

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RAVENSOTE COMMUNITY JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Frimley, Camberley

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125061

Head teacher: Mr G J Gregg

Lead inspector: R B Bonner

Dates of inspection: 7 – 10 June 2004

Inspection number: 257271

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	589
School address:	Old Bisley Road Frimley Camberley Surrey
Postcode:	GU16 9RE
Telephone number:	01276 709007
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Kemp
Date of previous inspection:	22 June 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Ravenscote is a large community junior school in the Heatherside area of Frimley. The school is set in an area of mainly private housing. The school is very popular in the area, and is over-subscribed. There are currently 589 pupils aged from 7 to 11 on roll, who are arranged in four year groups, with five mixed-ability classes in each year. The numbers of pupils attending the school are similar to those recorded in the previous report. There are more boys than girls in each year group. Pupil mobility is low. Attainment on entry to the school is above average. Pupils who attend the school are predominantly white British, with a small number from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. Four pupils speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The primary languages of these pupils are Finnish, Japanese and Cantonese. Just over a tenth of pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Their needs include autism and development delay.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25384	R B Bonner	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Geography Physical education
9744	P H Brown	Lay inspector	
3730	R Battey	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Music Religious education
21865	L Day	Team inspector	English as an additional language English History
27219	G V Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Ravenscote Junior School is effective in its work** and provides good value for money. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching. Leadership and management of the head teacher are very good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The 2003 test results in Year 6 were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- The head teacher and senior management team have created a very good climate for learning that enables pupils to succeed.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good support they receive.
- Pupils behave very well and demonstrate very good attitudes to their work as a result of very good provision for their personal development.
- The school ensures that pupils have equal access to the very good range of opportunities that it provides.
- Parents contribute well to pupils' learning at school and at home.
- Very good links with the community and other schools make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- The systems by which the school checks pupils' progress lack consistency and are insufficiently rigorous.

Since the last inspection in 1998 the school has made very good progress. The provision for more able pupils has improved, and this has resulted in an increase in the numbers achieving at the higher levels in the national tests. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have risen to above the national average as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching and the provision of additional computer equipment. Standards in English, mathematics, geography, history and religious education in the current Year 6 classes are also higher than those recorded at the time of the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

**Overall pupils achieve well** because of the good teaching they receive. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics, religious education and music, above average in science, ICT, geography, history and design and technology, and average in art and design. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are very well supported, and achieve very well.

In the end of Year 6 test results in 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. Based on their prior attainment pupils' progress was well above average in English and science, and average in mathematics. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic minorities. Over the past five years the trend in the school's results for core subjects of English, mathematics and science was broadly in line with the national trend. The targets for 2004 are challenging but achievable in both English and mathematics.

**Pupils' personal qualities are very good. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Pupils have very good attitudes. They are keen to come to school, respond very well in lessons and are attentive and motivated learners. Values are fostered effectively through the caring and supportive relationships that exist between staff and pupils, and the very good example that is set by all those working in the school. Standards of behaviour are very good. Attendance is well above average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good.**

Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and effectively use a range of resources to engage pupils in their learning. In response, pupils behave very well and try hard in response to teachers' high expectations. The curriculum is very good. Opportunities for curriculum enrichment are very good. A wide range of educational visits, extra-curricular activities and visits from members of the community provides very good enrichment of pupils' learning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school provides pupils with good care, guidance and support. It works very well in partnership with parents and the community, and it has very good links with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The leadership and management of the head teacher are very good. The leadership of other key staff is also very good. The head teacher and the senior management team have been particularly successful in promoting a very positive ethos in which all pupils are able to flourish. Governance is good. The school governors understand the school well, are committed to its development, and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents are very satisfied with the school. They report that their children like school, and that the arrangements for their children to settle into school are particularly good. They think that teaching is good and that their children are making good progress because the teachers expect them to work hard. A few parents were concerned about harassment, but behaviour during the inspection was very good. Pupils also show good levels of satisfaction. They comment particularly on how hard they have to work and how well their teachers help them with their work and if they are worried.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- To increase the rigour and consistency of the systems by which the school checks pupils' progress, ensuring that teachers use this information more effectively to plan work that meets the learning needs of individual pupils.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, pupils achieve well. Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics, religious education (RE) and music, and above average in science, information and communication technology (ICT), geography, history and design and technology.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Test results in 2003 were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their individual targets for improvements.
- Pupils with English as an additional language settle quickly into school and achieve very well.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.0 (29.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.8 (29.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.9 (30.4)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 150 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. In the end of Year 6 test results in 2003, standards in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. In comparison to similar schools results were well above average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. Based on their prior attainment pupils' progress was well above average in English and science, and average in mathematics. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic minorities. Over the past five years the trend in the school's National Curriculum points for all core subjects of English, mathematics and science was broadly in line with the national trend.
2. In 2003 the school exceeded its targets in English but failed to achieve them in mathematics. As a result of this the school introduced a range of measures:
  - The test results were analysed and areas for development were identified.
  - There has been a stronger focus on improving provision for the using and applying elements of mathematics – which the school recognises needs to continue.
  - Staff discussed with pupils their understanding, approach and attitudes to mathematics.
  - Teaching and learning and pupils' books were monitored.
  - The Subject Manager has provided additional support for individual pupils.
3. The targets for 2004 in English and mathematics are challenging but achievable. Those for mathematics point to a significant rise in the percentage of pupils achieving at the higher level (Level 5), and because of the measures taken the school is on line to achieve these.
4. Pupils enter the school with standards that are above the national average. Standards in current Year 6 classes are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Overall pupils achieve well in all three subjects. In English, pupils achieve well in writing and they achieve very well in reading because teachers promote this aspect particularly

effectively. In mathematics, the vast majority of pupils achieve well in response to good quality teaching. However, there are occasions when individuals and groups are provided with work that is not sufficiently tailored to meet their learning needs and as a result they do not make the progress they should. Standards in science in the current Year 6 classes are slightly lower than in previous years. One reason is that the school does not consistently use targets to involve pupils in their learning and to raise standards. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 are much clearer about what they should do to improve and standards are set to rise in these classes.

5. Since the last inspection the head teacher and staff have worked effectively to raise standards in ICT and to improve the achievements of more able pupils. These measures have brought about the following:
  - Standards in ICT have risen to above average as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and resources.
  - Improvements in the provision for more able and talented pupils, particularly in English, mathematics and science, which has resulted in an improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving at the higher level (Level 5).
  - Improvements in the provision for more able and talented pupils in other subjects, for example religious education, geography and history, which have resulted in improvements in standards.
6. Achievement of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) against their targets in their Individual Education Plans is very good. For example, in a small withdrawal mathematics group the pupils achieved very well attaining above average standards. There has been a big improvement in the achievement of pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) settle quickly into school, are very well supported, and achieve very well. Able, gifted and talented pupils achieve well because the school effectively fosters and encourages their development, for example in sports and music.
7. Standards in religious education (RE) and music are well above average and pupils achieve very well in these subjects. Standards are particularly high in music because the school effectively uses the expertise of a specialist teacher to teach music throughout the school. In addition, pupils have access to very good provision for music tuition in a wide range of instruments. Standards are above average in ICT, geography, history and design and technology and pupils achieve well in these subjects. Standards in these subjects are higher than those recorded at the time of the last inspection as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, the provision of additional resources, and the provision for more able pupils. Standards in art and design are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Physical education (PE) was sampled, and so an overall judgement on standards or pupils' achievement could not be made.

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

Pupils' attitudes and their personal development are very good. Overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very caring ethos of the school permeates all activities, and helps to promote pupils' very good relationships, attitudes and personal development.
- The school sets very high expectations for pupils' conduct and behaviour and they achieve these in an excellent manner.
- Pupils have high levels of confidence and self-esteem and have a very eager desire to learn.
- Opportunities to promote the multi-cultural diversity and richness of our country are sometimes insufficiently promoted.

## Commentary

8. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good. There has been an improvement since the last inspection where they were described as good. Pupils are very well behaved, polite and courteous. They respond very well to the very good caring ethos of the school. Pupils enjoy school, benefiting very well from the wide range of opportunities offered them. They are very interested and involved both in lessons and in activities out of school hours. Parents are very supportive of the school, and very happy with the values the school promotes. Pupils behave very well, and often in an excellent manner, in lessons and around the school. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. No pupils have been excluded and there have been no racist incidents. When given opportunities to work independently or in groups pupils work together very keenly and co-operatively, sharing and valuing ideas. They concentrate very well on their tasks trying to give of their best. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language share the same very good attitudes as their peers and very much appreciate the levels of very good support they receive.
9. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are very good, and have a positive impact on their learning and standards. They are happy and secure, and enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all are valued. Pupils respond very well to the help provided and benefit greatly from the very high expectations the school sets regarding their conduct. They are proud to receive achievement awards for their efforts, in and outside school, in achievement assemblies and always strive to do of their best. Pupils of all ages mix well at playtime and lunchtime, and pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language take a full and active part in lessons, and all activities the school offers.
10. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong. They are very well supported through the school by the very good role models set by the adults in school. All pupils are very aware of the class and school rules, abiding by them very well. These help the school to be a very orderly community. Spiritual, social and moral values are very well promoted through whole school in class assemblies and throughout the school. The school has a well developed and resourced programme for personal, social and health education, where a developing sense of citizenship is effectively promoted through lessons that are specifically focused on these matters. The school council meets regularly, and members are taking their responsibilities very seriously when making decisions on behalf of the whole school. For example, they talk enthusiastically about the 'hire hut', which was set up on their initiative where pupils can hire play equipment to use during play and lunchtime. This provision is well managed by pupils from Year 5 and 6. There is further capacity for pupils to take a more active role during school council meetings, for example by chairing the meeting or taking minutes. Residential visits and visits into the community provide a good range of opportunities to practice their very well developed social skills. Pupils are encouraged, through all school activities to be honest, trustworthy and well-mannered. Here they succeed very well.
11. The pupils' cultural development is good. They are provided with a curriculum that promotes a good understanding of western culture in subjects such as history, geography art and design, music and English. Pupils' understanding of different cultures is promoted through religious education in which pupils learn very well about the major world faiths. This is well supported by visits to a mosque, churches, a temple and a synagogue. They frequently have people representing different faiths coming into school to talk about them. The school is appropriately aware of the need to develop further an understanding of the richness of this country's multi-culture society and how racism can occur. It is in the process of purchasing a further range of appropriate resources that will further develop the pupils' understanding.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.9	School data	0.1
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.*

12. Attendance of pupils is very good, significantly exceeding the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality is also very good which allows lessons to commence on time and with minimum interruption.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good. The breadth of curricular opportunities is very good, and opportunities for enrichment are very good. Accommodation and resources are very good. The care, support and guidance provided for pupils are good. Links with parents and the community and those with other schools are very good.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well.
- Teachers effectively use resources to engage pupils in their learning and help them to achieve well.
- Teachers and support staff provide good levels of support and encouragement, which helps pupils to engage in their work and achieve well.
- Pupils behave very well and try very hard in response to teachers' very high expectations.
- Assessment procedures although satisfactory, are not sufficiently rigorous to enable teachers to tailor work consistently to individual pupils' learning needs.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 53 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (9%)	13 (25%)	22 (42%)	13 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	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 is good overall, and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Overall, this constitutes good improvement since the last inspection. There have been particularly good improvements in respect of specific areas of weakness that were identified in the previous report. For example, standards in ICT have risen to above average, principally because of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. The school has been particularly effective in using performance management targets to improve

teaching in this subject. The quality of the Individual Education Plans for pupils with SEN has also improved, and these are now very good.

14. Lessons are usually well planned and structured with common planning across each of the five classes in the year group. This ensures that pupils in parallel classes have similar experiences. Although this works well most of the time, there are occasions where teachers do not tailor their planning sufficiently well to meet the particular learning needs of pupils in their classes. This sometimes leads to individuals and groups of pupils being provided with work that is either too hard or too easy, and as a result they do not achieve as well as they could. Learning intentions are shared at the beginning of lessons so there is a good understanding of what will be learned in ways that make sense to pupils.
15. Teachers demonstrate at least good knowledge of the subjects they teach, which is exemplified by their clear explanations that enable pupils to make connections with their previous learning and to achieve well. All of the excellent lessons were taught by subject specialists who demonstrated very good knowledge of the subjects they teach, and successfully shared their enthusiasm for the subject with the pupils. In an excellent English lesson in Year 6, for example, the subject manager's wholehearted reading of T.S Eliot's poem, 'Macavity', brought to life the 'mystery cat' and enthralled the pupils with her characterisation. The very high expectations and technical expertise of the music subject leader enabled pupils in a Year 5 class to make excellent progress in their learning.
16. Teachers present lessons in a variety of ways which capture pupils' interest, and encourage them to be involved in their learning. A particularly good example of this is the way in which many teachers use interactive whiteboards to illustrate teaching points, engage and maintain pupils' interest and assess their understanding. Lessons usually provide a very good atmosphere for learning. Pupils have the confidence to try things out, attempting an ambitious answer or putting forward an opinion, secure in the knowledge that the reactions of both teacher and fellow pupils will be sensitive and supportive. Teachers throughout the school set very high expectations of pupils and the effectiveness of their work can be clearly seen in the very good standards of behaviour and the very positive attitudes of pupils in the school. Most lessons move at a good pace that maintains pupils' interest, but occasionally there is a dip in pace and challenge, particularly during the individual and group activities. On these occasions, although pupils behave well, their enthusiasm wanes and they do not make the progress they should.
17. Other weaknesses in teaching often relate to individual lessons, and are not necessarily to be found in all classes. These relate to minor weaknesses in questioning, missed opportunities for pupils to revise their work and evaluate their progress at the end of the lesson, and insufficient attention given to the teaching of subject specific skills, for example in art and design.
18. The teaching and learning of pupils with SEN in class are good. When withdrawn for small group work to match their discerned needs teaching is very good and sometimes it is excellent. Overall, they receive good levels of support from their teachers, aided well by support assistants. Assessment of these pupils is good. There are very good systems in place for their recognition, including very good targets in their Individual Education Plans. However, support assistants and teachers insufficiently record the progress of pupils as it happens to inform further teaching and reviews.
19. Assessment is satisfactory, but there is capacity for improvement. The school uses a range of tests in English and mathematics and end of unit assessments in other subjects to check pupils' progress as they move through the school. There have been particularly good developments in ICT for pupils to evaluate their own progress. However, assessment practice lacks rigour and consistency, and assessment information is not always used effectively to inform teachers' planning.

20. The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is variable. In the best cases, teachers provide pupils with a clear view of the quality of their work, and where they need to improve. There are a few examples where work is not marked and in others where there is a cursory tick. Although pupils have been set targets for improvement, teachers make infrequent references to these in their marking. As a result there are missed opportunities to set high expectations and involve pupils in their own learning.

## **The curriculum**

The overall breadth of curricular opportunities is very good and provision meets statutory requirements. A wide range of educational visits, extra-curricular activities and visits from members of the community provides very good enrichment of pupils' learning. Accommodation and resources are very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Support for learning outside the school day is excellent.
- The promotion of pupils' participation in arts, sports and other activities is very good.
- The school ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- Provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship is very good.
- The very good range of resources supports and enriches pupils' learning.

## **Commentary**

21. The broad curriculum, including religious education meets statutory requirements and provides a rich learning experience that prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their education. Learning opportunities are further enhanced through the provision of French and German as additional subjects, and peripatetic music tuition is provided in stringed, woodwind, keyboard, percussion and brass instruments. The school has benefited from sports training provided by Chelsea Football Club and local community clubs in judo and tennis. A very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and links with members of the community provides very good enrichment of the curriculum and are well attended.
22. Pupils participate in inter-school netball and football, cross country, mini rugby and track events, adding to the school's success in promoting participation in extra-curricular activities. In the arts the school enriches pupil experiences through visits from theatre groups and music workshops. The school ensures that all pupils whatever their social or ethnic background, gender or ability have equal access to all learning opportunities available. The school is fully inclusive. One of the strengths within this is the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum provision for these pupils is very good. They receive very good levels of support when withdrawn for specialist help for literacy and numeracy. When support staff is allocated to them in class they also receive very good levels of support. This helps them to complete the tasks they have in the same way as their fellow pupils. They have a full entitlement to the schools curriculum. Targets in their Individual Education Plans have been considerably improved since the last inspection. They are now very well matched to the specific needs of pupils and to the period of review.
23. The school uses members of the community very well to extend pupils' learning of their responsibilities linked to real life situations as future citizens. Other agencies such as the Life Education Centre and Police Youth Liaison Officer provide good personal and social education including sex and relationships guidance and awareness of drug and alcohol misuse. The school teaches aspects of personal and social development as discreet topics using a commercial scheme, but successfully integrates positive links with the Probation Service, Police and Fire and Rescue Service. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions and suggest solutions to current problems which affect their community.

24. There is a very good range of high quality resources to meet the needs of the curriculum. The provision of computers in the ICT suite and around school is particularly good, and both staff and pupils have become proficient in their use of interactive whiteboards in some classrooms. Accommodation is good but there is limited space in some classrooms to extend and develop practical activities. The school benefits from spacious grounds which provide an exciting additional resource for learning.

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

The school provides a very safe and secure environment in which pupils can thrive. Support, advice and guidance available to pupils are good. The involvement of pupils in the life of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils learn in an effective, very caring and supportive environment, which promotes meaningful relationships with adults.
- The very good induction arrangements enable children to settle into school very quickly.
- Adults working in the school are very good role models and make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Health, safety and child protection procedures are all very good.

### **Commentary**

25. Health and safety procedures, including those related to child protection, are very good and fully meet the needs of the school. The health and safety policy is clear and comprehensive providing valuable information concerning the allocation of specific responsibilities. Risk assessments are thorough, fully documented and effectively implemented. A particular governor has delegated responsibility for health and safety and he, in the company of the deputy head teacher, conducts a site-wide safety audit once per term. A report is submitted to the resources committee, which sanctions any improvements needed. Welfare arrangements are of a very high quality and fully meet pupils' needs.
26. The care, guidance and support afforded pupils are good, and are firmly founded on the very good relationships which exist between them and their teachers. As a result of their close personal knowledge of individual pupils they are able to provide effective pastoral support. However, the quality of this care and guidance is somewhat impeded by the lack of rigorous and systematic monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) makes good contact with infant and secondary schools and the available supportive agencies to determine pupils' needs and attainment.
27. Induction arrangements for new pupils are very good, both for those entering the school at the beginning of Year 3 and those entering at a later stage. Very good liaison has been established with the 11 feeder schools, which has resulted in:
- structured pupil visits during the term prior to entry,
  - systematic transfer of pupil information for the benefit of Year 3 teachers, and
  - the appointment of a designated teacher whose role it is to visit feeder schools and co-ordinate transfer arrangements.
28. Procedures for seeking and acting upon the views of pupils are good. The school council provides an effective channel of communication and its members are rigorous in feeding back information to their particular class and reporting back to the council the views of their classmates. A recent and successful example of pupil initiative, operating through the school council, has been the introduction of the "hire hut" where pupils themselves control the issue and return of playground equipment. More informal consultation is carried out by class

teachers who seek pupils' views on such matters as rules and procedures within their own particular classroom.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Very good partnerships have been established with parents, the local community and with local schools.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very strong links exist with parents based on very effective communications and active parental involvement in the life of the school.
- Links with the local community are very good and significantly enhance pupils' learning.
- Very effective liaison with a wide range of local schools enhances the curriculum and contributes to pupils' achievements.

### Commentary

29. Parents hold the school in very high regard. They consider it to be well led and managed, teaching to be good and children to learn within a very safe and secure environment. Their views are confirmed by inspection evidence.
30. Communication with parents is now very good and has improved considerably since the last inspection. Details of school events are provided through regular newsletters which are both lively and informative. The school prospectus meets statutory requirements and is extremely detailed but could be more attractively presented by the inclusion of photographs and a greater degree of colour. The governors' annual report to parents provides a very clear summary of achievements and events during the previous academic year. Parents receive an annual written report which summarises their children's academic progress and personal development. The reports include personal targets but some of these are somewhat vague and difficult to measure. Written communication is effectively supported by parent evenings which are held termly, and through informal day-to-day discussion which takes place either before or after school. Through an excellent range of letters sent by the SENCO and further face-to-face contact with parents with her and class teachers, parents are very well informed on the needs of their children with special educational needs. For example, letters sent home give parents very good suggestions of how they might assist their child's learning.
31. Parental involvement in the life of the school is very good. Many parents help in the class as was seen in an art and design lesson in Year 3 where three mothers plus a grandmother were very effective in supporting group project activity. Parents are also very effective in providing assistance with external visits and school clubs. The school very effectively encourages parents to assist their children's learning at home and to assist them achieve this makes available curriculum plans, manually and via the web-site, plus a wide range of leaflets explaining how various subjects can be best supported at home. Considerable financial help is provided by the parent teacher association (PTA) which also provided a focus for social interaction between parents and teachers. Parents are effectively consulted through the use of an annual questionnaire, discussion at PTA meetings and through informal contact. Parental views are taken fully into account by the head teacher and governors. Very few complaints or concerns are raised by parents but very good procedures have been established which allow for problems to be raised and resolved.
32. Links with the local community are very good and significantly enhance pupils' learning. A close partnership has been established with a local manufacturing company involving a jointly shared firework display which not only provides much pleasure but also considerable income. Links have also been forged with Chelsea Football Club, the Guildford Flames Ice Hockey Club and various public service organisations including the police and fire services. Pupils are very involved in their local community and regularly sing to senior citizens, a local hospital and a local arthritis group. A strong relationship has been established with the local parish church whose vicar is a regular visitor to the school.

33. Links with local schools are very strong and are highly effective in smoothing the transition into and from the school. A very strong partnership has been established with the local Tomslincote Secondary and Sixth Form College which provides assistance in the teaching of modern languages and with Collingwood College in science and ICT. The establishment of subject based transition units creates a very effective curriculum link between the schools. Very close collaboration also exists with the Kings International School resulting in the formation of a joint Young Enterprise Scheme.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good. The head teacher's very effective leadership provides drive and direction. Competent management is very effectual in ensuring that his vision is carried through, creating a successful and improving school. Governors provide a good level of support.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very effective leadership has shaped confident and flourishing teams across the school with common attitudes, values and beliefs.
- Curriculum leaders are often excellent role models for other staff and pupils.
- The performance management policy is implemented very well, and is integral to the school development system.
- The school takes a healthy and robust approach to financial management and all pupils benefit from the wisely targeted spending.
- The management and monitoring of performance data need to be tightened so that there is a better grasp of the rate at which pupils progress whilst in the school.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties well but should challenge the school more closely in relation to pupils' learning and achievement.

### **Commentary**

34. The school has made very good improvements since the last inspection through the determination, hard work and vision of the head teacher, ably supported by an effective deputy and senior management team. Together they have inspired and generated high levels of commitment and loyalty from all members of staff and respect from parents and the community. Every possible care is taken to ensure that this is an inclusive school, where there are high aspirations for pupils to receive their full entitlement to a quality education. Everyone is treated with respect and consideration at all times. All who work in the school are committed to these ideals and this has had a very positive effect on raising standards since the last report was published.
35. In Ravenscote, aspects of very good leadership are embedded throughout the school and not vested solely in the most senior staff. This is because there is a very strong culture of building leadership capacity from within the school and a number of successful internal promotions have been made in this way. The head teacher believes in delegated leadership, empowering and encouraging others to become leaders at different levels. This philosophy permeates the school with senior managers, team leaders and subject leaders taking on greater responsibility as post-holders. Overall, the quality of subject management is very good. One prime illustration of the positive influence of this is that a number of subject leaders exemplify the most effective teaching across the school and therefore lead by example. These high quality role models also provide support, appropriate resources and training for staff. This, in turn, contributes to improved teaching and, ultimately, higher standards in subjects such as English, ICT and RE.
36. Strategic planning aimed at reaching the school's ambitions is very good. The head teacher has consulted widely on the issues facing the school and takes account of the views of parents and pupils in shaping the priorities for development. The main strategic themes are

illustrated in the school development plan. This coherent and well thought-out document converts strategic decision into action with distinct lines of accountability and time frames for completion over the year.

37. Ravenscote is very effectively managed. The school day runs smoothly because it is organised efficiently. The deputy head teacher addresses the day-to-day routines very successfully with the help of the efficient and helpful office staff. One effect of this is that pupils move around the school with purposeful intent and no time is wasted as was noted in the previous report. Management roles of the team leaders are also well-defined ensuring unambiguous lines of communication and a regular programme of focused meetings in this large school. There is a clear sense of purpose across all the year groups and a positive receptiveness and response to change. As a consequence of this efficient delegation there is a tangible, shared belief that the school's success and high aspirations are a matter of concern for everyone no matter in which year group they teach. This sense of ownership and responsibility is very much a result of the tone set by the head teacher.
38. The management and leadership for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Governors make good contacts with the school and have just recently named a person to be responsible for special educational needs after a period of time where no named person was nominated. This person has a relevant role description. The last annual governors' report in 2003 does not give sufficient detail to parents on the implementation of the policy for special educational needs and a clear enough statement regarding access for the disabled and the governors attempts to improve access. There is no toilet in the school suitable for disabled pupils and there are areas of the school that are not at present accessible for these pupils. There is a very good inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in the day-to-day life of the school.
39. The leadership and management of the provision for the small number of pupils in the school with English as an additional language are good. The school is an inclusive community and works hard to alleviate any barriers to learning such as limited language skills. Pupils with English as an additional language are included effectively in all aspects of school life and their needs are very well taken into account as part and parcel of whole school development. Pupils are well integrated and the school's tracking of their achievements indicates that they make very good progress during their time in Ravenscote.
40. The school has developed and implemented some useful systems for evaluating its performance but there are currently only loose ties between the performance targets set and the assessment of pupils' progress over time. Teachers' assessment practice lacks consistency and there is no systematic attempt to share what works, what doesn't and to look for patterns or trends over time. The ad hoc approach to evaluating achievement and learning does not contribute fully to raising standards and is therefore a missed opportunity. The head teacher has identified this as an area for improvement but has not yet determined how this will happen.
41. Conversely, the implementation and effect of performance management are excellent because they are taken very seriously and viewed as part of managing and improving the performance of the school. This aspect has been strengthened since the last inspection. Outcomes from the effective, well-established monitoring of teaching are used – both as a lever and a catalyst – as an influential management tool. Subsequently, this information is used to help set the priorities in the school development plan and the continuing professional development programme. In fact, the recent focused professional development opportunities enabled all staff to gain greater confidence in teaching the skills of ICT and of using it as a tool to support other subjects. On an individual level, performance management has helped a high number of teachers to meet the threshold standards. The management, induction, organisation and support for teachers new to the school are very good. The deputy head

teacher works very well to give support and guidance to newly appointed or temporary staff that work in the school. All these aspects have a positive influence on the school's provision for its staff.

42. The governors are at an early stage of transition. Following a recent review, the governing body was effectively reconstituted and its way of working rationalised to improve its corporate role. The reduced numbers of governors are informed, interested and involved. Governors follow a rolling programme of visits to classes to find out for themselves how things are going. They are enthusiastic and articulate in their support for the school and have a good understanding of its many strengths, and of the areas for development outlined in the school development plan. However, there is an over-reliance on the head teacher to provide information about the effectiveness of the school. Challenge, therefore, should be greater particularly in regard to questioning the school about the value that teaching adds in terms of pupils' attainment year-on-year.
43. The approaches to financial management are excellent and help the school achieve its educational priorities. This is highly successful because the head teacher works closely with governors to make sure that spending decisions have a direct influence upon raising standards. The funding spent on improving the provision for ICT is a good example of this. Also, the very generous donations from the PTA are targeted towards areas of greatest need. The library refurbishment in 1998 is a very good case in point. More recently, funding for books has been provided with £1000 allocated to each year group.
44. The day-to-day administration of the budget is excellently managed by the experienced and meticulous administrative officer whose eagle eye ensures that resources are controlled effectively. The recent school audit found no areas for major improvement. In summary, the school makes sure that money is spent wisely by researching how to spend it and choosing the goods and services that represent the best value for the school. These principles are applied efficiently to the purchase of equipment and consumable resources, and to the appointment and deployment of staff. A large proportion of the balance of funds being carried forward to the next financial year has been earmarked for the continual improvement of the school's ICT equipment.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,394,950
Total expenditure	1,352,195
Expenditure per pupil	2,296

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	43,533
Balance carried forward to the next	86,288

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS**

### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Standards in the current Year 6 classes are well above average.
- Results in the national tests have improved year on year since the last inspection. The targets set for 2003 were exceeded.
- Pupils' achievement is very good in reading and good in speaking and listening and writing.
- Leadership and management are very good, taking an energetic lead in promoting the subject by modelling excellent teaching practice.
- Opportunities to use language and literacy across the curriculum are very good.
- Most pupils do work and learn well but have the capacity to improve still further. Better use could be made of assessment information to plan appropriately for learning through focused target setting.

#### **Commentary**

45. In 2003, standards in national tests were well above the national average and well above average when compared to similar schools. Over the past five years test results in English have risen steadily, mirroring those seen nationally. Key features in the very good improvement made since the last inspection were the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the specific targeted support for more able pupils, identified as a major area for development in the last report. A positive effect of this intervention was the significant rise in the number of pupils achieving at higher levels in the national tests. In 2003, over half of the pupils reached this higher level with similar predictions for this year. Inspection findings are that the school is sustaining these very high standards in speaking and listening, writing and reading. The achievement of all pupils is good and very good in reading because teachers promote this aspect very well. Pupils enter the school with above average literacy skills and the school is working successfully to improve them.
46. Pupils are very effective communicators. This is an improvement on the finding of the last report, which judged the pupils to lack confidence when talking. Currently, when pupils are given the opportunity, they speak confidently and with relevance. They readily enter into discussion with visitors and enjoy the cut and thrust of a debate, for example in Year 5, about the morals of fox hunting. Their skills in speaking and listening have been strengthened through the strategy of paired discussion (response partners) and this technique is used in a number of classes to encourage good interaction.
47. Pupils enjoy reading because teachers promote a love of reading through their own enthusiasm and the quality of their reading to pupils. Pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy and they are competent readers of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Pupils are ability grouped for guided reading so that even the lowest attaining pupils learn to read confidently with little hesitation and with a secure understanding of the main story line. Year 6 pupils develop critical appreciation of a range of books and are able to talk with discernment about different authors. Pupils are adept at finding the information they need from different sources and demonstrate very good skills in this aspect. Comments made in the reading records indicate good parental support for this element of English.

48. The development of writing skills is a focus for the school this year and standards are improving because of this. Also, of the five discrete literacy lessons a week, three are targeted at writing. As indicated earlier, standards are very good although this judgement generally reflects the finished work seen in the scrutiny of books rather than that observed in lessons. During the inspection much of the written work undertaken involved pupils using white boards and felt pens to draft quick responses or alternatively, using photocopied writing frames to make notes. Whilst these are important skills to be learned, these activities, by their very nature, resulted in the work of a lower quality than that represented in their books. Many pupils observed are not confident spellers and few applied appropriate spelling conventions to improve this. Nevertheless, pupils' books do provide many good examples of a wide range of writing for different purposes.
49. Teaching and learning are good. Much of the success in achieving high standards is due to the consistently good teaching of literacy. One lesson, taken by the subject manager, was judged to be excellent because in her enthusiastic reading of T.S Eliot's poem, 'Macavity', she brought to life the 'mystery cat' and enthralled the pupils with her characterisation. Other key features in teaching include:
- Well planned and structured lessons with common planning across each of the five classes in the year group. This ensures that pupils in parallel classes have similar experiences.
  - Learning intentions are shared so there is a good understanding of what will be learned in ways that make sense to pupils. Teachers often build on what has gone on before.
  - Insistence on high standards of behaviour and mutual respect.
  - Adults value pupils' contributions and often succeed in capturing their interest and participation by asking probing questions. Pupils' responses are often thoughtful and considered.
  - Good use is made of time and resources and the teachers mark routinely the work of pupils, offering useful guidance for improvement in the comments made.
  - Well trained support teachers and assistants provide good support in lessons and slower learners benefit greatly from their involvement.
50. There is capacity for teachers to improve pupils' achievement still further. At times there is a dip in pace and challenge, particularly during the individual and group activities. Teachers need to be alert to the lack of demand in some of the work that is offered. Teachers are not always consistent in their approach to the checking and evaluating of pupils' progress in the key skills.
51. The subject is very well led and managed. The manager is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and her own teaching, as highlighted, provides a very good role model for her colleagues. Through monitoring teaching and analysing pupils' work she has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in English although she recognises she doesn't have sufficient grasp of performance data to predict accurately results this year. Resources for the subject are good and the parent teacher association provides generously the funds to boost the selection of books available across the year groups.

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

52. Very good use is made of literacy in a number of subjects of the curriculum and this has a most positive and significant impact on the development of pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Pupils enhance writing techniques and accuracy through subjects such as science, religious education, geography and history, where various styles are used to present work, such as diary writing and others' personal accounts. Pupils' very good reading skills enable them to access information for independent research and projects. This aspect is best amplified by the example of the use of a multi-media presentation with speech bubbles and digital pictures to enhance a storyboard plot in Year 6.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the current Year 6 classes are well above average.
- Teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of mathematics, and questioning is used effectively to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils are developing and using mental strategies well.
- Information technology is used well to support pupils' learning.
- Marking is uneven in quality throughout the school.
- Work is not always sufficiently tailored to meet individual pupils' learning needs.

### Commentary

53. Standards in Year 6 are currently well above the national average and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment.
54. Teaching and learning are good as teachers' knowledge and understanding enable them to ask rigorous questions which are well targeted at all abilities. They manage pupils well and all are on task and motivated during lessons. Pupils are encouraged to share their strategies and there was evidence during the inspection that they are successfully building on previous learning. In two very good lessons teachers used the pupils well to illustrate teaching points and this promotes their confidence and respect in the class. Learning objectives are shared with pupils and are often well focused on helping pupils to check their learning. There is a good emphasis on the importance of mathematical language and pupils use the appropriate terminology with confidence. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teachers have high expectations of their pupils and overall the presentation of work is of a high standard. Teachers use interactive whiteboards and computers with confidence, demonstrating concepts such as translation of shapes in Year 5 and reflection of shapes in Year 4. This resource clearly enhances the quality of teaching and learning in these classes.
55. Lessons are based on the National Strategy units of work and are structured with common planning across each of the five classes in the year group. This ensures that pupils in parallel classes have similar experiences. Although this works well most of the time, during the inspection there was evidence that some pupils found difficulty with understanding the concept being taught and so their levels of achievement were reduced. In contrast to this, the subject leader taught an excellent lesson, which was very carefully tailored to the individual learning needs of pupils. She included all groups of pupils through skilful questioning, and provided pupils with opportunities to share their learning strategies, which effectively assessed their understanding and promoted their self-esteem.
56. Assessment is satisfactory and the subject manager is fully aware of the need to add rigour to the present system to ensure that individuals' achievement is checked to inform future targets and lesson plans. Marking of pupils' work is of variable quality. Most teachers are marking to provide encouragement and praise but there is little evidence of evaluative comments that ensure that pupils know how to improve their work.
57. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject manager is knowledgeable and fully aware of the standards of work throughout the school using regular monitoring of teaching, pupils work, planning and discussions with pupils. She has already identified using and applying mathematics as an area for further development in the school.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. Good use is made of mathematics in a number of subjects of the curriculum. Pupils apply their mathematical skills in geography when they calculate the width, depth and velocity of a river or interpret local maps using coordinates. Pupils often use computers to collect, sort, and organise data, and produce block and line graphs, and pie charts.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in the current Year 6 classes are above average.
- Pupils achieve well as a result of overall good and sometimes very good teaching.
- There is a good emphasis on developing all aspects of science, including practical and investigative work.
- In some classes achievement is very good and standards are well above average.
- There are sometimes insufficient opportunities for pupils' collaborative and independent learning.
- Many pupils are unsure what to do next to further develop their standards and achievements.

### **Commentary**

59. Standards in science by the end of Year 6 are above average. In 2003 national tests standards were well above average. Standards are not as high in Year 6 as they were at the last inspection when they were well above average. The trend over time has been for standards to be well above average. A reason for the fall back this year in Year 6 is that pupils do not always know what to do to improve. They are insufficiently set individual targets saying what they should do next to improve their standards. Lessons seen and samples of work in Years 4 and 5, where many pupils are clearer regarding what they should do to improve, indicate they are achieving well above average standards. Overall the school does well for its pupils, with all groups making good progress and achieving well.
60. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. In lessons seen during the inspection teaching never fell below good and varied between good and very good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, and planning shows a clear focus, pupils learn well, showing high levels of interest and enthusiasm for the subject and concentrate very well working hard at their tasks with good levels of understanding. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to investigate and carry out experiments. Teachers make very good use of questioning to determine what their pupils know and evaluate work across class very well as the lesson progresses. However, a few lessons are too teacher-centred with the pupils not always given sufficient time and opportunities to plan their own investigations or to work collaboratively and independently. The marking of pupils' completed work is uneven across the school. Best practice, not often seen, informs the pupils what they need to do to improve and gives them a clear target to achieve to help them to improve their standard. Pupils do not always follow up what the teacher says what they need to do next.
61. Even though the standards by the end of Year 6 are not as high as at the time of the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved and pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved. There is now a greater use of computer technology to support teaching and learning and to promote individual research. The use of assessment with a clear statement on what individual pupils need to do next with clear targets shared with the pupils to stretch their attainments further is still under-developed and more able pupils are not always taken as far as they could go.

62. There is a good development plan to take the subject forwards. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The very good contact with local secondary schools with a secondary teacher coming to work in the school and pupils visiting the school is impacting well on standards. The subject is well resourced and there are good curriculum links with English, mathematics, design and technology and geography.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection and are now above average.
- Pupils are achieving well because of good teaching and effective support provided by teaching assistants and ICT technicians.
- All aspects of the ICT curriculum are well covered within the scheme of work.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum has been developed well, but there is capacity for further improvements.

### **Commentary**

63. Standards in Year 6 are above average. These standards are higher than those recorded in the previous report, and are as a direct result of improvements in the quality of teaching and resources. The school has been particularly effective in using performance management targets to improve the quality of teaching in this subject.
64. Teaching and learning are good, and pupils achieve well. Teachers show secure subject knowledge and confidence when they make good use of the data projector and interactive whiteboard in the ICT suite to demonstrate procedures they want the pupils to follow. Teachers provide pupils with clear step-by-step instructions that enable them to make connections in their learning and to achieve well. This skill was illustrated particularly well in a lesson in a Year 5 class, where pupils developed their ability to use control language and write a simple procedure to control a set of traffic lights. Pupils achieved well in this lesson because they were well motivated, responding well to the teacher's high expectations, and were provided with particularly good levels of support by the class teacher and ICT technician.
65. In the best lessons teachers clearly identify the skills to be learned, and how these will come together to create, for example an animation. In a very good lesson in a Year 6 class for example, pupils confidently used digital cameras to record a series of photographs, which they then downloaded into a computer and subsequently imported the pictures into a multi-media package. Many pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the program, making their pictures bigger or smaller and adding speech bubbles to explain the series of movements that made up the animation. During the lesson pupils worked very effectively in pairs, demonstrating very good negotiating skills as they decided what animation they were to do, and what role each would play.
66. The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic and influential teacher. She has been instrumental in bringing about many of the improvements in all aspects of provision in this subject. She checks teachers' planning, samples pupils' work and works closely with other teachers and support staff to develop their confidence and expertise with new programs. The ICT scheme is based on national guidance and the good lesson planning based on it encourages the systematic development of ICT skills as pupils move up the school. Skills are clearly planned and reinforced and there are particularly good opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to a given task. Assessment procedures are developing well

with a specific focus on pupils evaluating what they know at the outset of a topic and then what they have learned by the end. Three ICT technicians not only ensure effective use of computers in the computer suite but also provide pupils with good levels of support in lessons.

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

67. There are good examples of ICT being used well in other areas of the curriculum. In literacy, pupils write stories, plan trips and combine text and graphics when designing an advertisement, for example. In mathematics, pupils use spreadsheets to create graphs and branching data bases to sort, for example types of food or 'minibeasts'. The school very effectively uses a computer program for pupils with special educational needs to practice basic skills in English and mathematics, and this provision contributes significantly to the progress they make. There is further capacity for subject leaders and teachers to plan more systematically the opportunities for pupils to use their computer skills across the curriculum. The school has correctly identified the need to continue to develop this aspect of its work.

## **HUMANITIES**

Geography and religious education are reported in full. History was sampled as only one lesson was observed.

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in Year 6 are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good, and pupils achieve well.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to apply their language and literacy skills.
- There are good opportunities for independent research.

### **Commentary**

68. Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. This constitutes good progress since the last inspection, and reflects improvements in the quality of teaching and greater opportunities for pupils to undertake independent research.
69. Teaching and learning are good. In the best lessons teachers clearly explain the task in hand, providing clear step-by-step instructions, ensuring pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers often provide pupils with a wide range of resources that effectively promote the development of geographical skills. Pupils often use CD ROMs and the Internet to explore and research different topics. Through these opportunities pupils develop good research skills, and gain good insights into the geographical features of different parts of the world, for example St Lucia and the Amazon Basin. In a very good lesson, pupils in a Year 6 demonstrated a good awareness of physical features of mountainous regions, for example glaciers and U-shaped valleys, and the effects of weathering and erosion. They provided well-reasoned arguments about how weather conditions enhanced or detracted from tourism in a specific area. During the lesson the teacher posed challenging questions to assess pupils' understanding and to take their learning forward. The teacher set high expectations and in response pupils worked with interest and good levels of concentration.
70. The curriculum is good and effectively promotes the development of geographical skills. There are particularly good opportunities for pupils to study contrasting locations, with them making observations about their similarities and differences, and expressing their opinions about what

they like and dislike. Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well through this subject. For example, pupils write letters and reports, create leaflets and posters, and take measurements during a river study. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has been instrumental in developing the curriculum to include environmental topics and encouraged a greater focus on the promotion pupils' geographical skills. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are adequate, but the subject leader recognises the need to record more systematically the development of pupils' skills in this subject.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good coverage of the locally agreed syllabus.
- Pupils are very well encouraged to apply religious doctrine to their every-day lives.
- There are very good links with the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and their personal development.

### Commentary

71. Standards of attainment are well above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is a big improvement since the last inspection when they were in line with the national expectation. Pupils are well encouraged to research topics and very well to apply their writing skills with clear, well developed explanations of what they have learnt and their own findings. Achievement over time is very good. Their achievement is related to assessment which tracks well the coverage of the subject.
72. Teaching and learning are very good overall and varied from occasionally satisfactory to excellent across the period of inspection. Pupils are developing a very good understanding of the major religions of the world. For example, they discuss knowledgeably the similarities and differences between Hinduism and Christianity. The school provides pupils with very good opportunities to link their spiritual, moral and social development and cultural development to their personal and social development. This can be seen when pupils explore the concepts of good and evil and the impact of religion on people's lives and the way they conduct themselves.
73. Parents across a range of faiths are invited into school to discuss with pupils their religions and the pupils talk with high levels of understanding about these visits and their visit to a mosque, churches, a temple and a synagogue. Overall, assessment is satisfactory. It places an appropriate emphasis on the recording of the coverage of the subject, supporting well the achievement of the pupils. Marking is uneven. It very often rewards effort and does not state what they need to learn to increase their understanding. Their literacy skills are very well applied to the subject.
74. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader has a very good awareness of needed developments and has devised a very good action plan to take the subject forwards. Here pupil self-assessment is appropriately noted for improvement. Resources are good and there is an increasing use of ICT to aid the pupils' understanding and research.
75. In **history** standards are above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. Pupils achieve well and they respond well to the good teaching they receive. Through studying a range of topics pupils develop a good sense of the passing of time and acquire knowledge and understanding of different periods and people. For example, in the good lesson observed in Year 4, pupils sensibly discussed why Boudicca was

killed, presenting plausible explanations by effectively drawing on their knowledge of the political situation that existed at the time.

76. Theatre visits enhance pupils' understanding of historical events. For example, a History Alive Workshop provided pupils in Year 6 an opportunity to experience the conditions that governed the lives of people during World War 2. This led to some wonderful empathetic pieces of writing about war time at Christmas.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Art and design and music are reported in full. Design and technology and physical education were sampled because no lessons were seen in design and technology, and the focus of physical education lessons was games and swimming, with no dance or gymnastics being observed.

### **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject manager has begun to implement assessment and evaluation.
- Art and design is used effectively to support other areas of the curriculum.
- There is insufficient focus on the teaching of skills.

### **Commentary**

77. Standards in Year 6 are currently average. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Standards in Year 6 are lower than those recorded at the time of the last inspection. Until recent times this subject has not been a focus for development.
78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with a few examples of good and very good teaching. In lessons where teaching was satisfactory, teachers do not always provide pupils with the necessary skills to improve the quality of their work. For example in a lesson in a Year 5 class, pupils were asked to draw elements of the environment from memory and the teacher missed the opportunity to improve pupils' observational skills through work in the school grounds. In a very good lesson in Year 6, the teacher was confident in demonstrating skills, making suggestions and building on previous learning. She used former pupils' work as examples of good practice to encourage and raise expectations of performance. Pupils in this class showed a confident enthusiastic approach to their art, demonstrating a good range of skills as they enlarged still life drawings prior to painting them.
79. The school uses the nationally recommended guidelines and the subject leader plans to implement changes to the scheme of work to more closely reflect the needs of the pupils. The subject is used effectively to support other subjects in the curriculum. In Year 6, colourful kites were created linked to carnivals in St Lucia and pupils in Year 3 designed pots with Greek designs as part of their work in history. Year 4 pupils had made masks using card linked to the story, 'Where the wild things are'. During the inspection good links were made with science in Year 3 when pupils suggested improvements to the environment and in Year 4 reactions to works by famous artists were used satisfactorily as a stimulus for expressive writing.
80. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has supported non-specialist teachers through working alongside them in the classroom. She evaluates planning and has observed teaching and learning. She has begun to implement assessment of individual skills in drawing, and pupils are involved in evaluation of their own standards of work and that of their peers. The overall quality of display throughout the school lacks the vibrant quality often associated with the subject. There are some good examples particularly in Year 6

but the range overall is limited and does not reflect colour, pattern, line, shape and form using other media such as textiles, sculpture and computer design.

## Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Maintenance of well above average standards.
- All pupils achieve very well because of very good teaching and learning.
- Very good opportunities to play a wide range of instruments.
- Use of assessment is under-developed.

### Commentary

81. Since the last inspection standards have remained well above average. Supported by the very good subject expertise of the teacher pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. Older pupils very successfully use a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments to improvise melody and rhythm, performing significant parts demonstrating an awareness of their own contributions such as leading, taking a solo part or providing rhythmic support. Practical standards to play music are very well enhanced through the very good range of opportunities to play a wide range of musical instruments supported by the very good input of professional musicians.
82. Teaching is very good overall and is occasionally excellent. This supports the very good learning of the pupils. They work very hard at their tasks, concentrating and rising to the very high level of expectation and challenge set by the teacher. The subject leader has appropriately discerned the need to develop assessment to enable the pupils to be clear regarding what they individually need to do to improve the areas of work where there are weakness, such as intonation and phasing when singing.
83. The taught curriculum is very well extended after school with the provision of a junior (Years 3 and 4) and a senior choir (Years 5 and 6). These are very well supported by pupils. About 50 pupils regularly attend the junior choir and about 20 pupils the senior choir. The school has a developing orchestra of about 16 pupils, representing brass, woodwind, string and percussion instruments for which they get tuition from the visiting professional musicians. Good contacts are made with a local secondary school where their music teacher and some Year 7 pupils come to this school. Pupils visit homes for the elderly, usually at Christmas time, to entertain the residents and a choir has sung in Guilford Cathedral. About 50 pupils have recently very successfully performed at a local schools festival.
84. The subject is very well led by the specialist music teacher who gives freely of her time. The provision of a room for the teaching of music gives a very good access to the wide and relevant range of music resources.
85. In **design and technology** standards are above average. In Year 3, there is evidence of pupils developing skills for strengthening paper, using techniques such as folding, rolling and layering. In Year 5, pupils used skills such as cutting, reinforcing, joining and stitching to make slippers. In Year 6, pupils successfully made cam toys of good quality and accuracy that clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of their design and making skills. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows their planning for projects includes details of specification and criteria for successful design with evaluation and developmental recording. Pupils are involved in making assessments about their own work and the work of their peers. This process is effective in raising pupils' awareness of the quality of work produced and also enables them to have a clear view of where they can improve.



86. The school follows the nationally recommended scheme of work but has begun to make modifications to suit the needs of pupils. The subject manager has introduced assessment and recording and has made very good links with secondary schools to provide opportunities to improve pupils' achievements and to raise standards.
87. In **physical education** standards are above average in athletics, games and swimming. In athletics lessons, pupils demonstrate good levels of co-ordination as they develop triple jump skills. In games' lessons a significant minority of pupils in Year 6 demonstrate good throwing, catching, bowling and batting skills. By the time pupils leave the school the vast majority swim 25 metres, with a significant number swimming much longer distances.
88. Teaching and learning are good. The strengths in teaching relate to planning, management and organisation, good guidance on how pupils can improve their performance, and good use of pupils to illustrate teaching points and highlight good practice. In response, pupils are keen and enthusiastic, demonstrate good attitudes to their learning and achieve well. Occasionally, the pace of lessons is too slow, and as a result pupils lose interest and limited progress is made. The curriculum is well structured to include all the required elements. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader regularly provides demonstration lessons and has a clear over-view of the subject. Resources for learning are good.

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

89. Pupils' **personal, social and health education** and **citizenship** is very good. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education supports this area of learning very well. The programme implemented by the school raises pupils' awareness of feelings, values and beliefs of others and makes a positive contribution to their self-esteem. The school successfully uses members of the community such as the police and fire and rescue service to ensure pupils are developing an awareness of responsibility and this is supported well by the programme of citizenship. Issues such as drug and alcohol awareness and sex education are provided through contacts with local community services.

## 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	2
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>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<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	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2

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