevant to pupils' needs. Their progress was unsatisfactory because such plans were not taken account of when work was planned, according to the previous report. All pupils achieve well across the school, due in part to the improvement in the quality of teaching and planning.
56. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on the learning of number. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' work shows good progress as they develop their understanding and competence using the four operations – addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The older pupils use calculators to solve word problems that involve difficult calculations. They can round numbers up or down to the appropriate decimal place and enjoy the challenge. Younger pupils enjoy quick fire mental sessions at the beginning of their lessons based on multiplication and division. They then explore shape and the use of standard measurement (centimetres or grams), whilst another class counts squares to work out the area. The youngest pupils enjoy working out money problems and giving change. All Year 2 pupils understand place value for tens and units and the higher attainers are confident to a thousand.
57. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. In Years 3 to 6 during the previous inspection one in five lessons were judged to unsatisfactory or poor. Teaching has improved considerably with all but one lesson being good. Where teachers are enthusiastic, introducing a lesson with quick fire mental sums, pupils are well motivated and keen to succeed. Questioning is used effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' knowledge. Because relationships between staff and pupils are good, pupils are confident to respond to questions, explain how they found their answer and are happy to write their method on the board. One



strong feature, a weakness identified in the previous inspection, is planning. Teachers plan together using the national numeracy guidelines to help. This ensures similar coverage and tasks in each age group. Tasks are carefully planned to match the needs of all the pupils and appropriate challenges are provided for all levels of ability, including extension work for the higher attaining pupils. However there is no systematic planning for computer use within mathematics. This is an area for development. The very good support provided by the teaching assistants benefits not just those with special needs but also other groups of learners. Teachers ensure they are fully versed in the lesson objectives and know how best to help their groups. After a session the assistants feedback to the teacher so plans can be amended if necessary. All teachers share the lesson objectives with their pupils, who often write them in their books as a title for the work. However, opportunities are missed to use this strategy as an assessment tool by noting whether or not the objective has been achieved. The use of positive and helpful marking is not consistently used throughout the school.

58. In some lessons the final session or plenary is well used to reinforce learning where pupils have failed to understand what they should be doing or to add another dimension for children to solve. However, occasionally this session is rushed and not used effectively to resolve difficulties. In the unsatisfactory lesson pupils became restless as many opportunities were missed to ensure they have sufficient knowledge to complete the task set. Little support was given when pupils were struggling and the plenary was used inappropriately to move them on when they were still lacking in understanding of the original problems.
59. The subject is well led despite the fact the leader is only recently appointed. Some new ideas about the teaching of mathematics have already been implemented but have had insufficient time to make an impact. Assessment and tracking are more manageable than they were but need to be used more rigorously to ensure all pupils have appropriately matched tasks to ensure progress to the next level.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

60. The use of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory. For example coordinates were used to identify buildings in an ancient Roman town: bar graphs used in science, computer program used to draw shape patterns. This is an area where more effective use of mathematics can be developed across the curriculum.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good across the school, reflecting good progress from year to year.
- The school very effectively develops pupils' skills of scientific investigation and understanding of scientific method.
- Very good attitudes have a positive effect on achievement.
- ICT is now used well to support pupils' learning.
- Good leadership and management have a strong effect on achievement.

### **Commentary**

61. Pupils develop a good understanding of science as they progress through the school. In the Year 1/2 classes they acquire a sound understanding of a wide range of topics and standards of attainment are average overall by the end of Year 2. The school has set very challenging targets for Year 6 classes this year. In spite of the fact that there are a significant number of pupils with special educational needs, and several pupils who find sustained concentration

very difficult, pupils are working hard to attain standards above the national average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good understanding of a wide range of topics and a good grasp of the requirements that make a fair test.

62. Good teaching and learning ensure that pupils are enthusiastic about their work and learn well. Teachers plan lessons together in year groups. They are very careful to meet the differing needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. Teachers explain things carefully so that pupils can begin their experiments with confidence. Pupils enjoy the subject and work hard because teachers make learning interesting and exciting. They respond well to the challenging activities presented to them and the majority achieve well in lessons.
63. Teachers give good attention to developing learning through investigation. Pupils work very well together with a partner or in small groups. They carry out their experiments carefully and discuss their results with developing understanding. In all science lessons teachers give pupils many opportunities for discussion, making sure that pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language are given opportunities to contribute. For example, during the inspection the three parallel Year 3/4 classes were all observed turning an idea about how to keep things warm into a form that could be investigated. In all three classes the discussions showed that pupils have a very good understanding of scientific method. Teachers are developing the use of scientific vocabulary well and making effective use of mathematical skills to support learning. Pupils often present their results in charts, tables and graphs. However many pupils do not take enough care in the way they present their work.
64. The curriculum is carefully planned to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The use of information and communication technology is improving. For example, pupils in the Year 5 classes worked very sensibly in pairs using a computer program to investigate how blood circulates round the body.
65. The subject is now managed well. The co-ordinator accepted responsibility for science at the beginning of the academic year. She is knowledgeable about science and has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Good assessment systems are now in place, which help teachers know how pupils are progressing. Resources in the subject are good and very well organised. The school is now in a good position to improve further.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision in the subject is much better than it was at the previous inspection.
- Pupils have made rapid strides in their achievement.
- Teachers are confident about the areas of ICT they need to teach.
- Because resources are so much better the school is able to teach a full and wide curriculum.
- Leadership is very good and has given dynamism and impetus to improvement.

### **Commentary**

66. The school has made very significant improvement since the previous inspection: standards are better, the quality of teaching and learning is good and frequently very good, the full curriculum for ICT is taught, resources are now good and subject leadership is very good, making a strong impact on achievement and teaching. There has been a very strong response to the key issue of the previous inspection requiring improvement in ICT.

67. Pupils now achieve across a very broad range of work in ICT. This includes the achievement of higher attaining pupils, some of whom work at a level above that expected for their age. It includes the achievement of those who normally find learning difficult. They show great enthusiasm for work with computers and are well supported by appropriate tasks and the skills of teachers and learning support assistants. It includes the achievement of those who are learning English as a new language. These pupils get instant feedback from the computer about their achievement and this is a further stimulus to their endeavour. A particular success of the school is its creative approach to work across the full range of National Curriculum subjects. Since the previous inspection, teachers have become enthused about teaching ICT and now demonstrate a good level of skill that acts as a strong stimulus to pupils' learning.
68. The school is making very good use of its computer suite. Although space is at a premium, it is a good facility that contributes significantly to achievement. Leadership of the subject has overseen good training and good provision of software to complement the school's broad and balanced curriculum. Very good leadership has contributed a great deal to the school's recent success in this area of school life.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

69. This is an area of particular school success. ICT is now used across a very wide range of subjects. Pupils have quick keyboard entry skills and this helps their desktop presentation when using programs such as 'Publisher'. They use spreadsheets to enhance data logging and analysis in mathematics and science. Computer programs are well used in subjects such as geography, history, music and art and design. Colourful images are to be seen displayed in many parts of the school. The work of Year 6 pupils using a challenging computer program on the degradation and deposition found in a mature river helped them to a sophisticated understanding of the formation of ox-bow lakes.

## **HUMANITIES**

Insufficient inspection evidence means that it was not possible to make judgements about provision in religious education, history and geography. However, there was sufficient evidence from the work in pupils' books and on display around the school to make judgements about standards. By the time pupils are eleven, standards are above average in geography. They are average in geography, history and religious education when pupils are seven and average in history and religious education when they are eleven. The evidence of work and the few lessons seen implies that provision is good in geography and history and satisfactory in religious education.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of visits to stimulate pupils' interest in history and geography.
  - There is good coverage of the curriculum, especially in history and geography.
  - Pupils enjoy making a study of the past.
  - There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills in history, geography and religious education.
  - Standards in geography are above expectations by Year 6.
  - Pupils' enthusiasm contributes a great deal to their achievement.
  - Religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual development.
70. No lessons were observed in **history** during the inspection but teachers' planning and a sample of pupils' work throughout the year indicate that pupils reach national expectations and achieve well. Pupils learn effectively from the time they start studying history. Year 2 pupils enjoy comparing holidays in times past with their own. They study The Great Fire of London and the work of Samuel Pepys, making very good use of their art skills to enhance their written work. After a visit to The London Museum they wrote about all they saw. As part of a comprehensive study of life in Britain since the 1930's Year 6 pupils had produced booklets

covering each decade. They contrasted school life in 1930 with their experiences today and carried out independent research in the Second World War. The pupils' models of shelters used in the war made a good connection with their design and technology studies. Good quality displays stimulate interest in history. A display of work on The Egyptians by the Year 3/4 classes was very good.

71. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Resources are good. The school has invested wisely in providing a good selection of books and artefacts to enhance the pupils' interest in the subject.
72. Although it was only possible to observe two lessons in **geography**, an analysis of pupils' work over the past year and on display indicates that pupils achieve well throughout the school.
73. Years 1 and 2 can talk about the travels of Barnaby Bear. Barnaby Bear is a school teddy bear who travels with pupils and staff all over Britain and the world. Pupils can find places he had visited on maps of the British Isles and the world. Pupils study the different types of homes we live in and present their results in graph form thus making a link with their mathematical studies. They make a map of their route to school that adds to their knowledge of the area. This helps them to contrast Harold Wood with a very different part of Britain. Pupils now make good use of information and communication technology for presenting their work and for research, using CD ROMS and the Internet. Year 6 work on rivers during their ICT lesson was very detailed. They use geography well to help develop their skills in literacy, though more attention needs to be given to improving handwriting and presentation. The two residential visits arranged for Year 5 and Year 6 give pupils added interest in geography. Year 6 pupils were already looking forward to their visit to the Isle of Wight. The teaching seen in Year 5 was good. Before watching a video of desert life the teacher challenged pupils to make notes on three aspects of desert life. This stimulated the pupils and they worked well with sustained concentration. Throughout the school, teachers' attention to display captures the pupils' interest in the subject.
74. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There has been increased focus on the development of geographical skills. A system of assessment has recently been developed which is just beginning to be used effectively. Resources are good. They are well organised and carefully stored.
75. Standards of work seen in **religious education** during the inspection match the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in the Year 1/2 classes gain a satisfactory knowledge of the special books used in different world religions. They know several Bible stories, for example the story of Moses, which they record in words and pictures. Year 3/4 classes learn about Judaism. They design an invitation to Abraham's feast. Year 4 pupils used their skills in information and communication technology to write newspaper articles about Moses and Pharaoh. Year 6 pupils become Easter Detectives writing individual books with fifteen separate sections on The Easter Story. All these activities help the pupils to develop their literacy skills. Pupils also visit a local church in Harold Wood and a synagogue in Romford.
76. In the only lesson observed during the inspection, the teacher in a Year 1/2 class challenged the pupils to think and suggest, '*Who helps us?*' Pupils were very keen to answer. The general discussion helped pupils' speaking and listening skills. One pupil suggested that the lady in the large library was very helpful at finding good books. As the pupils made their suggestions the teacher wrote them on the white board. This helped them complete their writing later in the lesson. The leadership and management are satisfactory. The curriculum coordinator has only recently taken responsibility for the subject. A new system of assessment has recently been introduced. Resources are good.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. It was not possible to accumulate sufficient inspection evidence to make judgements about provision in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. However, from the wealth of work on display it is clear that standards in art and design are average and those in design and technology are above average by the time pupils are eleven.
78. Only two lessons were seen in **art and design**. One very good lesson saw Year 1 and 2 pupils having very positive experiences using clay to make models of familiar creatures. The teacher carefully taught some basic skills and techniques before moving the pupils onto a larger piece of clay to create their finished articles. Pupils got a great deal of satisfaction out of this experience and achieved a great deal in a relatively short span of time. A good lesson with Year 6 pupils saw them involved in making models of the human form using a wire skeleton and papier-mâché technique. The teacher's lively style sustained pupils' interest as they followed a demonstration that gave them insight into basic skills that they then went on to practise.
79. Elsewhere in the school there is a great deal of work on display that supports pupils' acquisition of satisfactory standards. Some work in Aborigine style, inspired by a visiting artist, provides a lively welcome to the main school foyer and to the infant block. There are many examples of ICT being used to support learning, particularly in learning about work in the style of famous artists.
80. Although no lessons were seen in **design and technology**, scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks shows a depth of experience across designing, making and evaluating through a systematic set of projects. It is clear that the school has a good understanding of how design and technology should be taught. Study of finished products on display indicates a high level of application and finish. Of particular note are older pupils 'favourite book boxes'. In this project, pupils have created an imaginative environment based on favourite books using a good range of designing and making skills.
81. During the inspection **music** was not a focus, although some lessons were observed. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards at the age of seven but as two lessons were observed in Year 6 standards in music at the age of eleven are judged to be in line with expectations and typical for this age. Singing was heard in both infant and junior assemblies and was pleasant with clear words. Where the hymn was more familiar pupils joined in well, although the older pupils lacked enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate the ability to keep a beat and to recognise two and three beats in a bar. They appreciate a very rhythmic version of '*Down by the riverside*' and enjoy clapping the beats. Some pupils have a good understanding of technical terms.
82. Teaching is at least satisfactory. In one lesson the teacher used a CD to support learning and in the other the teacher is skilled at playing the keyboard, using this to teach the pupils a new song. Both were equally successful. The lesson planned was challenging both to pupils and teachers.
83. Presently there is no music specialist to provide support and guidance for the staff. However the school has a very structured published scheme that gives teachers clear lesson ideas and ways to develop the elements of the music curriculum.
84. Instrumental tuition is available and extra-curricular recorder clubs are held twice a week. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a local music festival and to perform in the church. A visiting drummer provided added excitement. All these activities help to enhance and develop pupils' musical understanding and appreciation.

85. During the inspection few lessons in **physical education** were observed. All focused on gymnastics or dance rather than balls skills and games. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards at the age of seven or eleven. However, in the dance and gymnastics lessons observed standards were in line with the expectations for the age of the pupils. Year 5 pupils demonstrated how well they could build up a sequence of movements to represent different groups of people portrayed in a picture by Lowry. In another Year 5 lesson pupils successfully choreographed a short sequence of four sets of eight small movements with their partners. Some of the sequences included some well thought out moves. In a Year 6 lesson pupils worked very well together, in pairs, to devise a sequence of linked balances. Some were carefully thought out with smooth linking movements and sustained balances. However the class found it was much more difficult to perform these movements on the apparatus rather than the floor.
86. The quality of teaching in the few lessons observed was satisfactory or better. Teachers plan carefully and ensure pupils understand reasons for a warm-up at the beginning of each session. During the lesson pupils build on and develop skills in balancing and moving in time to the music. Because relationships are good all the pupils are keen and willing to demonstrate their work, whilst the class watches quietly. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to evaluate each other's work and to show their ideas to the class. Some are appreciative of work of their peers, applauding their efforts. However, even in the good lessons, there was an element of noise that detracted from the concentration: it is especially important when using apparatus to insist upon silent or very quiet working for health and safety reasons.
87. Although the subject leader was not present during the inspection the headteacher was able to share information about the impact made over the past year or so. The school has worked very hard to achieve an active sports mark and as a result has many links with outside clubs, who provide coaching for a range of sports. Extra-curricular activities are varied but at present only available for the oldest pupils. This is likely to be extended to include younger pupils in the future. Pupils play interschool games; attend athletics meetings and other sporting events. All these activities help to enhance the curriculum and, where a pupil belongs to a team, a sense of commitment to attend the practices.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Personal, social and health education (PSHE)**

Provision in PSHE is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils complete a good volume of work in PSHE that successfully demonstrates the school's intentions in this area of the curriculum.
- There is good provision of time for PSHE teaching, through a well-developed scheme of work.
- All staff give good support to the school's sense of direction for pupils' personal development through their own conduct and relationships.
- Very good leadership regards the school provision in PSHE as central to the school's working environment.

#### **Commentary**

88. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that they get through a significant number of written tasks that give good support to the spoken and role-play work in lessons. The work seen illustrates pupils' insights into themselves, human relationships, how to deal with difficulties, how to lead a healthy and purposeful life and how to manage the benefits and dangers of different substances. Provision in this area supports pupils' growing maturity of attitudes and understanding of difference. The school approach is systematic because there is good

support for all teachers in the school's programme of study and policy. All adults working in the school understand the need for a common approach and teaching is underlined by the way adults manage relationships with other adults and with pupils. This helps to confirm the content of lessons in pupils' minds. A committed member of staff who sees PSHE as an essential part of the life and work of the school has led the area very well. The teaching is successful in the growing sense of maturity and responsibility of pupils. This makes a strong contribution to their behaviour and attitudes in lessons and as a result contributes well to the quality of learning and pupils' achievement.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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