

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARTIN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND CONTROLLED  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Dorking

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125141

Headteacher: Mr Derek Gooch

Lead inspector: Mrs Jenny Catlin

Dates of inspection: 7 – 9 June 2004

Inspection number: 266220

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	356
School address:	Ranmore Road Dorking Surrey
Postcode:	RH4 1HW
Telephone number:	01306 883474
Fax number:	01306 743328
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Chris Rogers

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is larger than most other primary schools with 356 boys and girls aged 4 – 11 years of age. Currently about 3 per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals and this is lower than most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, at 29 per cent, is above that usually found. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is also above national figures. There is a wide range of needs identified. The school has one pupil for whom English is not the mother tongue and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is average. There are five Traveller pupils on the school roll. Mobility of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal time of admission is high. The socio-economic circumstances of the school compare favourably to those elsewhere. The attainment of most pupils on entry to reception is average. The school holds a Gold Artsmark award which acknowledges its commitment to the full range of arts, music, drama and art and design. Additionally, in 2003, it gained the Healthy Schools award and the Investors in People award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9520	Mr John Leigh	Lay inspector	
22831	Mr Clive Lewis	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education
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22778	Mrs Anne Shannon	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Special educational needs English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Although a number of aspects of the school's work are good, with some being very good, the school has **serious weaknesses**. Within the past two years there have been a significant number of new teachers who are working very hard to compensate for the significant underachievement of many pupils in the past. This underachievement has come about through the school's poor procedures in tracking pupils' progress to ensure they make as much progress as possible. Standards in many areas are below average. Currently the school gives pupils a sound standard of education although value for money is unsatisfactory.

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

- Children in reception are given a very good start to their education.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with adults and they are very good with one another.
- Standards in science and information and communication technology are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Standards in mathematics are average at the end of Year 2 but are below average at the end of Year 6.
- Standards in reading and writing are below average at the end of Year 2 but average at the end of Year 6.
- There is a history of significant underachievement for many older pupils.
- There has been insufficient action to check on pupils' progress and standards.
- The governing body is not effective in challenging the school over falling standards.
- The school takes very good care of pupils and ensures their personal development is good.

Since the school was inspected in 1999, improvement has been **unsatisfactory**. Although some of the main issues identified for improvement at the time of the last inspection have been tackled satisfactorily many higher attaining pupils are not being fully challenged in their learning and the role of subject managers in monitoring standards, teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. However, the school was effective last year in offering challenge for two gifted pupils and the leadership and management of mathematics has improved recently. Significant strengths are the excellent relationships within the school and the rich and varied programme of activities offered to pupils. The most significant weakness of the school's work is the lack of systems to check pupils' progress from the end of Year 2 to Year 6 which would have alerted them to the significant underachievement of many pupils.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 6.*

**Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory** by the end of Year 6. However, the youngest children achieve very well and many are on course to meet expected standards on entry to Year 1 with an above average proportion exceeding them. Most pupils in the current Year 1 are achieving well and in the current Year 2 achievement is satisfactory. Current standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 are average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. Higher attaining pupils are not doing as well as they could. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have underachieved significantly in the past and many have not made sufficient progress since Year 2. Although the teaching is now strong, many pupils have not made up this lost ground. Pupils' achievement is improving and consequently current standards are average in English although they remain below average in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. In 2003, the school's Year 6 test results matched the national average in English and science but in mathematics they were below average. When results are compared with those of similar schools, standards in English were below average and they were well below average in mathematics and science. The school has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this does have some effect on standards but the lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils has a similar impact on standards. The school's very recent analysis of achievement shows that it currently adds little value to pupils' performance. Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. They have very positive attitudes and behave very well; attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides pupils with a satisfactory standard of education but has yet to overcome the effects that previous weaknesses have had on standards. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and there are pockets of very good and pockets of weaker teaching. Teaching and learning for children in the reception classes are consistently very good and often excellent. Children are happy and confident and make very good gains in their learning. In Years 1 to Year 6 teaching is satisfactory with some very good lessons but in some lessons activities are not always well matched to the attainment of the pupils. As a result, they are not challenged effectively and do not make enough progress. Assessment in some classes is thorough in English, mathematics and science but overall, there is little detailed analysis of assessment information. A very good range of clubs and educational visits enriches a good curriculum. The school cares for its pupils very well and works closely in partnership with parents to enhance pupils' learning. There are very good links with the local community and good links with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Monitoring and self-evaluation have been ineffective in ensuring that the school enables pupils to achieve as well as possible. While there has been some improvement in the past 18 months, it has yet to have any significant impact on pupils' achievement. The governing body is supportive but has had little involvement in reviewing the school's performance and or holding the school to account for the standards it achieves.

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

Parents are **positive** about the school and appreciate how well their children settle into reception. Pupils are happy, enthusiastic and feel safe in school. They particularly enjoy the very good relationships they have with other pupils and their excellent relationship with adults.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Ensure there is effective and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and senior management to bring about improvement and remedy identified weaknesses, most particularly in standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology;
- Ensure that class teachers' assessments give them a clear understanding of what pupils already know, understand and can do and what they need to learn next;
- Develop the skills of subject managers in monitoring standards, teaching and learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is **unsatisfactory** overall in Years 4 to 6 although in Years 2 and 3 it is satisfactory. Achievement in reception is **very good** and many children are likely to meet expected standards on entry to Year 1 with an above average proportion exceeding them. Most pupils in the current Year 1 are achieving well and in the current Year 2 and Year 3 achievement is satisfactory. Current standards for pupils in Year 2 are average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. However, higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are not doing as well as they could.

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

- In 2003 the Year 6 test results matched that of many schools nationally in English and science but they were below average in mathematics. However, the school failed to meet their targets for 2003 in both English and mathematics.
- Standards for the current Year 2 pupils are below average in reading and science and well below average in writing.
- National test results at the end of Year 2 in 2003 dropped significantly due partly to a high proportion of pupils with SEN.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 4 to 6 despite some good and very good teaching because many pupils have made little progress since they took the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- Current standards in science and information and communication technology are below average across the school.
- There has been significant underachievement by many pupils in the junior classes and this has had a detrimental effect on standards by the end of Year 6.

#### **Commentary**

1. At the time of the last inspection in 1999, standards at the end of Year 6 were described as above average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. In 2003, the school's Year 2 test results were below average in reading and mathematics while in reading they were well below average. Results compare unfavourably with similar schools and suggest underachievement from the average standards with which pupils enter Year 1. Teachers assessed standards in science to be well below average for the proportion reaching the expected Level 2 but average for Level 3, which is the expected result of higher attaining pupils. Results in 2003 show a marked fall in standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The higher than average proportion of pupils with SEN had some effect on standards which were at an all time low.
2. Year 6 test results in 2003, when compared with all schools nationally were maintained in English from the time of the last inspection when they matched the national average. However, they have fallen in mathematics from average to below average and have also fallen in science from above average to average. When compared with similar schools, that is, those schools who have a similar proportion of pupils claiming their entitlement to free school meals, results in 1998 in English and mathematics were average and below

average respectively. However, in science they were above those found in these schools. When the 2003 results are compared with these similar schools, standards were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. These results, as with the results at the end of Year 2, compare unfavourably with those of similar schools and suggest poor achievement since these Year 6 pupils took national tests in 1999. The school readily acknowledges that achievement has been unsatisfactory as a result of weaknesses in teaching between 2000 and 2002. Additionally, a further group of pupils in Year 4 with average attainment are admitted from other schools in the area, hence the reason why there are mixed age classes from reception to Year 3 but none in Years 4 to 6. However, while these are contributory factors they are not the whole picture of why pupils underachieve. The most significant reasons are the lack of any systematic monitoring of teaching and learning designed to bring about improvement and remedy identified weaknesses.

- Overall, the trend over time in Year 6 test results matches that found nationally from 1999 to 2003 although it was better in 1999 and 2000. The school did not meet its targets in 2003 and is unlikely to do so this year. The targets do not provide a high enough level of challenge and it is unclear what information is used to set them as the school has insufficient on the progress pupils make across the school. Girls outperformed boys in 2001 to 2003, but there are gender fluctuations from year to year that do not present a clear overall picture and there is a larger proportion of boys identified with SEN.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (27.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.4 (26.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.4 (28.2)	28.6 (28.3)

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

- Children in reception are likely to reach, and a significant minority exceed, expected standards in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Standards for children when they enter reception are average. Standards for the current Year 2 pupils are below average in reading and science and well below average in writing. Standards in mathematics are average although some higher attaining pupils could be doing better. This indicates underachievement by some pupils because they entered Year 1 with overall average standards. By the end of Year 6 pupils have regained some of this ground and standards in English are in line with national averages. However, this picture is not reflected in either mathematics or science where standards remain below average.
- Children in reception are achieving very well. Most pupils in the current Year 1 continue to achieve well and build on the good start they were given last year when they were in reception. In the current Year 2, achievement is satisfactory overall but lower and average attaining pupils achieve better than higher attaining pupils, who are not challenged sufficiently in mathematics and science and in some literacy lessons. There is no significant difference in the achievement of the pupil whose home language is not English or of those pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Pupils' achievement, in the junior classes, has improved over the past 18 months due to some strong teaching from many newly appointed staff. Despite this, achievement

remains unsatisfactory because of the lack of progress many pupils have made since they sat the national tests at the end of Year 2. All pupils with SEN make good progress in relation to the targets set for them in their individual education plans and some make very good progress and achieve their targets and are taken off the register. They have very good attitudes to the school and work hard during lessons. There is a register for gifted and talented pupils and 15 pupils have been identified as being more able and they achieve well. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. In Year 6, pupils are now achieving consistently well in English, mathematics and science because teaching is good and often very good. In these classes assessment information is used thoroughly to identify and remedy gaps in learning. However, standards remain lower than they should be because of the significant underachievement of pupils in the past. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in other subjects except in information and communication technology (ICT), where there remains considerable underachievement and standards are below average. There are insufficient opportunities to extend and consolidate their learning through the use of ICT in a range of subjects.

7. Overall, pupils' English language and literacy skills at the end of Year 6 are sufficient to enable them to make satisfactory progress in other subjects. Their below average numeracy and ICT skills are insufficient to ensure sound progress in other subjects, for example, in science.
8. Parents are happy with the progress that their children are making now. Some have been aware of a distinct rise in expectations since new staff were appointed, following a period when they felt their children were coasting and not developing as much as they would have liked.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, they mature very well during their time in school and personal development is cultivated very well. Attendance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- School has very high expectations of pupil conduct.
- Relationships, confidence and self-esteem are very good.
- Spiritual awareness and respect for others is very good.

### **Commentary**

9. Attendance is in line with national averages. The school does all it can to ensure pupils and parents are aware of the importance of good attendance. The school liaises with external agencies, such as Education Welfare Services and Traveller Education, where necessary. However, unauthorised absence is above national averages because some parents do not inform the school of the reason for their child's absence. The youngest children settle very well and leave their parents happily at the start of the day. Most pupils' are punctual.

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

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	4.9
National data	5.4

School data	0.7
National data	0.4

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

10. Pupils like school very much, feel secure and are keen to come. They are polite, helpful and considerate, for example, they hold doors open and love to assist visitors. They respect each other even when adults are not present. They show great interest in their work immersing themselves fully in what the school provides. They co-operate well in groups. In a Year 5 numeracy lesson, they enthusiastically, and with obvious interest and delight, demonstrated their understanding of how graphs can be interpreted by analysing a graphical representation of taking a bath from first getting into the water to leaving it. In reception, children's attitudes to learning are very good. They listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is the result of very good teaching where teachers maintain a high level of interest and set appropriately challenging tasks that ensure that all abilities have the opportunity to achieve. By the time they leave reception, the majority will reach the required standards for children of this age in their personal, social and emotional development and many will exceed expectations.
11. The vast majority of pupils behave very well and most demonstrate good self-control. There have been no exclusions this year. Staff have very high expectations for behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour is consistently challenged with the result that those few pupils with inappropriate behaviour are well managed to be as least disruptive as possible. Pupils' relationships with others are excellent. They take care of their own and others' property and take pride in their school. Play times, break times and mealtimes are very well supervised and are characterised by friendliness, calmness and happiness. Smiling faces are a feature of the school.
12. Pupils develop very good confidence and self-esteem. Questioning and encouragement by teachers ensures that pupils are encouraged to speak in front of their friends. In a Year 4 literacy lesson they compared stories by Rudyard Kipling using drama, where they took parts and acted them out to the class. This was very fruitful in raising their confidence to speak in front of others. Pupils engage well in the responsibilities given to them and carry them out willingly and with pride.
13. Learning, in most lessons, is made interesting with well-chosen activities, which stimulate a desire to learn. For example, in a mixed Year 2/3 numeracy lesson, pupils were stimulated by very good teaching to improve their problem solving skills, as they systematically discovered how many possible combinations of three different coloured pompoms could be used on a clown's hat.
14. Spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to talk about themselves and the beginnings of self-knowledge and spiritual awareness are developed. In assemblies they sing a good range of Christian songs and consider the meaning of the Trinity. They think about greatness in the light of spiritual understanding revealed in the Bible as "whoever humbles himself.....is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." They have good opportunity for reflection, when thinking about the day ahead and praying. They appreciate their own culture and have a good appreciation of cultural diversity, for example in a Year 4 religious education (RE) lesson they could identify different faiths from photographs of the different clothes worn. Pupils have learnt about Indian and African cultures and pupils study French and German.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	336	2	0
White – any other background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	3	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school is providing a **satisfactory** quality of education but the full effect of current practice is not yet evident because teachers are working to overcome previous weaknesses in pupils' achievement. Where teaching is good and very good, gaps in pupils' knowledge are being filled. In many classes, assessment is starting to be used effectively to measure the progress that pupils are making and to identify ways of improving achievement. However, this practice is inconsistent and contributes to the variable achievement of pupils in some classes and year groups.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Although there are pockets of strong teaching it cannot be considered to be better than satisfactory overall because of the variation in quality and the underachievement of many pupils in the junior classes which has a negative effect on standards by the end of Year 6.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching for the youngest children in the school is very good and, on occasions, excellent.
- Teaching in Year 6 is consistently good or very good.
- All teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and encourage them in their learning.
- Teachers' lesson plans lack sufficient detail to ensure that work meets the needs of all pupils, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Throughout the school, pupils apply themselves well to the tasks that are set for them and try especially hard when they are given the opportunity to work independently.
- Assessment in English, mathematics and science is inconsistent; the school has not yet developed effective systems for recording how well pupils are doing.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (9%)	10 (30%)	11 (32%)	8 (23%)	2 (6%)	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.*

15. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was good and a significant strength of the school. Since then many pupils have not achieved as well as they could, particularly in Years 3 to 6. However, over the past eighteen months teaching has improved considerably as a result of the appointment of many new staff. Many teachers are working very hard in an attempt to overcome this previous underachievement and teaching in reception and Year 1 is frequently very good and, on occasions, excellent. Teaching in Years 2 to 5 is satisfactory, although some good and very good lessons were seen during the inspection. However, this is inconsistent and results in pupils making variable progress. Teaching is consistently good in Year 6 with some very good teaching that is having a positive effect on pupils' learning and helping to raise standards. Despite the improvements in teaching in the past eighteen months it has yet to compensate fully for the underachievement of many pupils. The school, until very recently, have been unaware of this underachievement because there were no satisfactory procedures in place to keep a check on the progress pupils made, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
16. Teachers' planning for lessons are often not detailed enough to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met, particularly those who are more able. However, the teaching of pupils with SEN is good because they are given very good support by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and the learning support assistants (LSAs). These pupils have good attitudes to the school and work hard during lessons because the LSAs play a vital role in managing the pupils and guiding them in activities. There is a register for gifted and talented pupils and 15 pupils have been identified as being more able and they are taught well. Teachers are very aware of the strategies necessary to support pupils with English as an additional language and the thorough and consistent development of language skills in lessons ensures that they make good progress. There are no significant differences in the expectations and challenge offered to pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.
17. Teachers are consistent in their management of pupils' behaviour and this ensures that pupils in all classes have the opportunity to learn in an orderly and harmonious environment. This supports pupils' achievement and the school's efforts to raise standards. Homework is meaningful, interesting and varied, and effective in moving pupils on in their learning.
18. The school admits an additional group of pupils, from local first schools at the beginning of Year 4; this enables the school to have single age classes in Years 4 to 6. However, from reception to the end of Year 3 some classes cover a two-year age span. This means that teachers face particular challenges in planning and in deciding how to organise groups of pupils for various activities, because the learning needs of different ages in the class are different. The best planning and management of a mixed age class is found in reception and Year 1, where the teachers are most effective in matching work to the very wide range of prior attainment in the class. Planning is also good in Year 6, with a strong emphasis on providing activities that are motivating and inspiring to pupils.
19. In some lessons there is often far too much time spent on the introduction – which lasted for half an hour in some lessons – instead of dividing up the time in a way that was best

suited to the wide range of prior attainment in the class. Scrutiny of pupils' work in mathematics and science shows that higher attaining pupils are not being challenged as much as they could be.

20. Assessment in English, mathematics and science is very variable; when it is good it contributes directly to an improvement in standards and to the good teaching found in many classes. Assessment information is not used effectively to identify any underachievement, to pinpoint gaps in pupils' knowledge and to set individual targets that are communicated with pupils so that they know how to improve their work, as well as with parents so that they know how to help their children. Systems for recording how well pupils are doing in the foundation subjects of art and design, design and technology (DT), music and physical education (PE) have not yet been developed, because the school has concentrated on raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum provided for pupils is **good**, enriched by a **very good** range of additional learning opportunities. Accommodation is **good** and resources are **satisfactory** overall. The experience and expertise of the staff are well matched to the curriculum.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils and is interesting and stimulating.
- The school is fully inclusive for all pupils, meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs very well.
- A very good range of additional learning opportunities enriches pupils' learning.
- Innovative use of the school environment.

### **Commentary**

21. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Overall improvement since the previous inspection is good. There are now programmes of work for all subjects and the ICT suite is fully functional. Planning structures have been established for the youngest children, for all subjects of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for RE. The school places a strong emphasis on fostering pupils' spiritual as well as their intellectual and physical development. There is good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship, which contributes considerably to the pupils' personal development because they are confident to express their feelings in a trusting and secure environment. Pupils have a planned curriculum that includes circle time and teaches alcohol, drug abuse and sex education effectively. The school ensures that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Support for pupils learning to speak English as an additional language and for Traveller pupils is good. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
22. The school places a very strong emphasis on ensuring all pupils are provided with a curriculum that meets their needs. The school makes very good provision for pupils with higher level SEN and those who hold a statement of SEN. Procedures are very well organised. The most recent requirements outlined for these pupils are fully met. The SENCO works very effectively with all members of staff. She is responsible for

organising the support these pupils need and ensures that they have full access to the curriculum. Seven children have a statement of SEN and the school has ensured that their needs, as specified in the statements, are fully met. Individual targets are reviewed regularly to monitor each pupil's progress towards the learning targets and to set new ones. The school also ensures that provision matches the individual pupil's education plan (IEP). Pupil's progress is carefully tracked and if targets are not met the SENCO investigates the reason. There are many initiatives used to support these pupils, for example the additional literacy support.

23. The school gives pupils a very good programme of additional experiences. There are a number of clubs such as sports clubs, choir, drama and art and craft clubs, which are very well attended by pupils. There is specialist music tuition provided and visitors greatly enhance pupils' learning and extend their chances to have expert support. For example, members of Chelsea Football Club were coaching pupils during the inspection. Residential visits for Years 5 and 6 support pupils' personal development and links made with schools in France and Germany broadens pupils' experience beyond their immediate environment. The school has recently been awarded a Gold Artsmark for its provision for creative arts.
24. Teachers generally have satisfactory subject knowledge and their expertise and experience are matched to the needs of the curriculum and pupils in different phases. In reception, the teachers and LSAs are highly skilled and are well trained. The school uses their individual talents to enhance the curriculum through teaching German and French. At present a 'carousel' of activities organised by LSAs is being trialled with Years 3 and 4. The foreign language activities are giving the pupils a sound start to learning a foreign language but the art and ICT activities need to be linked to pupils' class learning to be of lasting value. The level of resources to support learning is satisfactory. The library is very cramped (and during the inspection extremely hot and airless) and does not encourage pupils to browse reading material comfortably. The use of the extensive grounds to support learning is a strength of the school's provision. Pupils have experienced a wide range of activities from hedging demonstrations to creating class gardens. Hurdles have been built to allow the pupils to bird watch. There is also a shaded area that can be used as an outside classroom.

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

**Very good** steps are taken to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection. **Satisfactory** support, advice and guidance are provided based on **very good** monitoring of personal development. The school seeks, values and acts on the views of pupils well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Trusting relationships that pupils have with adults are excellent.
- Care and protection for children is very good.
- Personal development is monitored and promoted very well.
- Tracking of pupils' progress across the school is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

25. Child protection has a high profile. It is handled sensitively, effectively and promptly. Staff always work in the best interests of all pupils to safeguard their welfare. Child protection is well supported by thorough and effective arrangements in which the school, parents and other appropriate agencies work together well.
26. The school ensures that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment very well. All reasonable steps are taken to keep pupils safe and protect them from injury or ill health. The health and safety policy is appropriate and provides clear guidance on the important issues. Termly inspections of school premises are carried out with governor involvement. Risk assessment is appropriate and up to date. For example, risk assessments for trips are informed by pre-visits by staff.
27. The school provides a most secure, supportive, caring environment where pupils feel very safe and happy. Relationships with adults are excellent. Pupils are known very well as individuals. If they have a problem, pupils are extremely confident they can go to an adult and get help. On numerous occasions, pupils were seen talking to staff, who listened and provided help or re-assurance. Teachers understand the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and those from Traveller families. They prepare well for new arrivals and support them appropriately throughout their time in the school.
28. Pupils with SEN are well supported, which ensures they have the opportunity to achieve well. The school identifies these pupils at a very early stage and makes appropriate provision. Individual education plans contain appropriate targets, which are informed by detailed assessment of pupil's difficulties. This information is used effectively to plan appropriate work and has a positive effect on pupils' progress. Individual education plans are reviewed at least termly and where needed more frequently. The SENCO regularly looks to see whether targets have been met and if not looks for the reason. The school works closely with the local education authority's support services.
29. Some good assessment practice was seen in a few lessons but it is inconsistent as is the marking of pupils' work. Optional tests that most junior pupils take at the beginning of the school year have not been analysed in enough detail to enable the school to set accurate individual, group or end of Year 6 targets or to adjust the curriculum to cover areas where there are weaknesses. Consequently, the school has no clear picture of the progress pupils make in their learning or what they need to learn next. At present, assessment procedures are working better in Year 6 because these teachers are using the information they have more effectively to plan their lessons. It also works well in reception and Year 1 where there is a high commitment by all adults that pupils will make as much progress in their learning as possible.
30. The school has very good procedures to monitor personal development. This has an impact in the significant development of pupils' personal qualities. It is very effective because staff know their pupils very well and they use every opportunity through encouragement and support to develop them. Their views are sought through informal opportunities and through questionnaires. The school council is impressive in the way it seeks the views of pupils and suggests ideas for improvement, such as having the water fountains changed to make it easier to fill water bottles.
31. Good behaviour and attitudes to work are recognised and rewarded accordingly. Pupils understand the consequences of anti-social behaviour and develop very good relationships with each other. They become increasingly independent, self confident and

knowledgeable about themselves and healthy and safe living. The school equips pupils very well with the skills necessary to become good citizens. For example they consider what it means to live in a diverse world, respecting similarities as well as differences and have a good appreciation of the need to protect the environment.

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

The school's partnership with parents and other schools is **good** and with the community it is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school uses its community very effectively.
- Contribution of links with parents to pupils' learning at school and home is very good.
- Parents' views and their support of the school are very good.
- Educational links with other schools and links to wider partnership are very good.

### **Commentary**

32. Parents are well informed by regular, well-presented general school newsletters. The prospectus is of good quality and communicates well what the school does. There are good opportunities to receive information on their child's progress throughout the year. Information for parents whose children have SEN is good. The annual report to parents on their child's progress is very detailed, thorough and for example, includes useful assessment of a child's personal and social development. It is much appreciated by parents. Targets are clearly set, for example, recognising numbers 10 to 20 in reception and improving punctuation in Year 4.
33. The school works closely with parents when their child is put on the register for SEN. The parents' views and opinions are sought and are considered when drawing up targets for their child to achieve. An 'open door' policy operates where parents are able to discuss their child's progress with teachers, the SENCO or LSAs. The SENCO meets with parents to explain and discuss the targets, which have been set for their child. A parent support group has been started with the aim of involving parents in the learning and developments in the school and parents have shown that they value this. The school has strong links with the local special schools and with secondary schools to support pupils transferring to secondary education.
34. Parental views are very positive. They are very pleased with what the school provides although a number felt that more able pupils should be extended more. The school encourages a strong sense of partnership based on mutual trust and confidence. The school is an open door environment, very welcoming to parents, which results in very good relationships with parents. Parents are committed to the school and a large number help by, for example, supporting reading, mathematics, athletics and art.
35. If parents are concerned about anything they are confident to approach the school for resolution. They are appreciative that their children receive the help and support they

need. Additionally, the school has a positive relationship with the local English language support service and the advice and support has helped teachers understand the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and how to best support them. There is an equally supportive relationship with the authority's Traveller support team which ensures these pupils settle well into the school. The school provides good opportunities to help parents support their children's learning through information on what topics are to be covered.

36. The Parent Teacher Association is very effective in arranging events, which raise significant funds to support the pupils by, for example, improving ICT provision, providing playground markings and supporting art and music groups.
37. There are many visitors from the local community, who contribute significantly to the understanding of pupils. The following outstanding example was seen:

The grandfather of one of the children in reception visited the Pixham Annexe on the day when Venus traversed the sun. He brought an old wartime telescope and focused the image on an improvised screen in the playground. The children were excited and enthralled to see the slow movement of the planet across the sun, very well explained by the grandfather. The teacher used this practical insight to ask questions, and it was clear that a lot had been learnt about telescopes, safety when looking at the sun and the solar system, summed up by one four year old girl who exclaimed "...and that's the universe!"

38. Church links are very strong with regular visits from local ministers and shared services to which the community is invited. Through visits to school, pupils have a very good understanding of those who work in the community such as hedge-layers. It is clear that this contributes strongly to the personal development of pupils. A dance company, whose dancers include some with a disability, performs in school, which inspires pupils to perform similar dances at a centre for adults with learning disability. The school uses the surrounding community well to enhance the learning of its pupils.
39. The transition to the secondary school is handled well because of good liaison between schools, which ensures pupils settle well into their next school. An example of this is the work done by Year 5 pupils sharing the ICT facilities at the secondary school. There are very strong and productive links with other schools through the Dorking School Language Development Group.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The governance of the school is **unsatisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is **unsatisfactory**. The effectiveness of management overall is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The governing body has yet to develop a sound grasp of the areas in which the school needs to improve.
- There are insufficiently high aspirations by the headteacher and key staff to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as possible.
- The roles of subject managers and senior staff are carried out unsatisfactorily.
- There are no effective systems in place to check on pupils' progress across the school.
- The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Leadership and management of learning for the youngest children are of high quality.

## Commentary

40. The governing body has an awareness of and pride in the many strengths of the school. However, due partly to the significant difficulties the full governing body has had in obtaining appropriately detailed information; it has only very recently and belatedly begun to develop any understanding of the weaknesses of the school. As a consequence, their ability to challenge senior managers and to act as a 'critical friend' to the headteacher and senior staff has been very limited and their role in helping shape the vision and direction of the school, particularly in terms of improving pupils' achievement, is still in the very early stages of development and remains unsatisfactory. However, the governing body are conscientious in ensuring that all statutory duties are fulfilled appropriately and they have been diligent in ensuring that value for money is obtained in any school-improvement projects.
41. The long-serving headteacher is clearly responsible for and takes understandable pride in the very good ethos of the school. The resulting very good relationships and very good attitudes and behaviour coupled with the wide and interesting range of additional curricular activities undoubtedly make the school a happy place to be in and ensure that pupils want to come to school and enjoy their time in school. However, considerably less stress has been placed on ensuring pupils achieve as well as could be expected, particularly in the 'core' subjects of English, mathematics and science. Only very recently have subject managers analysed freely available data. This analysis, with support from the local education authority, demonstrates clearly that a significant number of pupils are not achieving standards of which they are capable by the time they leave the school at the age of 11 and there has been considerable under-achievement over the past three or four years.
42. This under-achievement has been the result of a number of factors, including:
- the absence of a strong senior management team with a clear whole-school overview of standards and a drive to improve them;
  - insufficiently high aspirations by the headteacher and key staff;
  - the lack of strategic whole-school planning with a clear focus on improving standards;
  - weak leadership of the curriculum and teaching by senior staff (at the time of inspection, the core subject of science, for example, had been without a co-ordinator with the responsibility of monitoring standards and teaching for two years);
  - the lack of any rigorous systems for the monitoring of performance data or for tracking pupils' achievement despite data on pupils' performance in annually undertaken tests English and mathematics being readily available. No analysis of these results had been undertaken until comparatively recently;

- the lack of any systematic monitoring of teaching and learning designed to bring about improvement and remedy identified weaknesses.
43. The role of subject manager or 'future subject manager' has been recently allocated to a number of teachers, many either new to the school or new to the responsibility. Amongst these teachers there are clear and positive signs of the development of a sense of 'ownership' of their subjects and an understanding of the need for target-setting and for the monitoring of achievement and planning and teaching over the whole school. However, there is still a considerable way to go before these policies and strategies are implemented consistently across the whole school. Currently, not all subject managers are effective because they are not empowered to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school. Additionally, there has been insufficient support offered by the senior management to develop and implement whole-school strategies designed to improve standards. This weakness, alongside that of insufficient checking on pupils' progress, has been a particular barrier to raising achievement within the school. Although staff new to the school, particularly newly-qualified teachers, speak positively about the support they have received, and the school has appropriate performance management systems in place, the unsatisfactory teaching observed in two lessons and the proportion of satisfactory teaching observed, indicates that these systems have not been fully effective in providing support and in bringing about improvement where needed.
44. The management of the provision for pupils with SEN is very good. The SENCO is very experienced and committed to seeing that these pupils fulfil their potential. She is committed to introducing strategies which will further improve the provision and this is a particular aid to raising the achievement of many of these pupils. The school's approach is very well organised and designated funds are used appropriately. The school is part of a local SEN partnership of schools where SENCOs meet to share resources and expertise. All of the established support staff are experienced and well qualified. Staff that are new to the school are to receive training. All staff work closely with the SENCO who ensures that they are all aware of the procedures. Parents are kept well informed and are invited to all reviews. Very good records are kept and there is very good liaison with the secondary schools when pupils transfer at the age of eleven. There is a governor designated as a person responsible for overseeing SEN and she plays an active role. She meets regularly with the SENCO and reports back to the governing body.
45. Leadership and management of learning for the youngest children are of high quality because the member of staff with responsibility has a thorough knowledge of the curriculum young children need to learn. She monitors performance data and ensures that all teaching and support staff are kept up to date with developments and appropriate training. This very good quality provision is a factor in ensuring that the provision for these young children enables them to achieve as well as possible.
46. Inspection findings confirm that essential office management functions are covered appropriately and are not unduly bureaucratic, allowing teachers to get on with their job of teaching the pupils. Appropriate, well-monitored accounting systems ensure that up to date information about the school budget is available to the governing body in time for their meetings. The governing body are aware of the "best value" principles of challenge, comparison, consultation and competition, although their application to date in decision-making in such areas as setting targets, planning for improvement, allocating resources to priorities and managing implementation has been limited.

47. Due to the unsatisfactory achievement of a significant number of pupils, the school is not giving satisfactory value for money. Nevertheless, it has been successful, over the past eighteen months, in appointing a considerable number of high quality staff and consequently, management responsibilities have been reviewed recently. The school's increasing awareness of the factors that have led to the underachievement of many pupils in the past places the school in a strong position to rectify their weaknesses when the necessary systems are in place to bring this about.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	812,076
Total expenditure	830,257
Expenditure per pupil	2,406

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	50,433
Balance carried forward to the next	32,252

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

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

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. This is because of the coming together of four key elements:

48. Firstly, there is very high quality teaching and learning for children both in the main school and in the Pixham Lane annexe. All the teaching and learning seen was at least very good with three lessons seen where teaching was excellent. This very high quality teaching is characterised by all staff working very well together as a supportive team. Teachers are very experienced and knowledgeable about the curriculum. They very effectively plan a range of challenging activities and hold very high expectations that all want to learn. Lessons are full of pace and challenge and children maintain their interest very well throughout. All the teachers use a very good mixture of adult-focused and child-selected activities to develop the skills of independent learning. As a result, children of all abilities work co-operatively and collaboratively in large and small groups. Together with the supporting staff, teachers work very hard to make all experiences enjoyable and learning fun. They monitor children's responses very well, track their achievement and build on all experiences. Teachers carefully adapt the next lesson in a series to include and extend learning started previously. During the inspection, for instance, the teacher in the Pixham annexe altered her planned Tuesday literacy work to incorporate the transition of Venus across the face of the sun. The opportunity to listen to a visiting grandfather, to ask mature questions and to read and write about such an event, sharing learning, was of great value to children's learning.
49. Secondly, assessment is of very high quality and gives very good guidance to teachers. The school has devised a system that enables staff to identify children's knowledge, skills and abilities as they enter the school. Teachers formally assess children regularly and the information gained contributes to the pupils' Profile. As well as formal assessment of abilities, all adults evaluate children's learning and use this information very well in planning and adapting future work. Children enter the reception classes with a wide range of skills and abilities, but which are generally average. They achieve very well and by the time they enter Year 1, all but a very few attain expected standards. Those children who have SEN achieve very well as a result of the support given to them by all adults.
50. Thirdly, the curriculum provided is very good and meets the needs of all children very well, including those of higher ability as well as those with SEN. Teachers identify activities for each specific area of learning but where possible make links to use knowledge and skills from one area to develop understanding in another. This provides a rich, broadly based curriculum that challenges children in an enjoyable learning atmosphere. This is very successful as a result of teachers having a very good range of resources to meet the needs of all pupils, including visitors to the school who share their knowledge and specialist equipment well with children. The school has a good range of outdoor equipment, especially at the annexe. Although the outdoor space is small, the teacher has 'zoned' the playground well to enable children to develop their physical skills in active games as well as providing quiet areas to share a book, write a story, do a puzzle or role play in the 'house'. Unfortunately, the surface of the playground, an issue at the time of the previous inspection, still is in a very poor state with loose gravel, rough, and uneven

patches and has no fixed safety surfaces which makes it unsafe for children to use high climbing equipment. The outside area for these young children in the main school has recently been partly resurfaced and now provides an interactive extension to the classroom.

51. Fourthly, leadership and management are of high quality. The manager for this aspect of the school's work has a thorough knowledge of the curriculum young children need to learn. She checks on children's progress and ensures that all adults are kept up to date with developments and appropriate training. Very regular meetings between the reception staff and teachers in Years 1 and 2 occur. This ensures that children are prepared very well for the main school and teachers of older pupils know the experiences children bring to their learning. A careful induction programme enables new children to settle quickly and happily into the work of the school. Frequent pre-school meetings ensure that children are familiar with the staff and parents know who to contact with any questions or if they have a problem. For instance, while Year 5 pupils make a residential visit, all the children in the Pixham annexe move into the main school for the week. At the end of that week all children in the reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes will make a visit to the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum along with parents and younger brothers or sisters. Children who join the school in the autumn are invited to spend time with the reception classes during this week and their visit includes a puppet show.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The planning of a range of activities and the support given is very good.
- Very clear routines are well established in both classes.
- Adults deliberately and carefully group children to work together on activities both teacher-directed and child-selected.
- There are clear and high expectations about behaviour.

### **Commentary**

52. Teaching and learning is very good. As a result, all but a very few with specific needs attain the expected standards by the time they are in Year 1. Teachers very carefully establish how they expect children to behave and lessons are very carefully planned and structured to help them learn to live and work together. Discussions about how the characters behave in stories and role-play activities help children learn the difference between right and wrong. Children know and trust their teachers and supporting adults very well. They develop the confidence and ability to take turns and share resources and equipment as a result of adults establishing very good and careful routines. Children have good opportunities to talk with adults about their concerns and contribute to the smooth running of the classroom. They learn to care for living things and the environment, such as watering seeds and plants and put such as snails and spiders back where they were found. They demonstrate pride in their own achievements, such as when they give out fruit and drinks at snack time for the rest of the class. The standards and good progress noted in the previous report have been very effectively improved.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of the literacy strategy for reception children to develop speaking and listening skills, reading and writing as well as a love of books.
- Classrooms are language rich environments with labels, books and children's work well displayed.
- Rooms are well equipped with pencils, crayons and other markers and papers to develop children's emerging writing skills.
- Teaching is very good as all adults are positive role models for children.

### **Commentary**

53. Children achieve very well because a very good range of opportunities are provided for children to develop their language skills. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Children enter the school with above average speaking and listening skills, average reading skills but just below average writing skills. By the end of the year, nearly all children will reach expected standards with most being in transition to National Curriculum work by the time they enter Year 1. Children are encouraged to develop a wide vocabulary because a range of very high quality activities are planned for children to communicate with each other as well as with supporting adults. Frequent opportunities are provided for role-play, which develops children's vocabulary. Children with SEN linked to the development of their speaking and listening skills are fully included in all activities with adults tailoring many to meet their specific needs. The good standards and progress noted by the previous report have been effectively improved, standards are good and achievement is very good.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good, direct teaching of number and other areas of mathematics and the monitoring of their skills develop learning well.
- Children learn very well through a combination of practical and written opportunities.
- Adults harness children's enjoyment of mathematics with good and carefully planned free-play opportunities.

### **Commentary**

54. Children achieve very well and attain standards that are above expected for their ages and abilities. When they enter the school their number recognition and background knowledge of shape and space are average though their ability to calculate numbers is just below expected levels. When they leave the reception, all achieve expected standards in each area of mathematics. Children are able to count very highly, recognising numbers well past 20, with most counting and identifying higher numbers in

1s, 2s, and 10s. They use common symbols such as + and - when writing number stories. They recognise common 2 and 3 dimensional shapes and have good awareness of time and fractions. This was well demonstrated when tidying away in the reception class in the main school building. The teaching assistant gave children a count of 10, but when she got to 9, instead of letting her get to 10, the children moved to 9 and a quarter, 9 and a half, 9 and three quarters, then 10, giving themselves extra time! Children also pointed out that a quarter took you to the 3 on the clock, being a quarter of an hour. There is very high quality lesson planning to develop children's full mathematical potential and the continual monitoring of progress occurs to achieve that potential. Teaching is very good. Teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy activities for reception children including counting rhymes and songs. All staff are well briefed about the abilities of each child and ask a very good range of challenging questions to encourage children to think and compute.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities are provided for children to use computers on a range of programs as well as other equipment, such as the cassette player in the listening corners.
- Staff plan and provide a good range of activities to develop general knowledge of the world around them.
- The local community and families offer very good support to children's learning

### **Commentary**

55. All children achieve very well as a result of teaching and learning being very good. Most will exceed the expected standards by the time they get to Year 1. The good use of computer programs enables the children to extend their knowledge of language while learning how to use the equipment with skill. Using writing and mathematical games programs, they develop their eye-hand co-ordination through the careful control of the mouse as well as identifying icons and tools that they use in other programs. Listening to music and joining in songs as well as stories from different countries helps children understand that not everyone comes from this country but that some music and stories are similar the world round. Teachers make very good use of simple scientific enquiry skills to encourage children to use their senses to investigate. For instance, children have very good knowledge of the order of the planets and that the sun stays still while the earth and other planets move round it because of very high quality teaching to support and develop such learning. During the inspection for instance, the transition of Venus across the face of the sun was to occur. A grandfather offered to bring his telescope into school to enable children to see the event occur using reflection rather children than just watching it on the television. When looking at life cycles children study snails and caterpillars, recording the development of butterflies from egg to caterpillar to butterfly. They examine mini-beasts and other creatures, plants and flowers, plant seeds and watch them grow. By the time they leave the reception class children know a lot about the natural world, about plants, animals and other creatures and how to look after them. Likewise they know a lot about themselves, their homes, family and foods for living healthy lives along with knowledge of what they can do well and how to live and work with others.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and provides children with many opportunities to develop their physical skills well.
- Small world characters, puzzles and a range of construction equipment, help children develop their fine control skills very well.
- Many opportunities to use scissors, brushes and paints and pencils and markers help make hand control and eye/hand co-ordination good.
- Opportunities are well planned to use a range of physical equipment in more formal sessions.

### Commentary

56. Children achieve very well and will meet expected standards by the time they go into Year 1. There is a good focus on the development of fine control skills through handling pencils, scissors, brushes and other tools on a daily basis. For instance, all children write daily using a range of markers, practising letters and number shapes, spacing groups of letters into word shapes, aiming to get the letters of such as their names of an even size and accurate shape. Teachers plan well the direct development of children's skills in formal physical education sessions in the halls and use the outside areas for children to investigate different movement skills. Children climb, throw and catch, skip and in the outside area ride. They negotiate the space avoiding others, using their space very well, adapting their behaviour to ensure that all activities are performed safely. In the classroom they used simple equipment to investigate mini-beasts and mathematical tasks, write and record well their news and mathematics. As well as the formal activities, children also have a well-planned range of more investigative, child-selected activities such as using the home corner to prepare food and using a range of construction equipment to make houses and homes. They use puzzles and small world models with skill, and paint and draw developing their eye-hand co-ordination. As a result, all children use a wide range of resources dextrously, ready for National Curriculum work in art and design and design and technology.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The direct teaching of skills is well combined with good opportunities for children to learn through play.
- Children have good opportunities to use a wide range of creative materials.

### Commentary

57. Children achieve very well because of very good teaching. All children are in line to reach, and most exceed, the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. The development of children's physical and creative skills is carefully linked in the planning

and all adults have very good knowledge of what experiences children will need for the future. The children's skills are assessed as they enter the school and opportunities are provided to meet specific physical and behavioural needs. This is particularly important for those children with special educational needs and those needing support for their social and emotional development through role-play activities to act out different situations. The teachers and supporting adults join children in this work to demonstrate positive behaviour and develop speaking and listening skills well. The wider creative arts such as music, art and drama are not neglected and children have frequent opportunities to express themselves creatively, copying and composing their own tunes, painting from their imagination and acting out the experiences of characters from a wide range of well known stories.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Development of speaking and listening skills is good.
- Effective support is provided for pupils with special educational needs.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

58. Standards in Year 2 are below the national average in reading. Although a majority of pupils reached the expected Level 2 in reading in the national tests in 2003, a large proportion did not. It was a similar picture for writing. Very few attained the higher Level 3 which means that standards in writing are well below average. Pupils' attainment in the national tests in Year 6 was similar to the national average for the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Pupils enter Year 1 with average standards in reading and writing but by the end of Year 2 they are attaining standards below the national average. This is unsatisfactory achievement. By the end of Year 6 pupils have regained some of this ground and standards are in line with national averages. However, compared to similar schools standards are below. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. After significant falls in standards in 2001 standards in English are improving.
59. Many pupils do not attain well in relation to their ability in Years 1 and 2. By the age of eleven pupils have achieved satisfactorily and are attaining at the national average. Pupils with SEN and those whose home language is not English achieve well because of the good support they have and they make good progress in the subject. Standards are slightly lower than those at the time of the previous inspection. During the inspection no difference in the performance of girls and boys was noted.
60. Throughout the school, staff work hard to ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills of speaking and listening and standards are good. Pupils are attentive and listen well in class. Most pupils are confident and articulate speakers. This is evident in their ability to ask and answer questions and in the quality of discussion.

They talk expressively about their work and things which interest them both with each other and with adults.

61. Standards in reading are unsatisfactory by the end of Year 2. The reading programme and daily opportunities to read to themselves and others are not yet systematically established to provide well for pupils of all abilities. The recently introduced reading session, where a small group of pupils work with an adult studying the same text is not being implemented across the school and the adults responsible for the sessions are not keeping secure records that track the individual's progress. Standards in reading by the end of Year 6 match those found in many schools. The resources in classrooms are used well and contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of reading. The library is inadequate and during the inspection too hot for comfort because of the glass roof.
62. Attainment in writing by the end of Year 2 is well below the national average. Standards have dropped steadily since the national tests in 1999. The reason for this is being analysed and areas for development have been identified. New whole school targets are being set for the coming year and a new tracking system is being introduced which will identify areas or pupils for focused support. By the end of Year 6 pupils write for many different purposes and in a range of styles. Inspection findings are that attainment is in line with national averages. Information and communication technology is used to further develop pupils' literacy skills. Pupils listen to taped stories and record themselves retelling stories. Pupils have Internet access to use in research.
63. Marking is not consistent across the school. Where marking is good, it shows the pupil how well they have achieved the task and what needs to be done to improve. Pupils with SEN and those of lower ability are given clear well-focused targets that help them to improve. They are very well supported in lessons by experienced LSAs. This raises their achievement.
64. At the time of the previous inspection, the role of subject managers was not developed. There has been little improvement in this respect. The role is in the process of being re-evaluated. There is a long established subject manager and one who only assumed this responsibility very shortly before the inspection. The long-standing subject manager has no overview of the whole school and has not used the available data to identify where there are weaknesses in teaching and learning.

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

65. The use of literacy skills in subjects, such as geography, science and religious education is **satisfactory** but it is an area for development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have fallen since the last inspection and are now below average by the end of Year 6.
- In some classes there are insufficient opportunities for high attaining pupils to fulfil their potential.
- Teaching is very good in Year 6, enabling pupils to achieve well in lessons and make up for some previous underachievement.
- Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall but there are some good features which are leading to good development.

### Commentary

66. Until 2003 National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 were high as they also were at the time of the last inspection. Standards in 2003 were below average and whilst there were a high proportion of pupils with SEN in the 2003 group of Year 2 pupils this is not the whole picture and indicates some underachievement of these pupils who entered Year 1 with overall average attainment. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were below those found nationally and those at the time of the last inspection. Evidence of work seen during the inspection reflects these below average standards.
67. The work seen in Years 1 and 2 shows satisfactory achievement for average and lower attaining pupils but higher attaining pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to fulfil their potential. In the work seen in Years 3 to 6 the achievement of the majority of pupils is improving but they have yet to compensate fully for past underachievement. Throughout the school, pupils with SEN are given good support and achieve well. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls or of pupils of minority ethnic heritage. The use of ICT is under developed in many classes.
68. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. However, in one very good lesson in Year 1, the lesson planning was extremely detailed and pupils were managed very well. Pupils showed enthusiasm as a result of their excellent relationships with the teacher and were eager to follow instructions and to answer questions. The lesson made a significant contribution to their understanding of right angles and to their grasp of quarters and halves. There was also some very good assessment of pupils' learning taking place, which enabled the teacher to have a clear understanding of what pupils already knew and what they need to learn next. In one Year 2 lesson, the introduction, which focused on mental mathematics, was much too long and lacked pace. Emphasis was given to asking questions that could be understood by the less able pupils and insufficient attention was given to providing challenge for higher attaining pupils. The teaching observed in a mixed age Year 2 and 3 lesson, coped well with the tricky problem of having two year groups in the same class, with the consequent wide range of ability. Despite this, the teacher's good subject knowledge enabled pupils to extend their understanding of numbers involving hundreds, tens and units.
69. In Years 3 to 6 features of the good and very good lessons included good pace and high expectations. For example, the teacher in the Year 6 class expected pupils to extract information from a time/distance graph on how far people had walked in a given amount of time. He provided constant challenge and provided pupils with good opportunities to recognise and take responsibility for their own learning by asking them to identify what they should have learned by the end of the lesson. Additionally, pupils in another Year 6 class had very good opportunities to extend their computer skills by using information based on the growth patterns of sunflowers to devise their own graph. A significant

feature of both these lessons was the opportunity provided by the teachers for pupils' to develop independence in their learning and this made a good contribution to their social development. In Years 3 to 5 teaching is variable and ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching is very good there is a brisk pace and high level of challenge for all pupils. Where it is unsatisfactory these aspects are not apparent and tasks do not provide all pupils with sufficient opportunities to extend their learning. All teachers model mathematical language well and maintain a pleasant, industrious atmosphere.

70. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory but show recent improvement. The subject manager works hard to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered and that all staff have a shared approach. Results of a range of tests are beginning to be analysed in order to identify strengths and areas for development and ensure that all pupils are suitably challenged in their learning. The subject manager has held responsibility for the subject for a comparatively short time but is aware that an area for development is to ensure that there is consistent and effective use of assessment. She is also aware that the ongoing checking of pupils' achievement through the school is a priority.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

71. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented suitably and adapted appropriately to support pupils' learning. There is satisfactory use of numeracy, and other aspects of mathematics, in a range of curriculum areas. Data collection in science includes mathematical calculations and a variety of graphs, as do the results of a recent traffic survey in geography.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupil's achievement is unsatisfactory.
- There has not been a manager for the subject for the last two years.
- Teaching in lessons seen was good and indicates a recent improvement in the quality of teaching.

### **Commentary**

72. Due to last minute timetable changes during the inspection it was not possible to observe any Year 6 science lessons. However, lesson observations lower down the school, discussions with Year 6 pupils, Year 6 teachers' records and an analysis of work undertaken during the current school year indicate that standards in science are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is particularly evident in the very small percentage of pupils likely to attain above national expectations, that is, Level 3 in Year 2 and Level 5 in Year 6, compared with all schools nationally. These low standards are a result of unsatisfactory progress in the past few years. Although this is now being remedied to some extent by improved teaching and closer adherence to a nationally recommended programme of work. More specifically, there are fewer worksheet

activities and more regular, practical opportunities for investigative and experimental activities. However, standards remain below average and pupils' overall achievement, given their at least satisfactory attainment on entry to the school, is unsatisfactory. No significant differences were observed between the achievements of boys and girls in lessons observed and pupils with SEN are well-supported and achieve well in terms of their learning targets due to the good quality of support provided.

73. The quality of teaching in both the Year 2/3 lesson and the Year 5 lesson observed was good. Both teachers had planned and resourced their lessons well and demonstrated good subject knowledge and very good classroom and behaviour management skills, allowing lessons to progress at a good pace. However, an analysis of pupils' written work indicates that there is considerable variety in the amount of practical investigative tasks undertaken from class to class; exercise books from some classes are full of investigations with predictions, conclusions and a growing understanding of the concept of a 'fair test', whilst others consist largely of worksheets and copied notes.
74. Although a newly-qualified teacher is expected to take over responsibility for science at the start of the new school year, there is currently no subject manager and, at the time of the inspection, the subject had been without one for two years. As a result, there has been no observation of teaching or monitoring of the quality of work produced and no checking of pupils' achievement to highlight the lack of progress in the subject as pupils move through the school. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall, although the use of ICT is underdeveloped. However, the school's outdoor environment is a very good resource and is used well.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- There is insufficient planning for the systematic use of ICT across the curriculum.
- There is currently no subject manager with the responsibility of monitoring standards or the quality and frequency of teaching in the subject.

### **Commentary**

75. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below expectations. This was confirmed clearly by an analysis of teachers' planning where, due to a lack of progress in the past, Year 2 teachers plan for and teach Year 1 skills and Year 6 teachers teach skills more typically observed with Year 4 pupils. Discussion with pupils also indicates that, although appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to rehearse their word-processing and keyboard skills, insufficient opportunities are available for pupils to develop their skills in the modelling or control and measurement aspects of the National Curriculum. When comparing this judgement with the "above average" judgement made at the time of the last inspection, it is important to note that national expectations in the subject have increased dramatically in this period, particularly in terms of pupils' skill levels by the end of Year 6. The school has kept pace with a number of national improvements, in particular undertaking government-funded ICT training for all the teachers and installing a small computer suite. However, the variations in the amount and quality of work covered

between classes suggests that insufficient time is spent on ICT lessons in some classes and teacher-confidence remains very variable, many are terrified of the subject. Progress since the last inspection has, at best, been unsatisfactory.

76. Only one ICT lesson was observed and, as a result, no overall judgement about the quality of teaching or learning can be made. In this Year 4 lesson, pupils were researching data by various methods including the internet. The teacher generated a good level of enthusiasm and managed the lesson well, using methods that clearly interested and motivated pupils with the result that they made good progress. A number of small group ICT activities, typically organised on a pupil-managed rota and supported well by LSAs, were observed during the inspection and these confirmed that pupils' 'mouse' and word-processing skills are broadly satisfactory. During the inspection however, with a few notable exceptions, classroom-based computers were severely under-utilised, with the computers frequently switched-off or unused.
77. At the time of inspection, there was no teacher with responsibility for the subject and this had been the case for the previous two years. A teacher currently in her first year of teaching has been asked to take over responsibility for the subject at the start of the new school year and a published programme of work is being purchased which it is planned to implement at the same time. However, the tasks in the current action plan for the subject, one of which is "keyboard skills to be again introduced to older pupils", indicate that the teaching of key skills in the past few years has been unsatisfactory and piecemeal and that planning for improvement remains very firmly in the future.

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

78. There is insufficient whole-school planning for the use of ICT across the curriculum and provision currently varies greatly according to teacher-enthusiasm and confidence.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

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

- There are no overall strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

#### **Commentary**

79. Due to last minute timetable changes, it was not possible to see any RE lessons being taught in Year 6. Judgements therefore are made on discussions, school documents and a scrutiny of samples of pupils' work. Three lessons were seen across the school.
80. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Year 2 know about Christianity and Biblical characters, recalling features of their lives. For example, pupils recalled that Jesus had disciples as special friends just as they have and recognise what being a friend means. They know that the sacred text for Christians is the Bible and that churches are sacred places important to Christians. During the inspection, pupils re-enacted a Christian marriage using the teacher's wedding dress and other

mementoes. They also re-enacted a baptism with a doll wearing the Christening gown used at one of the parent's baptism. This enabled them to think of the importance of keeping promises freely made and the marriage and welcoming rites in different religions. In their work on Islam they made a visit to a local Mosque and know that they are decorated with bright patterns. The themes taught enable older pupils to identify the links between different world religions. Older pupils can describe the relevance of festivals such as Diwali and Easter. Year 6 pupils have considered the similarities and differences between the faiths and are able to identify key points, showing some understanding of how a faith impacts upon life, enabling them to explore different views from within a single faith.

81. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers draw their lessons from the locally agreed syllabus and programme of work. They ensure that lessons are planned to match the learning needs of pupils in their classes and use a range of strategies to interest and involve pupils in their own learning. Pupils use a range of texts and other materials including photographs and artefacts. Visitors from the community, including parents and faith leaders, visit the school.
82. The previous subject manager produced a good programme of work linked carefully to the locally agreed syllabus. However, evidence from plans and from looking at pupils' work indicates that there is insufficient emphasis on getting pupils to record their work. The acting subject manager has a clear overview of what is being taught. Resources, including non-fiction reference materials, have improved since the last inspection.

### **History and geography**

Insufficient evidence was available to support overall judgements on provision in geography and history. No lessons were seen in geography and one lesson was seen in history. Work in pupils' books and on display was also examined and discussions took place. Standards are broadly average.

83. In **geography**, pupils in Year 2 study seaside places using a map to locate places in Great Britain. They identify some reasons for the development of seaside holidays and why certain locations were chosen. By Year 3, pupils have knowledge of the Indian village of Chembakolli and use posters, pictures and photographs to consider the life of children in the village. Work on India continues in Year 4 with pupils investigating the country as a whole and Year 5 pupils, in preparation for their residential visit, investigate Morecambe and the North West of England, contrasting it with the local area. By the end of Year 6, pupils use globes and atlases accurately to locate places on world maps and link together work on ancient Greece and the Olympics and settlements past and present.
84. In **history**, pupils in Year 2 identify key characters and gain a good understanding of the events of the Gunpowder Plot. Pupils have a themed curriculum to develop their chronological and researching skills. The questions pupils are asked help them both to learn facts and put themselves in the position of those involved, enhancing learning. Through a transport topic for instance, pupils learn of George Stevenson and rail travel, Henry Ford and motor cars and Amy Johnson and her flight to Australia. Pupils in Year 3 had combined history and geography in making a visit to Guildford by train, visiting the local museum, the home of Lewis Carroll and the local art gallery. Year 4 pupils researched the lives of famous people such as Churchill, putting them into world events and developing further pupils' chronological awareness and researching skills. The study

of the Tudors encouraged pupils to use secondary evidence, such as portraits, to find information about people and determine how reliable different sources of evidence are. By Year 5 pupils are investigating the Victorians, including inventors and engineers such as Brunel while Year 6 pupils have just started investigating the Ancient Greeks and comparing life in Athens and Sparta with modern Greece and the Olympic games.

85. The quality of the teaching observed was satisfactory. Teachers' made good use of resources, especially in history. This enabled pupils to become fully involved and motivated. The written recording of work is limited and little evidence was seen of work specifically adapted to pupils' particular needs. Marking is generally limited to the correction of spellings and grammar and thus reduces the opportunity to reflect upon, and to recall later, what they have done in these two subjects.
86. History and geography are taught as separate subjects in alternate half terms, using nationally recommended programmes of work. The gaps in time between studying one aspect of the subject and the next mean that pupils have difficulty in recalling work beyond the current focus. Skills, such as those of chronology and research, likewise are not frequently and systematically developed.

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

87. No **art and design** lessons were observed and therefore there was not enough evidence to make a secure judgement about provision in the subject. Evidence was limited to displays and a few sketch books and discussion with staff and pupils. This work showed average skills. There is a variety of clubs, including a knitting club that support the subject outside of the classroom.
88. No **design and technology** lessons were observed. As a result, no secure judgements can be made about either the quality of teaching or learning or about the provision for the subject. Although a scrutiny of Year 2 work confirms pupils are undertaking a broadly appropriate range of design and make activities and a large display of Year 5 work on "Bridges" contained some examples of above-average work, discussion with Year 6 pupils indicate that opportunities for design and technology activities vary considerably from class to class and are often too widely-spaced to allow any development of key skills. Although the school follows a nationally recommended programme of work, there is currently no subject manager with responsibility for monitoring coverage or standards and no records of pupils' achievement or coverage were available during the inspection.
89. No **music** lessons were observed and therefore there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about overall provision. There are several extra-curricular clubs, including choir and recorders, which support the curriculum well. There is a new subject manager who has good subject knowledge, is enthusiastic and is giving good support to class teachers. Until recently a specialist teacher taught the older pupils and some class teachers lacked experience in teaching the subject. The subject manager has written a new policy and devised a programme of work to support teaching. The subject is now well resourced.
90. No physical education lessons were observed. However, from a scrutiny of planning and discussions with the subject manager, it is clear that all strands of the subject, including the provision of outdoor adventurous activities for older pupils, are regularly taught and that the school continues to put a great stress on the teaching of swimming and dancing.

The subject manager confirms that all pupils are able to swim 25 metres, and beyond, by the time they leave the school and the school's dance troupes perform regularly at local festivals and in school productions. Resources for PE are good and a very good range of after-school sporting activities are provided for the pupils during the school year and the school enjoys frequent success in inter-school matches.

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

91. While only one lesson was observed it is clear that the school places a high priority on pupils' personal development and social learning and the teaching of personal, social and health education is an integral part of the life of the school. The curriculum includes a wide range of relevant topics that are planned to build pupils' skills and knowledge as they move through the school. Teachers are confident in their teaching of this sensitive area with timetabled sessions and its inclusion within subjects; for example, the importance of a healthy diet in science lessons.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>5</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	5
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	5
<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	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>5</b>
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	5
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).*