

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St Margaret's First and Middle C of E VA School**

Crawley

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 126043

Headteacher: Mr M Laverty

Lead inspector: Mr D Clegg

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th October

Inspection number: 260530

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: First and middle school  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 4 – 12 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 407

School address: The Mardens  
Ifield  
Crawley  
Postcode: RH11 0AQ

Telephone number: 01293 521077  
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Appropriate authority: West Sussex  
Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Luetchford

Date of previous inspection: 20th September 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is a larger than average middle/primary school with 407 pupils aged from 4 to 12 years. There are more girls than boys especially in year 7 and reception. The school will be re-organised to become a new primary school in September 2004 catering for pupils aged 4 to 11 years.

The great majority of pupils are white British; all pupils speak English fluently.

About 5 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is below the national average.

About 28 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, this is higher than average. The main difficulties are specific learning problems, social and behaviour issues and speech and communication problems.

The children enter school twice per year, currently the reception children are only in part-time.

There is very little turnover of pupils other than at the usual times.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
4341	Mr D Clegg	Lead inspector	English as an additional language, Information and communication technology, citizenship, history
9646	Ms G Osment	Lay inspector	
21171	Ms S Handford	Team inspector	Special educational needs, mathematics, design and technology, physical education
1742	Mr R King	Team inspector	Science, geography, religious education
4343	Ms S Billington	Team Inspector	Foundation Stage, English, art and design, music

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The overall effectiveness of the school is **satisfactory but it is underachieving**. Standards and achievement are too variable with some pupils not achieving as much as they should. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, but too much teaching is not good enough to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they could.

The school is very well led but there are weaknesses in management that are adversely affecting the quality of education. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good
- Pupils' very good attitudes to work help them to learn
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good
- Teaching is too inconsistent
- Weak management has resulted in a lack of improvements
- Too many pupils do not achieve as much as they could in English and mathematics
- The school develops and sustains a very constructive partnership with parents
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The school provides a very good level of enrichment to the curriculum

The school is not as successful as it was at the last inspection. Standards have declined and the quality of teaching is not as good. Leadership is very good but the school is suffering due to a residual impact of weak management. Many of the strengths have been maintained including pupils' attitudes and personal development. The level of care and support, the partnership with parents and the links with the community remain strong.

#### Areas where improvement has been insufficient

The governing body still does not monitor the work of the school enough and spelling remains weak.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	C	C	C
mathematics	B	C	C	D
science	A	C	C	C

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

**The standards and achievement are variable but overall satisfactory.** Children in the reception classes achieve satisfactorily but most will not attain the standards expected when children start year 1, particularly in literacy skills. The standards attained at the end of year 2 are generally below the national average in English and mathematics and achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards attained at the end of year 6 in English, mathematics and science are in line with the national average. Standards in reading are better than in writing. In year 7, standards are a little higher than average. Overall pupils in years 3 and 4 achieve satisfactorily and in years 5, 6 and 7 they achieve well.

Pupils have very good attitudes to school; older pupils particularly work hard and are keen to do well. Behaviour is generally very good both in lessons and around the school. Personal development is very good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **satisfactory**.

The teaching is satisfactory overall although it is variable. In the reception classes and in years 1, 2 and 3 it is satisfactory but it is too inconsistent to enable pupils to maintain a consistent level of achievement. In years 4, 5 and 6 teaching is better, often good, and helps pupils to gain ground. In year 7 the teaching is good.

The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils. The school is particularly good at enriching the opportunities pupils have in sport and makes good provision for pupils' personal development but not enough is done to monitor pupils' academic achievement

The school successfully develops and sustains a productive partnership with parents. There are good links with the community from which pupils benefit.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management are **satisfactory**.

The headteacher provides the school with a strong sense of direction and purpose. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. Governors share the school's aspirations and are becoming increasingly aware of its strengths and weaknesses.

The school runs very smoothly on a daily basis but the overall management is unsatisfactory. There is no systematic checking up on the quality of teaching by subject managers and information about how well pupils are doing is not well organised nor is it used sufficiently across the school.

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

Parents and pupils are very positive about the school. Parents are very pleased with the quality of information they get and feel that the school takes account of their views. Pupils also feel fully involved in the life of the school and think that the school does all it can to help them to learn.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in reading and mathematics for seven-year-olds
- Raise standards in writing between years 1 to 6
- Ensure a more consistent quality of teaching and make sure that there is more good teaching
- Improve the way the school is managed

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils achieve **satisfactorily** although there is considerable variation across the school. The youngest children in **reception** achieve **satisfactorily**. In **years 1 and 2** achievement is **unsatisfactory overall**. In **years 3 to 6** pupils achieve **satisfactorily** overall and achievement is **good** in **years 5 and 6**. Achievement in **year 7** is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in years 5 and 6 achieve well and attain average standards in English and mathematics
- Pupils in Year 7 attain good standard in English and mathematics
- Standards attained by the end of year 2 in reading and writing are well below average
- Standards attained by the end of year 2 in mathematics are below average
- Pupils achieve well in physical education and reach above expected standards
- Pupils attain higher than average standards in science in year 6
- In years 3 to 7 pupils achieve well in ICT

#### Commentary

1. The most recent results in 2003 indicate that standards at the end of year 2 have declined since 2002. The 2003 results for tests at the end of year 6 indicate some improvements in English, mathematics and science all of which are better than the national average.
2. The results of tests in 2002 (see tables below) indicate standards at the end of year 2 are below average in reading and writing and in line with the average in mathematics. At the end of year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly in line with the national average.

#### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (16.2 )	15.8 (15.7 )
writing	14.1 (15.4)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	16.9 (16.1)	16.5 (16.2)

*There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

#### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002*

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (26.9 )	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	26.7 (26.5)	26.7 (26.6)
science	28.5 (28.5)	28.3 (28.3)

*There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. The **trend** in improvement in standards, up to and including 2002, is below the national trend.



4. Children in **reception** achieve satisfactorily and many reach the standards broadly expected of children before they start year 1. The progress they make in social and personal development is particularly good.
5. The progress the children make in reception is not built on consistently in years 1 and 2. In **year 1** many pupils, especially the more able children, do not achieve as much as they could. This is due to some weak teaching that does not expect enough of pupils. Progress picks up in **year 2** and children achieve better but not well enough to make up the lost ground in English and mathematics.
6. In **years 3 to 4** pupils achieve satisfactorily although achievement is erratic due to inconsistencies in teaching, particularly in English. When pupils enter **years 5 and 6** the quality of teaching is more consistent with many good lessons. This helps pupils to achieve well and reach the standards they should in English and mathematics. They achieve above average standards in science.
7. Consistently good teaching in **year 7** ensures that the good achievement in years 5 and 6 is maintained and pupils do well and attain good standards in both English and mathematics. Standards in science are also maintained at a good level.
8. In the past five years girls have done slightly better than the boys in reading at the end of year 2 although boys have done better than girls in each of the tests at the end of year 6. The pupils for whom English is a second language do as well as other pupils.
9. Standards in ICT are in line with expectations throughout the school. In years 3 to 6 and in year 7 pupils achieve well considering the inadequate, dated resources. Pupils also achieve well in physical education and history; standards are generally above those usually found.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good** overall. Their personal development is **very good**. The attendance rate is **satisfactory** and the pupils arrive at school on time.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils have a love of learning.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very well and as a consequence their confidence is very high.
- Relationships between pupils and adults and with each other are very good.

### **Commentary**

10. The youngest pupils have good attitudes to school and by the time the pupils reach years 5, 6 and 7 they are enthusiastic about all that the school offers. Older pupils interviewed during the inspection said that they work hard and their lessons are fun. For example, in a year 6 history lesson the whole class were interested and involved in a discussion to persuade a parent to leave her evacuee child in the countryside.

11. The school cultivates pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. In lessons, teachers value the contribution that individuals make, thus developing self-esteem and self-respect. Through assemblies and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) lessons pupils learn to value themselves and others. Discussions on the school's statements of belief are helping pupils to understand what living and working in a community means. Year 7 pupils and reception children sharing books together is an excellent example of the statements of belief in action with pupils from different parts of the school working harmoniously together. Through visits, visitors and links with Sierra Leone and Cameroon the school is preparing pupils for life in multicultural Britain, which is an improvement since the previous inspection.

12. There are very good relationships throughout the school. Adults are highly effective role models in the way they interact with pupils and with each other. Overall, pupils' behaviour is very good and they play and work well together. This was evident during a Year 4 science lesson when the pupils worked in groups looking at opaque and transparent objects.

### Attendance

Attendance is about average but pupils come to school very punctually and lessons start on time.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

There have been no recent exclusions.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching is **satisfactory** although it is too inconsistent; there is not enough good teaching. The curriculum is **good**; it meets the needs of most pupils. The school provides several **good** opportunities that enrich the usual curriculum.

#### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory but it is too inconsistent. The inconsistencies go some way to explaining the different levels of achievement. Teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory and occasionally good, especially in personal and social development. In years 1 and 2 teaching is satisfactory but there is not enough good teaching and too much unsatisfactory teaching to ensure that pupils make the progress they should. Teaching in years 3 to 6 is better with more good teaching especially in years 4 to 6. In year 7 the teaching is good overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour
- Pupils with special needs are well taught in withdrawal groups
- There is not enough challenge for higher attainers
- There are weaknesses in the teaching of reading and writing
- Resources are well used
- Teachers are good at making sure children know what to do
- Teaching assistants are not always used in the most efficient ways
- Not enough use is made of assessment information

### Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (%)	5 (10%)	22 (45%)	18 (38%)	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

13. In almost all lessons teachers successfully manage pupils to ensure high standards of behaviour. This helps pupils to develop good work habits and enables them to learn. It is particularly evident with the older pupils who work very independently, help each other and maintain a high level of concentration. Just occasionally, there is too much noise in lessons and this results in children not learning as much as they could.

14. Children who have learning difficulties are often withdrawn in small groups and taught separately. On these occasions the teaching is sharply focused on their key difficulties and they benefit from the individual attention they receive.

15. There are several weak aspects to teaching. Because there has been no well established programme for checking on teaching it is only recently that the weaknesses are beginning to be addressed. In too many lessons, particularly with the younger pupils teachers' expectations are too low. This means that children do not learn as much as they could over quite long periods. There are also weaknesses in teaching some aspects of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and these impact on pupils' capacity to learn in other subjects.

16. Resources are generally well used, for instance the use of an overhead projector was effective in helping pupils learn how to measure accurately as they could 'see through' the Perspex ruler. The resources are often supplemented by clear explanations which are then reinforced by good demonstrations.

17. However, in too many lessons teaching assistants are not used as effectively as they could especially at the start of lessons. Too often they spend the early part of the lesson sitting and listening to the teacher rather than taking a more active part in the lesson. They are much better used in the middle of lessons when they work with small groups of pupils.

18. Weakness in the management of information about how well pupils are doing also impacts on lessons. Not enough use is made of information about what pupils already know and understand to plan lessons.

### The curriculum

Provision for the curriculum is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils experience a very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- There are gaps in resources for the teaching of ICT

### Commentary

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of most pupils. It is significantly enriched by the very good range of additional learning opportunities. Provision for sport is very good. The school takes very good advantage of all the facilities and opportunities provided, for instance, by the local authority and also taps into other avenues of support such as lottery grants. There is a

good selection of after-school clubs. The contribution of visitors and trips enhance pupils' learning. Visits, such as a residential trip to France, greatly enrich pupils' experiences.

20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The needs of all pupils are considered well. Those pupils who are identified as having particular abilities or gifts are enabled to take part in local authority schemes that cater for their needs and provide them with the opportunities to develop their talents.

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

Procedures to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are **very effective**. Achievement and personal development are monitored satisfactorily. The involvement of the pupils in the school's work and development is very high.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils are very well cared for and they feel secure in school
- Pupils' feel valued because the headteacher actively seeks and responds to their views
- Induction procedures for the youngest children are very good
- The assessment procedures to monitor pupils' academic achievements are not thorough and constructive

### **Commentary**

21. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. Pupils interviewed during the inspection were very positive about the support they receive from their teachers and the pastoral support assistant. Health and safety and child protection procedures, first aid and other medical support are thorough and ensure that pupils and staff work in a safe environment.

22. Pupils are consulted on their views about the school and year 7 pupils, for instance, welcome the chance to participate in special current affairs lessons. They feel able to express their opinions, whether positive or negative, because the headteacher is a very good listener and always answers their letters or questions. A display of persuasive letters on matters such as the state of a classroom or the look of the playground, together with the headteacher's replies, show that he respects and considers their views.

23. There are very good induction arrangements for the youngest children. The procedures include meetings for parents and an 'All about Me' booklet to complete. Reception teachers visit the children in their playgroups and the children are invited to assemblies and to spend time in the classroom prior to starting school. The bond that is formed between the reception children and year 7 pupils is very valuable in helping the children to feel happy and secure in school. There are good arrangements to make sure that the move to secondary school at the end of year 7 are as smooth as possible.

24. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. However, the assessment of pupils' academic achievements and the way this information is used to respond to individual needs is unsatisfactory. This results in pupils not always being given work that is at the right level in lessons

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

The school has a **very good** partnership with the parents. Links with the community are **good** and links with other schools are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has the full confidence of the parents
- Parents are consulted extensively and their opinions are taken into account
- Information for parents, including the annual reports, is very good
- Good community links successfully promote pupils' personal development

### Commentary

25. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting were very positive and reflect parents' confidence in the leadership of the headteacher. The headteacher respects the opinions of the parents. He recently canvassed their views through a survey; the return was high and showed a lot of satisfaction with the work of the school. There were three main issues raised and through the 'Parents' Post' parents are kept very well informed of how the school is responding or plans to address these and other issues.

26. Information for parents about the progress their children are making is very good. There are regular parent/teacher consultations and, in response to parents' requests, an additional meeting has been arranged. Annual reports provide very good information for parents: they show very clearly the progress that children are making and how parents can help them to improve their performance.

27. The school has good links with the local community that provide good opportunities for pupils' personal development. Visitors include members of the Sikh and Muslim faiths, clergy from local churches, artists and community football and tennis coaches. Pupils demonstrate country dancing at the Ifield May Fayre and older pupils take part in Junior Citizenship at the Hawth Theatre.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is **very well led** by the headteacher, but some key aspects of management are **unsatisfactory**. The governing body fulfils its role **satisfactorily**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides the school with a very clear sense of direction
- Governors and staff are committed to raising achievement for all pupils
- The school improvement plan is very well founded and guides the school's work
- There are significant weaknesses in the procedures for checking on how well the school is doing

### Commentary

28. The headteacher provides very strong leadership. In the relatively short time he has been at the school, he has secured the commitment of staff and governors to addressing weaknesses and seeking improvement. Governors have been very involved in reshaping the school's aspirations. They have a growing understanding about the range of their work and are making more informed contributions to the development of the school. Through the leadership of the headteacher, school leaders are becoming much clearer about what they need to do to improve the quality of pupils' learning and are becoming much more directly involved in raising standards. They are committed to ensuring that all pupils benefit from what the school offers and that all pupils achieve as much as they can.

29. A particular barrier to raising achievement has been the residual impact of weak management procedures. There are no well-established systems for analysing performance data to check on what pupils are achieving as they move through the school. Performance management systems for staff have only recently been reviewed and focused on necessary improvements to meet statutory requirements. Until recently subject managers have not been regularly involved in checking up on the quality of teaching.

30. The financial carry forward has been built into this year's budget to accommodate shortfalls and to offset reductions that were made to the school's income.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	963662
Total expenditure	890338
Expenditure per pupil	2220

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	47239
Balance carried forward to the next	73324

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

## AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children in the two reception classes become full-time at the beginning of the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, there were 19 children attending full-time, joined by 19 children attending part-time for the morning session and 15 children attending part-time for the afternoon session. They had all been in school for about four weeks. Children's attainment on entry is below average and many have limited pre-school experience. The school makes very good arrangements to ensure that children and their parents are well prepared for the transition to school. This ensures that teachers are alerted to any special needs that children may have and can provide for them. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. The majority of children are unlikely to achieve all the early learning goals, especially in literacy before they start year 1. Achievement is not as good as found in the previous inspection. Although children learn well where adults are directly involved, there is not enough help and support being given to children at the times they work at different activities without adult help.

### Personal, social and emotional development

Provision is **very good** and learning is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy coming to school and settle quickly into the routines
- Adults are good role models and relationships are good
- Behaviour is very good because adults have consistently high expectations of children's conduct

#### Commentary

31. The well established school nurture programme underpins the very good development of pupils' personal development. Because teachers are careful to give lots of positive rewards to children, classrooms are harmonious and happy environments. Children decide on their class rules and decide on rewards for their achievements. Children mainly play well together and look after equipment. There are many good opportunities for children to gather together with an adult to discuss their feelings and to discuss issues of fairness.

### Communication, language and literacy

Provision in this area is **satisfactory** and learning is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular, adult-led activities promote early literacy skills well
- There is not enough attention given to developing literacy in different aspects of learning

#### Commentary

32. Teaching for communication, language and literacy is good where adults work directly with groups of children. Children listen well to their teachers and are already learning their letter sounds. Books are chosen that interest children so that they are stimulated to discuss the characters and plot. They enjoy the humour in books such as 'Meanies'. However, teachers are not successfully building on the children's interest by providing follow up activities in which they can practise the skills they have learned with adult guidance.

### Mathematical development

Provision in this area is **satisfactory** and learning is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular adult led sessions promote mathematical development
- There is an unsatisfactory attention to developing children's mathematical knowledge and language in the wider curriculum

### **Commentary**

33. There are good regular sessions in which children learn to count to 10 and to recognise numbers. Teachers plan a range of good activities that promote mathematical understanding especially stimulating children by asking probing questions which make them think. During one well-planned activity, children enjoyed counting and measuring out the ingredients to make jam tarts. In this session they consolidated their understanding of numbers 1 to 5 and began to appreciate the notion of 'one more'. Other activities encourage children to experiment with mathematical ideas, such as measurement and quantity, but because children are not specifically directed to the activities, they do not benefit from them as much as they could.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

Provision in this area is **satisfactory** and learning is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good opportunities for children to find out about the natural world
- Children are given good opportunities for cooking
- There are good opportunities to use a variety of tools and materials
- There is not enough adult intervention in children's play

### **Commentary**

34. Children use the school nature area to explore the environment. They plant bulbs and last year won a gold award for their organic garden where they grew vegetables, which they cooked and ate. They visit the local environment and extend their experiences in visits to local farms and the seaside. This helps them to learn well. They are provided with a good range of activities to help them develop their senses, but teachers are not doing enough to challenge children to investigate and explore and so extend their learning. Where children are shown how to use the computer programs, they satisfactorily use the mouse to click and drag.

### **Physical development**

Provision in this area is **good** and learning is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The outdoor play area is well equipped
- Lessons in physical development are well planned

### **Commentary**

35. The outdoor play area has a good range of equipment for children to develop their co-ordination skills. Children enjoy using the space to play on the climbing frame and to ride on the tricycles. Activities are well set up and prepared. As a result, children enjoyed the challenge of using the large bricks to make 'Mr. Gumpy's Boat'. In a very enjoyable and very well taught lesson, children controlled a parachute and had a lot of fun crawling under it and tickling the toes of their classmates. Because they listened well to the teacher's instructions, this was a very successful session.

### **Creative development**



Provision in this area is **satisfactory** and learning is **satisfactory**.

## Commentary

36. Children are provided with enough choices to explore and express their ideas, using for example, paint and recyclable materials. There is some opportunity for imaginative play, but because there is little direction to children or adult intervention, this does not help children to learn as well as they might.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2 AND 3

### English

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory** overall. Too many pupils do not achieve as well as they should in years 1 to 4. Good teaching in years 5 and 6 helps pupils to make up lost ground, although standards are better in reading than in writing at this stage. In year 7, teaching is good and pupils achieve well. French is taught to the year 7 pupils but the subject was not inspected.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' skills in writing are weak
- Pupils do not make enough progress in reading in years 1 to 4
- Assessment systems are weak and information is not well used
- Pupils achieve well overall in years 5, 6 and 7
- The subject has not been consistently well managed

### Commentary

37. In years 1 to 4, pupils make erratic progress in writing and overall do not achieve the standards that they should. There are some variations in the amount and quality of written work in classes in the same year group; this is particularly noticeable in years 1 and 4. The skills that children bring with them from the reception year are not systematically built on in year 1; there is not enough opportunity for pupils to engage in independent written work. In year 2, pupils undertake an appropriate range of written work but their skills are often weak. Work is often difficult to read and too many common words are mis-spelt. A minority of more able pupils work at a good level, using, for example, interesting vocabulary and dialogue in stories, but their written work also shows errors in spelling commonly used words. The weaknesses in spelling and presentation persist into years 3 and 4 and marking often does not address the errors made. Pupils do not produce enough extended pieces of writing or draft and edit their work to improve the quality.

38. Pupils' skills in reading do not develop as well as they should in years 1 and 2. Although there is a strong emphasis on teaching letter sounds, there is too little attention given to making sure pupils recognise commonly used words. Few pupils are fluent readers and even the more able readers do not always grasp the meaning of what they have read. Too many pupils persist at pointing at words as they read or do not pay enough attention to punctuation. In years 3 and 4 overall, not enough attention is given to the teaching of reading, particularly in view of the low standards at the end of year 2.

39. Assessment systems are weak and the information that is available is not used as well as it could be. Marking of written work in years 1 to 4 is often superficial and does not identify areas for improvement, although some target-setting has recently been introduced. Pupils' developing skills in reading are not rigorously tracked. A skills checklist is used from reception to year 2 but it is not always completed accurately. Teachers make comments on the record on two occasions each year, but these are also of varied quality. Areas for improvement are identified but these are sometimes vague - 'develop recognition for high frequency words'. Subsequent comments rarely

address these and it is therefore difficult to establish whether a child has made progress in the areas identified or not.

40. At the upper end of the school, good teaching and a well structured programme for the teaching of English helps to ensure that the majority of pupils achieve well by the time they leave. Pupils read and respond to a wide variety of texts and learn to analyse the type and impact of language used in different situations, for example, use of adjectives in advertisements. Written work in a variety of forms makes good use of this study of language. Pupils are taught good strategies to help them with planning their work. They are actively encouraged to review and improve their work. However, for many pupils weaknesses in spelling and presentation are still evident and this has an impact on overall standards. Good evaluative marking, particularly in years 5 and 6, sets clear targets for improvement and subsequent marking usually refers to these.

41. There has not been enough checking up on how well the subject is being taught or how well pupils are doing and using this information to plan the next steps in learning.

## **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

Pupils make satisfactory use of their literacy skills across the curriculum. In year 2, pupils describe a visit to the church in religious education and the roles of different people living in a castle in their work in history. A visit to Hampton Court was used effectively in a year 4 lesson to encourage pupils to describe features of the kitchens and to develop their skills in speaking and preparing a guide book. Year 5 and 6 pupils wrote biographies after interviewing their grandparents about their experiences of World War II.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching in years 4 to 7 result in good level of achievement for older pupils
- There are too many lessons where the work is too easy for pupils
- The subject has not been well managed
- Good use of national numeracy strategy in years 3-6
- There is not enough direct teaching of basic numeracy

### **Commentary**

42. Although standards in mathematics are broadly in line with the national average for both seven and eleven year olds too many pupils do not achieve as much as they could.

43. There is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching of mathematics, particularly in years 1 to 3, and this results in pupils making erratic progress as they move across the school. The good teaching in the latter years helps pupils to make up some lost ground. This good teaching is also leading to some improvements in standards at the end of year 6, which are continued into year 7.

44. The weak management of the subject since the last inspection has resulted in weaknesses in teaching not being identified early enough and not enough use being made of the information about how well pupils are doing in different year groups. This situation is beginning to be addressed. The current work being done to analyse test results is providing teachers with valuable information about what they need to emphasise in their mathematics teaching.

45. In years 4 to 6 teachers are making good use of the national guidance to help plan interesting and successful lessons. The plans make sure that teaching focuses on key points and helps to make sure that lessons move on at a good pace. However, in some lessons the work planned is not hard

enough for pupils and many children spend too long on doing work that they can already do. Occasionally there is not enough direct teaching of basic numeracy skills, particularly at the start of lessons. For example, in a series of lessons about shape and space, because there is no teaching about basic number, some pupils could miss out learning about simple calculations for 4 or 5 days.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

Mathematics skills are used effectively across the curriculum. Some good use of numeracy skills was made in history in year 4 where pupils calculated entrance fees into Hampton Court. In science, pupils use aspects of numeracy to record the results of experiments, for instance using graphs and other forms of pictorial representation.

## **SCIENCE**

For years 1 to 6, school makes **satisfactory** provision for learning and teaching in this subject.

No science lessons were seen in year 7, but sampling work in pupils' books shows that good standards are maintained.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- High expectations in years 4, 5 and 6 help pupils to achieve well
- Pupils enjoy their science work and are very positive about their lessons
- There is too much variation in how well science lessons are planned
- Assessments are not used enough to improve achievement levels

### **Commentary**

46. Pupils make good progress in science and are achieving very well by the time they reach the end of year 6.

47. Pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities for learning in all the study areas for science. As they progress through the school, they gain a clear idea of what constitutes a fair test, discuss their results in pairs or teams and record their findings in a variety of written, graphical or pictorial forms. This rate of progress in years 1 to 3 is not as good as in the later years due to the weaknesses in lesson planning and not enough use being made of assessment information.

48. In a year 4 lesson pupils worked in teams to test and categorise a variety of materials and classify these into opaque, translucent and transparent. They worked very responsibly in teams of six in semi-darkness so that they could test the properties of the materials using torchlight. They discussed their results and the implications of these before recording their findings individually. The pace of their learning was high and they achieved very well because of the high expectations of their teacher. Similarly, year 5 and 6 pupils were conducting tests on the connections between evaporation and smell. Again, high expectations of teachers promoted good levels of achievement and personal development. Pupils were encouraged to explain their findings to each other and to the class using precise, technical and scientific language.

49. There is too broad a range of differences in the ways in which teachers plan work for their pupils. In classes where pupils make good progress, teachers match the work to meet the needs of groups in their classes by looking at their previous attainments and matching work to extend these. In classes where the progress of pupils is satisfactory, teachers do not use assessments so well to inform their planning and meet the needs and interests of groups and individuals. At present, it is not possible to track the progress that pupils are making in science because there is no common assessment system in use throughout the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) in year 7 is **satisfactory**.

Not enough teaching of pupils in years 1-6 was seen to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in those year groups.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching in year 7 is good
- Pupils in years 3 to 6 achieve well
- Good use of national guidance to help plan lessons
- Resources are unsatisfactory

### **Commentary**

50. The school does well to successfully teach ICT given the unsatisfactory nature of the resources. The equipment is dated and not well sited; the computers are split between two rooms and this does not help teaching. Teachers have very limited access to modern technology to help them to teach the subject. Despite these restrictions, the pupils in years 3 to 6 attain broadly expected levels; this represents a good level of achievement. The younger pupils in years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily; they have the expected level of skills but they have only a limited knowledge about how technology impacts on everyday life.

51. Year 7 pupils are well taught. The teaching is knowledgeable and makes good use of the national guidance when planning lessons. The planning also takes account of pupils' different levels of ability and confidence, ensuring that all pupils are working at the right level.

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

52. ICT is used across the curriculum wherever possible. It makes a contribution to learning in mathematics when pupils use spreadsheets and in the humanities for research purposes. The use of the Internet and CD-Roms helps to bring the subjects alive and make them more interesting. For instance, following a visit to a local Roman villa, pupils visited the villa's website and used this to support the work they did on their return to school.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

There was no opportunity to see geography lessons due to timetable arrangements.

### **History**

Provision in years 1 to 6 is **satisfactory**. History was not a focus for the inspection in year 7.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Eleven year olds attain above average standards
- History makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in other subjects
- Teaching in years 1 to 3 does not always meet the needs of all pupils
- Good use in made of a range of resources in lessons
- Weak management of the subject is resulting in variation in standards and the quality of provision

### **Commentary**

53. By the time they reach the end of year 6, pupils have achieved well in history. They like the subject and make thoughtful contributions to lessons.

54. Pupils in years 1 and 2 show keen interest in history but not all of them benefit as much as they might from the lessons. This is because plans that their teachers prepare and methods they use are too general and do not match the needs of all learners. By the time pupils reach the end of year 1, they are working at levels set out nationally, but some could be doing better. They do understand about the passage of time and can explain why people did things in the way they did in the past. At the end of year 2 standards are generally in line with expectations.

55. Visits to Fishbourne provide a rich resource for learning about Roman Times for year 3 pupils, who are aware of the importance of evidence in finding out about the past. These pupils could talk and write knowledgeably about Roman times using vocabulary such as hypocaust, toga and mosaic to explain how life was then. They speculated why London was established where it was and made good references to its southern location and proximity to the river.

56. Older pupils' learning is benefiting from the way in which history is drawn from, and contributes to, their work in other subjects. In a year 4 class, a visit to Hampton Court gave rise to some good mental mathematics work in calculating entry fees, followed by extending this to written calculations. Another class used the visit as an effective stimulus for their literacy hour.

57. Year 5 and 6 pupils are provided with a good range of studies to broaden their awareness of their own heritage and those of Europe and the World and they learn well from these. A very effective study was being undertaken on World War II in which pupils discussed and wrote about the differences between propaganda and reality. Use of posters, artefacts from the period and a good range of resources enhanced this work.

58. The school does not have systems to evaluate the impact that teaching has on pupils' learning in history. Neither is there any oversight of the curriculum or means of reviewing standards in the subject. Whilst overall provision is satisfactory, the absence of these management activities means that pupils' learning is becoming fragmented as they move through the school.

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

There was no opportunity to observe teaching or scrutinise pupils' work in design and technology, music or art. It was not possible to see lessons in physical education in Year 7.

### **Physical Education**

Provision for physical education in years 1 to 6 is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching in gymnastics lessons is good
- The subject leader gives very good guidance to colleagues and is assiduous in looking for ways to develop the subject
- Pupils have very good opportunities to participate in sports

### **Commentary**

59. Teachers are confident to teach physical education and pupils learn well. They ensure that lessons are enjoyable, through, for example, choosing lively music for the warm-up session. Pupils respond by trying hard so that by Year 6, many are achieving high standards in their control of movements and in the imaginative use of their bodies. There is a good level of challenge and skills are built up throughout the lessons. This is evident for example, when pupils put together a sequence

of movements so that they can be effectively performed when interpreting the mood of the accompanying music. A significant aspect to lessons is the very good opportunities pupils are given to assess the performances of their classmates to help them improve.

60. The subject leader is enthusiastic and very committed to the development of the subject. Physical Education makes good links with other subjects, such as science so that older pupils can collect data on, for example, their pulse rate or speed of acceleration. The subject leader ensures that the school takes advantage of all the opportunities that are provided by the local borough, such as specialist coaching and training for teachers. She seeks ways to supplement school sports equipment by participating in local and national schemes and has been successful in developing gymnastic equipment through a successful bid for a lottery grant award.

61. Pupils are given very good opportunities for participating in sporting activities. There are a good variety of clubs. Specialist coaches help pupils develop their skills in, for example, cricket, football and table-tennis for Year 7 pupils. Pupils take part in inter-school tournaments and the boys' football team is particularly successful. Opportunities for dance are good with pupils taking part in many local festivals. A significant strength is that the local borough encourages the school to nominate pupils with particular aptitude for extra coaching.

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

### **Personal, social and health education**

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**. No lessons were seen in citizenship.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Personal, social, health and citizenship education very effectively contributes to pupils' personal development

### **Commentary**

62. Personal, social and health education is central to the ethos of the school and provides very well for pupils' personal development, so that pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very positive and this helps them to learn well. The program is linked with the school's good focus on pastoral support and nurturing programme for younger pupils. Teachers' expertise has been enhanced through training so that the approaches are consistent and pupils are helped to behave well through positive strategies. As well as pupils' achievements in school being celebrated, parents are encouraged to inform the school of their children's other successes, so that these can be shared with their classmates.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

