

INSPECTION REPORT

WEST BYFLEET INFANT SCHOOL

West Byfleet

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125003

Headteacher: Mrs S James

Lead inspector: Mrs L Brackstone

Dates of inspection: 12th – 14th January 2004

Inspection number: 258346

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	166
School address:	Camphill Road West Byfleet Surrey
Postcode:	KT14 6EF
Telephone number:	(01932) 343 260
Fax number:	(01932) 356 481
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Cross
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

West Byfleet Infant School is situated in the centre of a thriving community with a strong commuter function. It is a small school with 166 pupils on roll and caters for pupils aged four to seven, in two classes per year group. The vast majority of pupils come from white British backgrounds and the number of pupils using English as an additional language is very low. Children mainly come from supportive homes with good standards of literacy and numeracy. Most are from united families who own their houses. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is six per cent and this is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is ten per cent, which is below average. Currently, there are no pupils with statements for special educational needs. The children have attended local private nurseries and playgroups and attainment on entry is average. The school received an achievement award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21872	Mrs L Brackstone	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs English as an additional language Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Religious education
9173	Ms S McDermott	Lay inspector	
30669	Mrs M Sandercock	Team inspector	English Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is a very good school where all staff work very well together as a team. Leadership and management are of **very high** quality. Teaching is **very good**; the planned curriculum is **very stimulating**, which enables all pupils to learn effectively. Consequently, by the end of Year 2, overall standards are **above** average. The school provides **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards attained in speaking, listening, reading and mathematics are well above average. In writing, science and art and design, they are above average.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, her deputy, senior staff and the governing body are of very high quality.
- The quality of teaching and learning are very good.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and they have very positive attitudes to learning.
- All pupils have equal access to a very stimulating curriculum, which provides excellent opportunities for enrichment activities.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school cultivates pupils' personal development very well.
- Support, care and pupil guidance are of very high quality, with the school very actively seeking the views of the pupils.
- The indoor accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- Too many children are taken off school for holidays.

Improvement since the last inspection is **very good** with all key issues being tackled effectively. In addition to this, the leadership and management of the school, the quality of teaching and learning and curricular provision have improved significantly.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	A	A	A	A
writing	A	B	A	B
mathematics	A	A*	A	C

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Pupils' achievement is good and there are no differences in the attainment between boys and girls or any particular ethnic group. Pupils start school with attainment as expected for this age group and they achieve well in the Foundation Stage. By the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, overall attainment is above the expected levels in all areas of learning except for knowledge and understanding of the world, which is as expected for this age group. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and they attain well above national standards in speaking, listening, reading and mathematics and above average standards in writing and science. Pupils also achieve well in art and design. By the end of Year 2, standards in history are as expected. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. No judgement was made on standards in design and technology, geography, music and physical education.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good overall and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work; they are eager to please and keen to succeed. They are confident and all pupils work and play together happily. Behaviour is very good. Punctuality is good but attendance is only satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school. Very high standards of behaviour are consistently expected and staff treat all pupils fairly. Teaching assistants contribute very effectively to the quality of lessons. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and they plan their lessons to ensure that the pupils acquire appropriate knowledge and skills. Pupils are well challenged through the very good use of questioning skills and this ensures that they are encouraged to apply their skills. Teaching methods are good and staff encourage the pupils to work both independently and co-operatively. **Procedures to check and track pupils' progress are very good.** Pupils have a very clear understanding about how they can improve. The curriculum is very well balanced and extremely well enriched by a highly effective programme of extra-curricular activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Resources are good but the indoor accommodation is unsatisfactory. Links with local schools and the local community are good. There are particularly strong links with the Junior School next door. Many parents work effectively with the school and support their children in their learning. However, a significant number of parents fail to understand the detrimental effect on their children's education when they are taken off school for holidays during term time.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has an excellent educational vision for the school which she shares with her very committed staff and the very supportive and knowledgeable governing body.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are very good. Parents are particularly pleased with the headteacher, the staff and the very good range of learning activities on offer. Pupils' views are also very positive. They feel very supported and know that if they have a problem someone in school will help them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Develop independent writing skills across the curriculum and review the style of handwriting taught on entry into school.
- The school, the governors and the local education authority need to review the cramped and inadequate accommodation.
- The school needs to make parents aware of the detrimental effect holidays during term time have upon the education of their children.
- The school needs to increase its vigilance in relation to the safety of staff, pupils and visitors in the car park at the front of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards of attainment on entry into school are as expected in all areas of learning. Achievement is good in the Reception classes and by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, overall attainment is above expected levels. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and by the time they leave this school, standards are above average overall and well above average in speaking, listening, reading and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in speaking, listening, reading and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above average with the more capable pupils working confidently within the higher than expected level.
- Pupils achieve well in writing, science and art and design. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average.

Commentary

Standards on entry into school and achievement through the Foundation Stage

1. Children start school with standards of attainment that are as expected. Achievement is good in the Reception classes because the quality of teaching and learning is very good. By the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, attainment is above the expected levels in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, physical development and creative development. Standards in knowledge and understanding are in line with the recommended expectations for this age group.
2. At the time of the last inspection, children were judged to be starting school with standards above those expected for this age group and progress was considered satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. However, progress in the Foundation Stage is now considered good and this is because the quality of teaching has improved.

Standards attained and achievement made from Years 1 to 2

3. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, standards attained in speaking, listening, reading and mathematics are well above average with more capable pupils working confidently within the higher than expected level for this age group. Standards in writing and science are above average but fewer more capable pupils are working within the higher than expected level. This is because writing skills are not sufficiently well developed across the curriculum. In addition to this, pupils who find writing hard are hampered by the style of writing taught in school. Standards in art and design are good with more pupils than expected working within the higher than expected level for their age group. Standards in history are as expected; pupils have a good verbal knowledge of this subject but because of missed opportunities for writing, their skills are not fully consolidated. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus but pupils could achieve more if they used writing skills to develop the ideas and themes discussed in these lessons. No judgements were made on standards attained in design and technology, geography and physical education. Pupils were observed singing, which was of satisfactory quality, but no judgement was made on overall standards in music.
4. At the time of the last inspection, standards in speaking, listening, writing, mathematics and science were considered to exceed national expectations at the end of Year 2. Standards

were judged to be average in reading. This means that improvement in standards since the last inspection has been very good.

Current standards compared to the most recent national tests in 2003

5. In the results of the National Curriculum tests of 2003 for pupils in Year 2, as illustrated in the table below, attainment was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison to similar schools, standards were well above average in reading and above average in writing. When compared to similar schools, standards in mathematics were recorded as average, despite the fact that all pupils attained the expected level and well over one-third of pupils exceeded it and were judged to be working at a higher stage. It was felt that this may be a mistake in the data presented and at the time of the inspection the school was investigating this issue. Trends in the performance of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently above the national average over the past few years.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003¹

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.6 (18.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.0 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.4 (19.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Whole school issues

6. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are gifted and talented, achieve well in relation their prior attainment because they are provided with an interesting range of activities that ensure that they work at their own level. There are no differences in the attainment of different ethnic groups or between the achievement of boys and girls.
7. Pupils are effectively encouraged to use their numeracy and information and communication technology skills well across the curriculum. For instance, teachers make very good use of a range of computer programs to reinforce science skills. Mathematical games support counting skills and help pupils to recognise numbers. However, insufficient use is made of writing to develop skills across the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This impacts very effectively on pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour, which is of very high quality. The attendance of the pupils is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are particularly enthusiastic to participate and to find out more both in and out of lessons.
- They have exemplary relationships with each other and with adults.
- The school sets high expectations of good behaviour and the pupils respond very well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils are confident and very willing to take on responsibilities.

¹ All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age seven is 15.5. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

- Pupils' spiritual development is good because staff encourage them to explore values and beliefs in a respectful environment.
- Provision for cultural development is very good; they provide high quality opportunities for artistic and cultural activities, which are reinforced through displays and posters.
- Attendance levels are only satisfactory because an increasing number of parents take their children out of school in the term time.

Commentary

8. Pupils really enjoy their time at school. They arrive happily in the morning and settle down very quickly to their lessons. They like being at school because lessons are fun. All the adults are extremely welcoming and have a special word for each of them. In lessons, pupils are very keen to contribute and give their answers. In the Year 1 lessons, the pupils are encouraged to nod their heads when they think they know the answer, so often in whole-class sessions the teacher is shown a sea of bobbing heads! Pupils are very good at having a go at new activities. In the Reception classes, the children were observed enthusiastically showing their artwork, which was based on the new concept of symmetry. Out of lessons, the pupils participate eagerly in *Golden Time*, when they can choose a wide range of interesting activities, such as solving mathematical puzzles, planting bulbs and doing gym. The attitudes of the pupils have improved further since the last inspection.
9. Provision for social development is very good, consequently, pupils get on extremely well with each other. By collaborating well in lessons, they spark new ideas and extend their learning. They listen attentively when their classmates are speaking. Many of the classrooms are cramped, but all pupils are very careful not to tread on each other's hands and feet when moving around during group work on the carpet. The outstanding relationships with the adults in the school make for some very effective learning. Pupils look up to the adults and are confident to ask for their support and advice. At lunchtimes, adults are very attentive to pupils' needs, although sometimes the older pupils too readily ask for help in cutting up their food when they are really old enough to do it themselves.
10. Provision for moral development is very good. The school has very clear strategies to promote good behaviour, very much based on the positive approach. The expectations for behaviour are written in large letters in a prominent position in the hall, for all adults and pupils to see. Pupils respond very well to the reward systems and consequently look upon good behaviour as the norm. In assembly, pupils were particularly excited to see if the number of marbles they had collected in their class jar for good behaviour was enough to win a favourite treat. Pupils feel very special when they climb the stairs to the headteacher's room to show her their good work. The often very good behaviour in lessons is a real asset to effective learning. It is very rare for pupils' learning to be interrupted by the inappropriate actions of others. The good order and maturity of the pupils in assembly are impressive. They come in quietly and sensibly, knowing exactly where to sit, concentrate well and are quiet and reverent during the time for reflection. There have been no exclusions.
11. The happy and well-ordered ethos of the school creates confident and self-assured pupils. Children arriving in the Reception class are settled in extremely well and very soon are able to cope with school life. Pupils enjoy being involved in the daily school routines. They willingly take the registers back to the office or help to clear up at the end of lessons. The older pupils feel very important when they help in assembly and take on their responsibilities maturely and sensibly. Pupils enjoy talking to visitors and showing them their school. However, on occasion, some pupils can be a little bumptious, which, although amusing in the youngest pupils, can make the older pupils seem cocksure and self-opinionated.
12. Provision for spiritual development is good. Assemblies, religious education, music, history and art and design all provide very good opportunities for pupils to reflect and understand their interdependence with others. In religious education, pupils explore the values and beliefs of people of the Christian faith and other world faiths. Opportunities to develop spirituality through

music are promoted well. For instance, music is played as the pupils enter the hall for assembly and then discussed with them. Opportunities in art and design are very good, with pupils taught to look carefully at their surroundings and observe more closely the wonders of nature in their close observational drawing. Teachers are successful in creating a calm, harmonious atmosphere that encourages learning. The Collective Act of Worship supports spiritual development very well. There is a feeling of quietness and worship, and a strong sense of the special place this time has in a busy day.

13. Provision for cultural development is very good. Opportunities are provided for studying the values and traditions of Christianity and some aspects of other cultures. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. Opportunities are provided for studying the values and traditions of Christianity and some aspects of other cultures. Reflecting on the work of famous artists such as William Morris helps to support the development of pupils' own techniques. The school has a positive link with a small village in West India and they sponsor a pupil at the local school. This helps the privileged pupils of West Byfleet appreciate what they have.
14. Attendance levels are similar to most primary schools. However, they have deteriorated significantly since the last inspection when they were judged to be very good. The main reason for this is the growing number of parents who take their children out of school in term time for family holidays. In the autumn term alone, there were over 30 holidays (roll 166). The headteacher is sympathetic to families who find it extremely difficult to arrange holidays in the normal time, but is starting to take a strong stand against the cavalier approach of some parents who too easily allow their children to miss vital schooling. The staff do all they can to settle pupils on return. A child who was away for a long time due to illness was observed being very sensitively supported to make sure she was learning well as soon as possible. However, the disruption caused by pupils coming back from holidays at various times causes unnecessary stress, both to teachers and not least to the returning children, who often find it a difficult, tearful time when they are unsettled. Consequently, they do not learn as effectively as they could.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	90	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	9	0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching and learning are of very high quality. The very well qualified staff teach a very well balanced curriculum, despite the unsatisfactory nature of the indoor accommodation. They have access to a good range of learning resources. Links with parents, other schools and the local community are very good. Pupils' care, guidance and support are good. However, there are shortcomings in the use of writing skills to support subjects such as science, history and religious education.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is very good. The procedures for checking and tracking their progress over time are of very high quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and the lessons planned ensure that the pupils acquire appropriate knowledge and skills.
- They have very high expectations of behaviour through efficient organisation and the consistent implementation of the behaviour policy.
- Pupils are well challenged through the very good use of questioning skills and this ensures that they are encouraged to apply their skills.
- Teaching assistants are used very well to support pupils.
- Teachers and teaching staff ensure that all pupils are treated fairly.
- Teaching methods are good and staff encourage the pupils well to work both independently and co-operatively.
- Procedures to check and track pupils' progress are very good. Pupils have a very clear understanding about how they can improve.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	13	10	0	0	0	0

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

15. At the time of the last inspection, most of the teaching was judged to be satisfactory. A significant minority of lessons were considered unsatisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection and over half of the lessons observed were of very good quality. Consequently, very good improvement has been made since the last inspection.
16. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and work very hard to ensure that the pupils acquire appropriate knowledge and skills. They are extremely sensitive to the needs of each individual pupil and use humour well to make learning fun. This also helps to build very good relationships and helps pupils feel confident about expressing views and opinions. For example, in a very good lesson with the youngest children, the two Reception class teachers and their teaching assistant had a relaxed and friendly rapport with each other and this had a positive impact on the achievement of the children.
17. Lessons are very thoughtfully planned and teachers make sure that tasks are modified appropriately to match pupils' varying stages of development. For instance, pupils in Year 2 are organised into ability groups for literacy and numeracy. Lessons have clear learning objectives that identify new skills to be taught. This was evident in a Reception music lesson where the teacher explained to the children that they were going to learn about beat. The teacher continually referred to this musical term and at the end of the session the children

were able to show the knowledge they had gained by playing simple instruments in time to the beat.

18. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and insist that all pupils must work hard at all times. This is very effectively achieved through efficient organisation and the consistent implementation of the behaviour policy. For instance, in a very good history lesson in a Year 1 class, the teacher expected all her class to be *'sitting up and concentrating'*. She rewarded good behaviour with 'star' cushions which pupils were able to sit on if they behaved particularly well. Pupils are also well challenged through the very good use of questioning skills and this ensures that they are encouraged to apply their skills.
19. Very good use is made of teaching assistants and other support in the classrooms to help pupils increase their understanding. They work very well alongside the class teachers and effectively interact with children, ensuring that individuals increase their understanding. Teachers and teaching staff ensure that all pupils are treated fairly.
20. Teaching methods are good and staff encourage the pupils well to work both independently and co-operatively. This provides them with good opportunities to understand new skills through discussion with their peers. The pupils are quite clear about the appropriate noise level when they are required to work on an individual basis. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to talk to each other at appropriate times but controlled the level of chat through a 'noise wheel', which consisted of a range of acceptable sounds. This also ensured that pupils were productive in the lesson.
21. A good range of teaching resources is used, which motivates the interest of the pupils in their learning. For instance, in a good Year 2 religious education lesson the teacher made effective use of an electronic presentation to motivate and interest the pupils. Lessons generally move at a brisk pace but occasionally the older pupils are required to sit on the carpet area for too long. This was evident in a Year 2 history session when the enthusiasm of the teachers and their very good use of resources became too much for the pupils, who became restless after sitting for a long time.
22. Procedures to check and track pupils' progress are very good. Pupils have a very clear understanding about how they can improve because group targets are clearly displayed in the classrooms. This is a significant improvement since the time of the previous inspection when it was felt that assessment procedures were inconsistent. Pupils' learning is checked regularly and teachers keep extensive records of pupils' attainment in all subject areas. This information is used very effectively to ensure that pupils are provided with work that is suited to their individual needs.
23. Teachers ensure that all pupils benefit from the learning opportunities provided and achieve well. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are identified early and good measures taken to support them in class. The teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from other ethnic groups is also very good. They are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Children with bilingual skills, who are not in the earliest stages of learning English, are carefully assessed by an outside agency and support is provided if necessary.

The curriculum

The quality and range of the curriculum are very good. It meets all requirements and caters particularly well for the needs of all pupils. Opportunities to enrich the pupils' learning are excellent. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils. Learning resources are good and support the curriculum well. However, the overall accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is very well planned and offers an excellent range of extra-curricular experiences.
- Pupils are very well prepared for their next stage in education.
- The school has very good arrangements to ensure that all pupils' needs are met, including the provision for pupils with special educational needs, which is very good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- The very good number of teaching assistants and suitably qualified staff and the high level of resources help to ensure that the curriculum is taught well.
- Teachers have to plan lessons extremely carefully to ensure that the unsatisfactory accommodation does not impact negatively on the curriculum.

Commentary

24. The curriculum is very well planned and has improved in quality since the last inspection. Great care is taken to provide learning activities that pupils find interesting and relevant. This ensures that all pupils achieve well and is made possible through:
- A very good curriculum in the Foundation Stage that meets the children's needs effectively. Many activities are planned in the Reception classes, which help children to achieve well in all the areas of learning.
 - In Years 1 and 2, the staff work very hard to provide a meaningful curriculum that is based firmly on the National Curriculum.
 - Throughout the school, there is a very strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills and personal, social and emotional development.
 - Careful thought to curriculum innovation.
 - Excellent enrichment opportunities, which are provided through a good range of visits and visitors and an extremely effective system for enabling all pupils to gain access to extra-curricular activities.

Example of outstanding practice

Once a week, all children are fully involved in 'Golden Time', which is a timetabled activity towards the end of the school day for about 40 minutes.

All the staff provide a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, which include sewing, drawing, aerobics, recorder playing and singing. Children choose a different activity each term and work alongside pupils from other year groups. This extremely successful way of organising extra-curricular activities ensures that all pupils are fully involved in the activities offered and are developing good personal and social skills as they relate to the wider group of peers within the school. In addition to this, it does not involve additional hours to the school day, which could be problematic for these young pupils.

25. Pupils are very well prepared to move on to the next stages of education. Excellent induction arrangements and the extremely caring ethos of the school help children to settle well. The outstanding teamwork amongst staff also helps to ensure a very smooth transition between the Reception and Year 1 classes. Very good arrangements have been made with the Junior School next door and this, with the encouragement by staff to welcome new challenges and be self-assured, helps the pupils to look forward to the next phase of their learning. Personal, social and health education are very well provided for. A particular strength is the whole-class 'circle times' when special sessions are set aside for sitting together and reflecting on social and personal issues.
26. Support for the more capable and gifted and talented pupils is very good. Teachers maintain very high expectations in all lessons and this ensures that the pupils achieve well. This is particularly successful in literacy and numeracy where the pupils in Year 2 are grouped by ability. Pupils from different social and ethnic backgrounds are supported equally well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well. Their needs are assessed very soon after they start school and careful checks are kept on their progress as they move through the school. Learning support assistants make a strong contribution to the teaching of these pupils so that most achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.

27. The school's secure management has ensured that the school is very well staffed by suitably qualified teachers and teaching assistants who make a very effective contribution in whole-class and group sessions. There is a good level of resources and these are also used effectively to support learning. For example, the quality and quantity of a range of books help the pupils to achieve very well in reading. The outdoor resources are especially good and include a pond and adventure playground.
28. On the other hand, the indoor accommodation is unsatisfactory and is not a conducive learning environment, despite the great efforts from the staff. For example:
- Classrooms are cramped and much too small for whole-class sessions. Role-play areas are organised in the safe and secure outdoor area but can only be accessed when the weather is dry and mild. Movement around the classrooms is tricky; in fact, it is fortunate for the school that the pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour and they politely step over each other when trying to move around the room.
 - The computer suite is inadequate. The room is tiny, poorly ventilated and only accessible by disrupting lessons in the hall. Teachers overcome access to the curriculum by planning work for very small groups who are helped by parent volunteers or classroom assistants when they work in the suite. However, introductions to skills need to be taught in the classroom and it is only because of very high quality liaison between staff that the class teacher keeps aware of the standards being achieved in the suite itself.
 - The hall is much too small for physical education lessons. Despite the very high quality planning by teachers to overcome the problem of space, pupils are required to wait patiently to take turns on the apparatus because the space is so limited and only a small amount of apparatus can be put out at any one time.
 - The attractive library area is too small to comfortably accommodate a class for story sessions. In addition to this, two extremely noisy driers from the adjoining toilet vibrate against the wall and this makes listening activities impossible.
 - The very competent administrative staff work in a very confined space. However, this cramped area also doubles up as a medical room and mini cloakroom.
 - There are no spaces for small group work or for specialist teaching such as music. In a very good music lesson in Reception, the teacher worked very hard to ensure that all the children had access to the instruments. Without this expert planning, not all children would have had equal access to the session.

Care, guidance and support

The welfare, health and safety of the pupils in the school's care are good. The school provides very good support and guidance to the pupils. Pupils enjoy being vital members of the school community and they feel that their teachers listen to their ideas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has excellent arrangements for settling in new pupils.
- Staff know the pupils extremely well and are able to give them very accurate support and guidance.
- All pupils say that they have an adult to go to if they are worried.
- Pupils are very well involved in the community of the school from a young age.
- The drawbacks in the accommodation emphasise the need for extra vigilance to ensure the safety of the pupils.

Commentary

29. Children and families new to the school system are settled in extremely well. Parents and children are given good opportunities in the previous term to get to know the school and the

staff. In their first term the children are given a couple of 'taster' sessions and then gradually introduced to full time education. The welcome given to the children and the confidence instilled in the parents mean that families very soon feel a real part of the school.

30. Adults are well aware of the individual needs of every pupil in the school. The very good academic assessment procedures provide a solid foundation for pinpointing where special help is needed. The headteacher makes sure that staff who need to know are up-to-date with any pastoral concerns. Personal, social and health education are very well structured and are planned to provide just the right guidance for the needs of the pupils in the class. In a very good Reception lesson on understanding feelings, the content was pitched at just the right level for these young children, so they quickly learnt the importance of sympathy for others. Currently, assessment of personal development is fairly informal and there is scope to extend the school's good practice from the main subject areas. However, by the end of the year, all teachers can write perceptive and knowledgeable reports on the personal development of each pupil. The deployment of teaching assistants as lunchtime supervisors is very effective because the care and support of pupils in the classroom is carried on seamlessly to lunchtime. During the inspection, the promotion of healthy eating, just covered in a recent lesson, was highlighted over lunch. The strong personal support for each and every pupil means the pupils are happy, confident and achieve well. This aspect has improved since the last inspection because assessment systems overall are much stronger.
31. Pupils have very good relationships with all adults in the school and really feel their views are taken into account. Right from the youngest to the oldest, each talks of having someone to whom they can turn if they are feeling unhappy. As yet, there have been no formal school surveys of pupils to gauge their views on a routine basis, although the new inspection questionnaire was taken on enthusiastically. However, the headteacher and her staff are very adept at keeping their 'ears to the ground' and picking up where there may be problems or gleaning good ideas. Teachers listen carefully to pupils and, particularly in personal, social and health education lessons, allow pupils to put forward their views and ideas. The recently formed school council gives pupils an early opportunity to learn more about the democratic process. Other pupils proudly take on responsibilities and, even though only of infant age, make a very useful contribution to the running of the school.
32. The school has good systems to ensure that the pupils are safe and secure while in its care. Child protection procedures are well established, although it would be good practice to ensure all staff are regularly updated on the most recent guidelines. All staff are very clear on first aid and welfare for the pupils and parents are informed immediately should there be any concern. Pupils are very carefully handed over to known adults at the end of the day. The site is regularly checked for health and safety hazards and any potential problems are dealt with quickly. However, there are some minor safety issues relating to the cramped conditions of the accommodation. For example, teachers need to organise activities in the classrooms or physical education lessons in the hall very carefully when space is at a premium and other equipment is in the way. Outside, the school staff have to be extremely vigilant in ensuring that pupils, parents and other visitors are not in danger from cars manoeuvring on the forecourt.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very good partnership with parents, only marred by the significant number of parents who take their children out of school in term time for holidays. Links with the local community are good, as are links with other schools and nurseries.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information provided to parents is of a high quality.
- The school ensures that parents are included as much as possible in their children's learning.
- The school regularly consults parents, and concerns are picked up very quickly.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- An increasing number of parents are allowing their children to miss school for holidays.

Commentary

33. The school provides a very good amount of useful information to parents. The prospectus is attractive, professional and gives a good flavour of the school. New parents are given a very good introduction via the admission pack and meetings to welcome them to the school. The school is particularly good at including families in school life and learning. All around the site are notice boards, leaflets and informative display so parents can find out more about what their children are learning. Parents are often in school for class assemblies, leavers' assemblies and the very well supported end of term productions. Teachers keep parents well up-to-date on how their children are progressing, whether via the regular parent-teacher consultations or in less formal meetings at the end of day. Reports are well written and give parents useful pointers as to how they can work with the school to help their children progress. Parents can talk at home with their children about what they are learning because they receive '*topic webs*' for each term, as well as seeing plans for the week in the class window. Additionally, parents have attended special meetings to find out about the teaching of mathematics and literacy skills such as how letter sounds are taught. Homework is clear and parents welcome the chance to enjoy books together with their children at home. Thorough information from school, combined with strong parental support, bolsters the pupils' good academic achievement and personal development. The partnership with parents remains as strong as it was at the last inspection.
34. The school makes sure that the views of parents are taken on board. The headteacher is visible and welcoming to parents, so is quick to pick up any queries or worries that parents might have. Following some unfavourable comments about the mathematics homework, the teachers carried out a survey, informed the parents of the results and have since extended the range of challenging activities. Parents are invited to the meeting to discuss the future school improvement plan, so feel well involved in management issues and are able to give valuable input. The Parent Friends Association now includes class representatives who not only organise fundraising, but also provide an important line of communication between parents and management.
35. West Byfleet Infants is a very popular school. Parents greatly appreciate all the school does for their children, as evidenced in the very positive inspection meeting and questionnaires. In return parents go out of their way to support the school, both by helping in class and by raising welcome funds for extra resources through the active Parent Friends Association. During the inspection a good number of parents were very ably involved in supporting class teachers, because they had been well briefed and knew where help was needed. The attractive and stimulating garden and adventure trail were both the result of substantial parental input. However, a significant number of parents are not supporting the school or their children's education as they should, when they take their children out class in term time for family holidays. The wrong message is given to pupils at a very formative stage of their life when their parents choose holidays over a commitment to regular education.
36. The school has good links within the locality of West Byfleet to extend the infants' curriculum and community awareness. Pupils regularly walk into the town to experience the local shops or find out about the station. The teaching of religious education benefits from a strong rapport with the parish and Baptist churches. Effective liaison with the adjacent Montessori nursery school helps those children transferring to the Reception class to settle in with as little disruption as possible. Following a slight hiatus in the development of links with the neighbouring Junior School, due to management changes, a strong working relationship has now been re-established. Staff frequently meet; teachers to discuss the curriculum, office staff to sort out admissions or the headteachers to sort out management issues. All this positive collaboration makes for a very smooth transition for the pupils from Year 2 to Year 3.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher, key staff and governors are all **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has an excellent sense of purpose and clarity of vision that she shares with her extremely good team.
- The deputy headteacher and other key personnel contribute very well to the leadership of school.
- The school is very strongly self-evaluative and analyses its results and findings meticulously in preparing its strategic plans for improvement.
- Very good governance ensures that the school is very effective.
- The day-to-day management of finances and the use of funds are very good.
- Staff work very hard to minimise the effect of unsatisfactory accommodation and pupils' holidays during termtime.

Commentary

37. There has been a very significant improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection and the appointment of a new headteacher. The school is now very well led and managed by the headteacher and all key personnel.
38. The headteacher has exceptional clarity of vision and has extremely high aspirations for the staff and pupils in the school, which have made a significant contribution to promoting an excellent ethos and committed team. The school has flourished and her leadership has played a highly significant part in bringing about the very good level of improvement since the last inspection. In fact, at a meeting between the registered inspector and parents, the headteacher was highly praised for her leadership. The headteacher leads the development of the whole curriculum very well. The school is very focused on evaluating what it does and the headteacher has consulted and involved pupils, parents, staff and governors in determining the plans for the future. Both staff and pupils feel that the headteacher is reflective and very fair when introducing anything new.
39. The level of teamwork amongst the staff is excellent. All staff support the aims of the school and join enthusiastically in the pursuit of high standards. They provide very good role models, ensuring a fully inclusive school, where new pupils and staff are welcomed and all are equal partners and beneficiaries in what the school provides. Teachers enjoy working at the school and the recruitment and retention of staff is very well managed so that there is a range of expertise giving a very balanced outlook. The deployment of both teaching and non-teaching staff enables this expertise to be shared so that pupils benefit. All staff influence the pupils in very positive ways. For example, teaching assistants also work as mid-day supervisors and are highly valued for their skills. This ensures that pupils establish excellent relationships with others. They remain involved in their work and behave very well in school. This contributes significantly to the high level of achievement in the school.
40. The deputy head and senior management team provide very strong leadership. Together with the governing body, they are fully involved in the plans to improve the teaching, raise standards and assess how well pupils are achieving. They have a very clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further. The majority of subjects are very well led and managed, and where co-ordinators are new to their role, the procedures and management strategies in place ensure that co-ordination is good. In the core subjects of English and mathematics, there are very secure procedures in place to analyse any weaknesses in performance in national tests and to bring about improvement. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators ensure that pupils have challenging targets and check progress towards them on a regular basis. Very good use is made of the local authority's analysis of data to check any

issues relating to gender or minority ethnic groups. Targets for national tests are very accurate and closely matched or exceeded by results.

41. The strategic planning is very good and results from rigorous self-evaluation. Planning is already in place to address all the areas for development identified during the inspection. However, in spite of the school's very good plans to address the barriers imposed by the unsatisfactory accommodation, there is, as yet, no secure guarantee that this will be resolved. Similarly, the school has very good strategies in place to minimise the absences of pupils so that all receive a full and balanced curriculum, yet some parents still have a careless attitude towards taking holidays in school time.
42. Very well integrated performance management procedures and very good induction procedures and training for new staff ensure that all are confident to meet the demands made upon them. Secure links are made, through the performance management process, with training, which is very well organised and provided for all staff. The school is a very effective provider of initial training for teachers and recruitment has benefited from the school's high level of expertise.
43. The governance of the school is very good because governors are well trained and knowledgeable. They use their personal expertise to help shape the future direction of the school. They have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are fully involved in consulting parents and staff while preparing the development plan and keep a keen eye on progress towards the objectives. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and are pressing hard for improvements in accommodation. Governors' involvement at every level very positively supports and contributes to the effectiveness and ethos of the school.
44. At the time of the last inspection, the day-to-day administration was very good with good systems for financial control. Each facet of financial management is now very good. The Friends of the school supplement the income very well and additional income is generated from other sources. Specific funds are very carefully targeted and prudently spent. The provision of additional support for those pupils who need it and the renewal and purchase of their learning resources are very prudently considered to obtain value for money. The governing body fully understands its role in financial management; the governors are fully involved in comparing what the school needs, provides and achieves so that clear spending targets can be set in place. They compare proposed spending costs and challenge senior managers, carefully considering how best to spend in order to achieve best value. The carry forward figure is slightly high but is being used to overcome the decrease in funding so that high staffing levels can be maintained.
45. There are exemplary procedures in place to manage finances and the minor issues on the most recent audit report were quickly addressed. The bursar is a very valuable asset and as clerk to the governing body and a member of the senior management team, she is readily available to advise about income, expenditure and best value. The income per pupil is low in comparison with other areas and the bursar's expertise is invaluable in ensuring that the finances are managed astutely and prudently. This makes a significant contribution to the very high quality of financial management and very good governance and is a positive contribution in enabling the school to provide very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	422,029	Balance from previous year	48,821
Total expenditure	407,802	Balance carried forward to the next	34,322
Expenditure per pupil	2,385		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and has been well maintained since the last inspection. Preparation for Year 1 of the National Curriculum is effective. The children enter one of the two Reception classes on a part-time basis at the start of the year in which they will be five. They continue their Foundation Stage education on a full-time basis when they have turned five. Children start school with levels of attainment that are as expected. By the time they reach Year 1, all children have achieved well, and standards are above expectations in all areas of learning except knowledge and understanding of the world, where standards are as expected nationally. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is very good and has improved since the last inspection. Adults enthusiastically encourage the children in their learning and insist on high standards of behaviour. Children's progress is carefully checked and tracked and this ensures that they achieve well. The curriculum is based on a nationally required scheme of work for this specific age group. There are a very good number of adults employed in the Foundation Stage who work very closely together with enjoyment and humour. The Reception classrooms are very small and cramped but staff make good use of the safe and secure outdoor areas, which are used as an integral part of the school day when the weather is dry and mild.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the expected level by the end of Reception.
- Teaching is very good.
- Children are provided with a very wide range of learning opportunities that promote their personal, social and emotional skills.

Commentary

46. By the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, standards in personal, social and emotional development are above average and children achieve very well. Provision has improved since the last inspection when it was considered good overall. The children very successfully maintain concentration in class and small group situations and this helps them in their learning. This was evident in a music lesson when the children were able to try out a range of musical activities. The children have a very good awareness of their own needs. For example, they confidently ask to go to the toilet using sensible and mature language. The children also dress and undress very well for physical development sessions. They maintain very positive relationships with each other and with all adults in their classrooms. A particularly strong feature is the good humour they share with their teachers. All children treat each other with high levels of respect. For instance, because their classrooms are so small, whole-class sessions on the carpet are very cramped. However, they move in and out of the seated children very carefully and make sure that they do not tread on any hands or feet.
47. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. This is because teachers always expect the very best behaviour and have high expectations. For instance, they encourage the children to use correct terminology for their personal needs, such as when asking to go to the toilet or when they need a drink. All adults have established very high quality relationships between themselves and the children. The very wide range of learning opportunities ensure that the children gain many quality experiences. For instance, it was noted that their role-play area has been turned into a hospital, which had appropriate uniforms, a large supply of bandages and a comfy bed for their more seriously ill patients!

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of the Reception Year, the children's development is above what is usually found.
- Teaching is very good and very well focused on the children's needs.
- Teachers talk to children with respect, nurturing their maturity as communicators.

Commentary

48. Teaching in this area of learning is very good so that the children achieve well in developing their communication skills. On admission to Reception, the children have average levels in literacy skills, though most speak confidently. Although some have better literacy skills than are usually found, this is balanced by a small number who have skills lower than is usually found. By the end of Reception, the vast majority will achieve and many will exceed the early learning goals. When speaking and listening, children are able to answer questions in words and simple sentences. They express their feelings in response to questions during 'circle time' and listen politely to their teachers and other children. More capable children listen to each other and share ideas in independent activities. They speak with confidence to adults about what they are doing and share ideas about what happens next in a well-known story.
49. The very good teaching incorporates many opportunities for adults to talk with children in small groups or individually and respond to their needs. Teachers use a good range of vocabulary when talking to children so that children are encouraged to experiment with words and, as a result, gain in confidence. When learning to read, or enjoying books, the children sequence pictures in the correct order to tell a simple story. They recognise that print conveys meaning, know how to hold books correctly and read simple words. The children listen to stories and join in with familiar and repeated words, especially if they rhyme. More capable children read simple sentences when reading from their own books.
50. The teaching of reading is very secure. When reading from simple text, teachers carefully emphasise words and read with expression so that children follow closely. Exciting activities are developed to improve reading skills. For example, making the 'cake' from The Toys Party, which encouraged children to remember the sequence of the story. Teachers ensure that there is careful and regular reinforcement of letter sounds.
51. When learning to write and using their writing skills, all the children, including the younger and less capable, make marks in response to the request to write. They realise that writing conveys meaning. The children trace over simple words written by the teacher, though some of their efforts are barely legible. Older and more capable children form several initial letters in the taught script. They over-write or copy the teachers' models for simple words and sentences. The children also write letters like 'homwc' to represent words like homework, sounding consonants with reasonable accuracy. These more capable children use one or two ideas in sequence, with words separated by spaces, and write their name without help.
52. In small groups and whole-class sessions, the teaching of writing is good and teachers focus carefully on the basic skills, bringing about the good level of understanding about sounds, words and sentences. However, there is seldom an adult supervising and encouraging independent writing activities and no check on who becomes involved. A good range of material is provided to support the development of writing but the opportunity to promote emergent writing skills, like 'lists', 'letters' and 'prescriptions', is often missed. The style of handwriting introduced to these young children is not really conducive to neatness nor does it enable children to read back what they have written, by identifying letter shapes, as many bear little resemblance to the sound programme they follow. Again, this limits the opportunities to become involved in, and to enjoy, writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, standards are above the national agreed levels for this age group.
- Teaching is good.

Commentary

53. By the end of Reception, all the children meet the expected levels of attainment in mathematical development and a good number exceed them. Achievement from entry into school is good because the quality of teaching and learning is good, which results in interested and well motivated children. Standards, provision and teaching have been maintained since the last inspection.
54. Children confidently count up to 20 and then reverse their counting back to 1. They name two-dimensional shapes and are developing an appropriate knowledge of three-dimensional shapes. They recognise simple patterns and use positional language such as '*under*' and '*over*' accurately.
55. The best features of teaching are the very good understanding of the way in which these young children learn. Activities are practical and firmly rooted in the children's experiences. For instance, in a good lesson, the teacher used feet to help develop the children's understanding of '*taking away*'. Very good use is made of questioning techniques, which ensures that children of all abilities are effectively challenged. Effective use is also made of small focus groups to consolidate the acquisition of knowledge and skills. This was evident when one of the Reception teachers took groups of children in turn to explore the features of different three-dimensional shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in whole-class lessons.
- The range of independent activities is not sufficiently focused on promoting this area of learning.

Commentary

56. Teaching in this area of learning is good so that children achieve well when working in large groups. By the end of Reception, the majority will achieve the early learning goals across this wide area of learning.
57. All, including the younger and less capable children, have an appropriate level of knowledge about their bodies and how to keep healthy. For example, they know that '*sneezing can spread germs*'. They build and construct tracks for cars to go over, under and around. The children confidently switch on computers, use the mouse and click and drag objects. They know the past and the present as it relates to their own lives and have a good understanding of places in the world where different people and animals live.

58. At the time of the last inspection, learning opportunities were well organised. This continues to be so. Good teaching ensures that in many activities, adults intervene very well when children are working with them so that learning is well supported. Children working individually on the computer with *'Tizzy's First Tools'* are similarly well supported so that they learn to use the mouse quickly. However, the upper case letters on the keyboard are not conducive to typing their names for these young children. Planning ensures that class activities are interesting and exciting so that children are involved in what they are doing. There are good links between the areas of learning so that both art skills and reading are promoted in learning about their bodies and keeping healthy. Children are very well managed, with clear expectations about how many in each group or taking turns so that they behave well when working independently. However, the planning for these independent activities misses opportunities to further promote learning by setting specific challenges, based on the aspects of this area of learning, with different challenges according to the capabilities of the pupils.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children exceed expected levels by the start of Year 1.
- They show very good levels of concentration and are very well behaved in lessons.
- Teaching is very good.
- The hall is small and requires very careful lesson planning.

Commentary

59. By the end of the Reception Year the children have exceeded expected levels. They achieve well because the quality of teaching is very good and stimulating activities are provided to motivate their development.
60. Despite the limited space, children attain high standards in their physical development lessons in the hall. They confidently jump, skip and run around the hall and are developing a good awareness of space. The children curl up into a small ball and move with expression, such as when they grow upwards like a flower in bloom. They know that their body goes through changes when they exercise. Simple pieces of apparatus are set out with care and they have a clear understanding of the importance of safety. The children confidently handle scissors, pencils and paintbrushes with good control. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. They listen attentively to their teacher and have a very good understanding of taking turns.
61. The quality of teaching is very good and this has a very positive impact on the children's achievement. For example, teachers have very high expectations of behaviour. In one very good lesson, the teacher used a tambourine very successfully to gain children's attention immediately. Very good attention is given to health and safety. For instance, the children know why they must work on the apparatus in silence. Lessons are very well planned. Teachers know the importance of warm up sessions and make cool downs fun but relaxing. The limitations of the hall provide some challenge for the teachers in physical development sessions but they deal well with this weakness in the accommodation by skilful management of children and use of apparatus. Staff also make good use of their outdoor area to develop physical skills.
62. Provision for physical development has been well maintained since the last inspection, despite the considerable limitations of the accommodation.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good overall and is particularly skilful in art and design.
- Very high levels of teacher expertise ensure good opportunities to experiment with colour.
- Children have a range of opportunities to sing and play musical instruments and are enthusiastic performers.

Commentary

63. Teaching is very good and planning ensures that children have a good range of opportunities in music, art and design and imaginative work. By the end of their time in Reception, the majority will achieve and many will exceed the early learning goals.
64. The vast majority, including the younger and less capable children, are able to draw a face putting in the features with a high degree of accuracy. They choose or mix colours that are closely matched to skin tones, hair colour and eye colour. The children sing confidently, holding the rhythm and tune well for their age. They recognise and name several percussion instruments and use them to keep in time well.
65. Very good teaching ensures that activities in art and design are challenging and very well supported by a high degree of teacher expertise. This ensures that children observe carefully and record the colours, shape and detail on portraits with a high degree of accuracy. High quality resources are provided so that children have a good level of satisfaction when they complete their work. Teachers' planning incorporates time for singing and playing instruments and children enjoy these sessions, performing enthusiastically, though somewhat loudly. Very high quality relationships are evident and this is supportive to the very good management of these creative sessions. This is essential to the success of the teaching, as it engenders very good behaviour; an essential factor in learning, as the accommodation is very cramped, providing little room for the children to spread out and experiment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- 2003 tests showed that standards were well above those in other schools nationally.
- Standards in speaking and listening and in reading are well above average.
- Standards in writing are above average.
- Teaching is very good.
- Leadership and management in the subject are very good.
- Across the whole curriculum, writing could be better used and handwriting could be neater.

Commentary

66. In national tests in 2003, standards in reading and writing were well above the national average. Reading was well above the standards in similar schools. In writing, standards were very high when considering pupils in similar schools who reach the expected level, though the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is well below what is found in similar schools. Similar

standards were found during the inspection. All Year 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Standards are well above average in speaking and listening and in reading. However, in writing, although standards are above average, fewer pupils are working at the higher level. Standards have improved steadily since the last inspection, when they were uniformly above average and pupils made satisfactory progress.

Speaking and listening

67. All lessons provide very good opportunities for speaking and listening so that by Year 2, pupils are very confident speakers for their age and listen attentively. Achievement is good in this area. The vast majority of Year 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, speak confidently to their peers or adults, express their opinions clearly, contribute to discussion when asked and make suitable responses to questions. More capable pupils listen to and take into account another's needs and vary their vocabulary when explaining things. They listen very carefully and understand the feelings of others and understand the underlying meaning of what is said.
68. This high level of achievement is because teaching is very good in this area. For instance, plenary sessions give good opportunities for pupils to explain and discuss. Teachers invariably encourage and value pupils' oral contributions. They use challenging questions to stimulate thinking skills and give good opportunities for pupils to enhance their vocabulary by the use of key words in each subject.

Reading

69. Reading standards are well above average in Year 2 and pupils achieve well. Year 2 pupils enjoy books and read enthusiastically. All, including pupils with special educational needs, read accurately and steadily, using strategies to decode unknown words. They describe the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Indexes and contents lists are used well and indicate their good knowledge of the alphabet. More capable pupils read confidently and accurately, paying attention to punctuation for emphasis. They summarise a short story, using pictures as prompts. Words are found in the dictionary by opening at the beginning, middle or end of the dictionary and checking the alphabetical order. The most capable pupils use the 'encyclopaedia' on the computer to find subjects they wish to research. They find key words from their science or history and find the definition in the dictionary. They read fluently with expression and with a due regard for the audience.
70. The teaching of reading is very good and engenders a high level of competence and enthusiasm for reading and using books. This strong teaching is due to the very well organised, daily reading sessions throughout the school, where all pupils are well focused on useful and challenging tasks. There is very good planning for a full range of reading opportunities so that pupils learn sounds, read sentences and text on a daily basis. Teachers and their assistants provide very good support for reading tasks. There is very good modelling of reading by teachers; they inject enthusiasm and expression into their own reading and prompt pupils to make sure they remember to do the same. The pupils benefit from strong parental support for the reading programme; pupils say that many parents hear them read for homework very regularly.

Writing

71. Attainment in writing is above average in Year 2, though there are less higher attaining pupils in writing than in reading. By Year 2, all pupils write a short sequence of simple sentences, without the regular use of full stops and capital letters, when writing independently. They spell very commonly used words like *'I'*, *'the'*, *'when'* and *'and'* accurately and make an accurate attempt at initial and final letter sounds. More capable pupils and the most capable are able to sequence four or five sentences, when retelling a story, using full stops to separate and often, capital letters. They use interesting words like *'kidnapped'* together with punctuation like

exclamation marks to enliven sentences, sometimes writing words in capitals for emphasis. Short stories are retold which are well sequenced and have a beginning, middle and ending. However, all pupils write in an irregular cursive style that is often clumsily formed and occasionally illegible.

72. Teachers provide a secure level of basic skills like the recognition of letter sounds and an understanding of alphabetical order. However, the teaching of handwriting does not enthuse pupils and teaching, although good, does not provide the whole range of writing opportunities available to these young writers. As a result, there is insufficient difference between the writing tasks and outcomes for the more capable and most capable pupils. Consequently, this means the most capable pupils do not always use their emergent writing skills from the earliest stage or use opportunities in other subjects to record their work. They are not utilising their very good speaking skills to clarify ideas in sequencing events and stories and do not see their writing as an exciting skill to acquire.

Teaching

73. Overall, teaching is very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was mainly satisfactory with some good teaching. The improvements in teaching are due to teachers' very good management in lessons, which ensures that all pupils behave well and listen politely. The organisation for teaching in Year 2, where pupils are set in classes according to their ability and work in small groups within each class so that tasks in reading, speaking and listening, are very precisely matched to need, results in very high quality input from teaching assistants, which ensures a very good level of discussion and involvement for pupils with special educational needs. Staff create an attractive learning environment, where displays stimulate and inform pupils, ensuring that relevant information about dictionary skills, writing clues and non-fiction books is available. There are very strongly supportive relationships between adults and pupils, which ensure that pupils try hard to achieve their targets and engender a very good level of learning. There are very good assessment procedures in place throughout the school, which teachers use very well. The targets for individuals and groups are displayed and marking is usually helpful in achieving them.
74. The use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning is good. It is a daily part of pupils' experience, providing good opportunities to supplement learning in the basic skills. However, there is little use of word processing, for example, to encourage pupils to revise and edit their work or to support the development of early writing fluency.
75. Leadership and management in the subject are very good. Pupils' assessment tests are analysed very carefully to identify areas for individual and school improvement and results are analysed and studied to determine trends amongst different groups of pupils, so that any specific needs can be addressed. The plan for development is thorough; it accurately identifies the need to improve writing at the higher level and there is an action plan to address this. The school sets itself challenging targets based on a thorough knowledge of the performance through Year 1 and Year 2 and achieves or exceeds these.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

76. Language and literacy are well used across the curriculum. Across the school, the secure use of the National Strategy for teaching literacy ensures that achievement is good. At the time of the last inspection, the school needed to develop literacy skills across the curriculum; aspects relating to speaking and listening and to reading have been well addressed, with good resources to support the use of non-fiction texts. However, the school does not incorporate sufficient writing opportunities into work in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very good and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is very good.
- Provision for more capable pupils is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their work in lessons.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

77. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above average with all pupils achieving the expected level. Well over one-third of pupils achieve the higher than expected level for their age group and this is very good. This is similar to the performance of pupils in the most recent national standardised tests. Overall, the school has made good improvements in mathematics since the last inspection when it was felt that more capable pupils made insufficient progress.
78. Pupils in Year 2 count up to 100 and add and subtract with numbers up to 20. They measure using centimetres and metres and recognise two and three-dimensional shapes. The children identify halves and quarters and confidently tell the time using a digital and analogue clock. In addition, the most capable pupils confidently multiply two numbers together such as 9×9 , 7×8 and 10×10 . They work in hundreds, tens and units and use a wide range of vocabulary to explain addition and subtraction. Their mathematical knowledge is used well to find out relevant information and display their results in tables and graphs.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The strongest features include very positive relationships with the pupils and high expectations of work and behaviour. This impacts well on attitudes and response in class. Learning intentions are clearly identified and this helps the pupils understand exactly what they are learning. Pupils are grouped by ability and this means that work is planned to meet their individual needs. Marking is used to praise and encourage and this gives the pupils high levels of confidence. Additional activities are planned for the more capable pupils, which result in high achievement for them. Pupils' progress is tracked and regularly checked. Teachers use this information very well when planning lessons.
80. Leadership and management are very good because teaching and learning in lessons are monitored on a regular basis and this ensures consistency throughout the school. The subject budget is well spent on a good range of interesting resources, which promote learning well. The co-ordinator ensures that planning links closely to the scheme of work and this enables skills to be progressively taught. Weaknesses from the last inspection have been systematically rectified.

Mathematics across the curriculum

81. Mathematics is used well in other subjects; for example, tables and graphs are used in science and mathematical programs are used in information and communication technology lessons. Opportunities to use and apply mathematical skills in other subjects are systematically planned across year groups.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- Teaching is invariably good, with some very good teaching.
- Discussion is very well used to promote interest and understanding.
- Too little use is made of writing as a recording tool.

Commentary

82. Only two science lessons were seen during the inspection, but the analysis of the work completed by pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 indicates that standards are above average. Teacher assessments in 2003 showed that all pupils achieved the expected level and over half achieved the higher than expected level, which was well above what is usually found. Although standards are not currently as high as this, all pupils achieve well and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Having analysed results, the school is confident that the slight fluctuation is due to the difference in cohorts. There is no evidence to indicate differences between the achievement of different groups of pupils: boys and girls; those with special educational needs; and more capable pupils or those from minority ethnic groups.
83. Year 2 pupils have all studied materials, electrical circuits and healthy eating. All pupils have undertaken similar tasks but, through discussion, it is clear that the more capable pupils have a deeper understanding. When studying electricity and how a circuit works, all the pupils recognise the potential dangers of electricity in the home. The less capable pupils understand that the batteries must be connected to bulbs by wires. The more capable pupil understands that when a circuit is complete, *'the power goes around the circuit and the bulb lights up'*. In their work on the body, the high quality support given to less capable pupils and those with special educational needs involves discussion and clarification, so that these pupils understand the need to eat more fruit and vegetables than sweets and crisps. Average and more capable pupils understand what makes a fair test.
84. Teaching is invariably good with very good teaching evident in Year 1. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was mostly good. This high quality teaching is due to very good use of discussion and emphasis on the correct use of specific vocabulary. Very good use is made of a wide range of carefully chosen resources so that pupils are interested and stay involved in their work. Effective use is also made of teaching assistants who support the learning of small groups.
85. When recording their work, art is frequently used as a recording tool but planning does not ensure that pupils are encouraged to use their literacy skills, particularly their writing, as often as they could. The fact that the majority of tasks are very similar and only the anticipated outcomes are different further restricts these opportunities for more capable pupils. Opportunities for younger pupils to list, label and write up observations in a few simple sentences are missed. Older and more capable pupils speak at length about what they have discovered but do not have enough opportunities to record factual information. As a result, the contribution made to extending literacy skills, although satisfactory, is less effective than it could be.
86. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Planning and teaching are checked to ensure that the science curriculum is fully covered and is consistently delivered through the school. This contributes significantly to the good level of achievement and high standards, as skills and knowledge are built upon at a good pace.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment is used well in teaching and learning.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support mathematics, science and art and design but insufficient use is made of it to develop writing skills.
- The computer suite is inadequate.

Commentary

87. Standards are as expected by the end of Year 2 and achievement is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to the time of the last inspection. Pupils create interesting pictures using a painting program. For instance, they have made pictures in the style of Kandinsky to decorate their calendars. They use word processing skills to write greetings in Christmas cards. The more capable pupils select different sizes and styles of font. Pupils are able, with adult support, to save and then retrieve their work. They make good use of databases and create block graphs to illustrate their findings and enjoy using computers, digital cameras and programmable toys.
88. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is because teachers have good subject knowledge and provide clear instructions for the pupils. There are effective assessment procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress through teachers' evaluations.
89. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of the curriculum and pupils' standards of attainment through her monitoring and involvement of staff in establishing a collection of pupils' work. She has observed colleagues on a regular basis and provides good support to staff through advice and monitoring their planning.
90. Although there are a sufficient number of computers across the school to meet the needs of the curriculum, the computer suite is inadequate and does not promote an effective learning environment. The suite has been cleverly created from an old cupboard and has been very attractively decorated. However, the very limited space available can only accommodate six computers. This means that skills need to be taught in very small groups, which is not an effective use of time. In addition, the room is poorly ventilated and becomes extremely hot and stuffy when in use for extended periods of time.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

91. The use of information and communication technology is used well in mathematics, science and art and design. For instance, programs are used to consolidate science lessons. This was evident in a Year 2 class where a group of pupils worked very well with a teaching assistant and volunteer parent to consolidate learning about the different parts of the human body. However, it is underused in English and this has a limiting effect on the standards attained in writing.

HUMANITIES

Religious education, History and Geography

No **geography** lessons were seen and therefore no judgement on provision, standards or teaching can be made. Two **history** lessons were observed and one in **religious education**. Comments are based upon these lessons, examination of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and co-ordinators.

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the lesson observed, teaching was good.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- More emphasis could be given to the development of literacy skills, particularly in extended writing.

Commentary

92. By the end of Year 2, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and all pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. Pupils identify what makes a good friend and recall some of the most popular Bible stories, such as the Good Samaritan. They explain a number of features from the Jewish religion and accurately tell the Christian story of creation.
93. Although the lesson observed was of good quality, teaching and learning overall are both satisfactory. Strengths of the teaching include good use of information and communication technology to make lessons interesting. For example, in the good lesson in a Year 2 class, the teacher made effective use of a computer presentation to introduce the lesson. This provided good stimulation for the pupils to enable them to think about the wonderful world in which they live. Good use is made of time to ensure a brisk pace. However, weaknesses in the overall teaching throughout the school include missed opportunities to develop writing skills. This was evident in the lesson observed where almost three-quarters of the page was left for pictures to be completed. This meant that expectations for writing were limited.
94. Subject leadership and management are good and staff are supported well. The co-ordinator ensures that planning corresponds to the scheme of work used and has a good overview of strengths and areas for development.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Very good use is made of a range of interesting resources.
- Pupils are fascinated by the subject and enjoy lessons.
- Insufficient use is made of writing skills to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.

Commentary

95. Standards are as expected by the end of Year 2 and all pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is similar to standards reported on at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the function of a timeline and know the difference between the past and the

present. They have an awareness of past events, such as the Great Fire of London, and know about famous people, such as Howard Carter and Samuel Pepys. They recognise that information about the past can be found from a wide range of resources such as books, television and computers.

96. Teaching is of high quality and this represents a good improvement since the last inspection when some unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Strengths of the teaching include very thorough lesson planning which ensures that skills are taught systematically. There are very high pupil expectations and effective use of questioning. This was evident in a highly effective lesson in a Year 1 class. The teacher ensured that all pupils were focused while she made very good use of a concentric circle to illustrate the passage of time from *'today, this year, in their lifetime and long ago'*. This stimulated the pupils' interest very well. A wide range of teaching techniques include whole-class activities, group work and discussions in pairs. Consequently, pupils feel very involved in the lessons and are thoroughly stimulated by the activities. Very effective use of resources stimulates the interest and enjoyment of the pupils. In a good Year 2 lesson, the two teachers involved used candles and a darkened room to very effectively create the feeling of very long ago before electricity had been invented. Good use of homework is also made to promote independent learning.
97. Teachers promote literacy skills well by extending the pupils' historical skills through the use of books. However, writing skills are insufficiently developed within this subject and this limits pupils' levels of attainment overall. For example, teachers tend to use prepared frameworks for writing and this hinders individuality. This was evident in a good Year 2 lesson where the very high quality input from the teachers was not reflected in the work produced by the pupils.
98. Leadership and management are very good because the co-ordinator is extremely enthusiastic about this subject and motivates both staff and pupils very well. He carefully monitors teachers' planning and ensures that the scheme of work is closely followed. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was felt that the requirements of the programmes of study were not being met. In addition to this, he has started monitoring teaching and learning in class and ensures that skills are taught progressively through effective assessment procedures. This was also identified as a weakness in the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

99. Across the whole range of creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects, the school supports the provision and pupils' learning very well. This is particularly successfully achieved through the provision of *'Golden Time'* activities, which strongly enhance the curriculum and enthuses pupils very well. Displays of work are attractively presented and pupils find this stimulating. Leadership and management of these subjects are good and detailed plans ensure that all the required areas of work are covered.
100. No lessons were seen in **design and technology** and **music** and only one was observed in **physical education**. Therefore, it is not possible to make a judgement on provision, standards or teaching. However, pupils were observed singing in assemblies and it was noted that during their Christmas performance, they could keep the tempo and the rhythm accurately. In the weekly *'Golden Time'* activities, all pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and sing in a choir. However, although singing is at the expected level, a weakness in the provision is that the choice of songs is not invariably suitable for these young voices. The pitch and the range is sometimes inhibiting to the quality of singing. When good choices of songs are made, as when the choir sang *'Zippedy-doo-dah'* in *'Golden Time'*, pupils sang tunefully and accurately.
101. Teachers are very enthusiastic about physical education and this ensures that pupils are keen to learn. The subject is well planned to cover the full range of physical activities and extra-curricular activities are very effectively organised and support the curriculum well. However, one major weakness is the accommodation that inhibits full and active participation in lessons.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In lessons, pupils are encouraged to observe their subjects closely before drawing.
- Lessons observed and the analysis of work show teaching is good.
- The subject is very well provisioned with high quality resources.

Commentary

102. By the end of Year 2, standards exceed the expected levels and all pupils achieve well. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection, though teaching, satisfactory at the last inspection, is now judged good.
103. Pupils are able to observe their subjects and draw in detail. This helps promote learning in many subjects across the curriculum. They are also able to select from a range of textiles and papers to create interesting designs.
104. In the lessons observed, teaching was good and this is confirmed by the quality of display, the drawing club and an analysis of pupils' sketchbooks. Strengths of the teaching include a high level of teacher knowledge so that pupils are given good clues to improve their work. Teachers use a very good range of resources and effective use is made of time. However, a weakness in the overall teaching as seen in lessons and in sketchbooks is missed opportunities to develop writing skills by listing selected materials, commenting on designs and evaluating what they have done.
105. Subject leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator checks planning to ensure that it accurately covers the scheme of work. She uses her budget wisely to provide and extend the exciting range of resources. Her own very high level of expertise is shared generously and is very supportive to her colleagues.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve good standards in personal, social and health education.
- Provision is very well planned across the whole curriculum.
- It is very well supported through other subjects.
- Close links are maintained with the Junior School.

Commentary

106. Standards in personal, social and health education are very good and all pupils achieve very well. This is a good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Pupils confidently learn to take care of their bodies in their science lessons and this helps them to develop many social skills. They participate in school and neighbourhood life and this helps them understand how to help each other. They understand the principles of citizenship through drama performances and enjoy being involved in school decision-making processes through the school council.
107. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. This is because the programme for personal, social and health education is very good. It is taught as a discrete subject and

reinforced throughout the curriculum. *'Circle time'*, when pupils sit together in a group to discuss different issues, is used very successfully to help pupils develop their self-esteem and gain confidence in expressing their feelings in a secure atmosphere.

108. Provision is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator ensures that teachers are well trained and are fully familiar with the planned curriculum and schemes of work. Very effective in-service training has enabled staff to feel confident in their teaching of this area of the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
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	2

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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