

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BELL FARM JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Hersham

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125058

Headteacher: Mr Hugh Tompkins

Lead inspector: Selwyn Ward

Dates of inspection: 11 – 14 July 2005

Inspection number: 276062

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 7 – 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 472

School address: Hersham Road  
Hersham  
Walton-on-Thames  
Surrey  
Postcode: KT12 5NB

Telephone number: 01932 224009  
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Email address: [head@bell-farm.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:head@bell-farm.surrey.sch.uk)  
Website address: <http://www.bellfarmschool.co.uk>

Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Lesley Jackson  
Date of previous inspection: 20 – 23 September 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Bell Farm is a very large junior school in the suburban village of Hersham. All but a small number of pupils are white and of British background. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds, but they are average, overall, as is reflected in the average number known to be eligible for free school meals. A high proportion of pupils have special educational needs, and an above average number have a statement of special educational needs. These cover a range of needs, but the largest proportion is for moderate learning difficulties. Pupils are of broadly average ability when they join the school, although the current Year 6 started at the school with generally below average skills in writing. Bell Farm Junior has been through a series of leadership changes since the last inspection, including a period when there was a succession of temporary headteachers before the current head was appointed in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
9271	Selwyn Ward	Lead inspector	
32677	Brian Horley	Lay inspector	
2756	Mike Barron	Team inspector	English; information and communication technology (ICT); geography; history; religious education; personal, social and health education; special educational needs
27654	Robina Scahill	Team inspector	Mathematics; science; art and design; design and technology; music; physical education; French

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Bell Farm Junior School provides a **good quality of education** for its pupils. The headteacher and senior leadership team have been very successful in building an effective staff team and in establishing an ethos where pupils are keen to do well. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The teaching is good, and girls and boys of all abilities achieve well.
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and, as a result, pupils behave well, get on well with one another and are enthusiastic in lessons.
- Bell Farm is very well equipped and benefits from an enviable, attractive site and some first-rate facilities, but some of the classrooms get too hot in summer and are too cold in winter.
- Pupils have not had enough opportunities to apply what they have learnt to their own investigations and problem-solving.
- There are very good arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils.
- Pupils benefit from a very good range of clubs and other extracurricular activities.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, overall, but recent improvement has been very good – reversing declines that followed an extended period when the school had no permanent headteacher in post. Previously identified weaknesses in the leadership of subjects, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and learning about other cultures, have all been successfully tackled.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in <i>National Curriculum</i> tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	D	C	C
mathematics	C	D	D	D
science	A	B	C	B

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school as well as how well they do in lessons. **Achievement is good.** This is true for boys and girls of all abilities, including the most able and those with special educational needs. Pupils are of broadly average ability when they join the school. In English, Year 6 pupils have made good progress over their time in school. With the disruptive effect of the several changes in temporary leadership, pupils in Year 6 have made satisfactory progress over time in mathematics and science, but their achievement in lessons is now good. This matches the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 5. By Year 6, pupils attain average standards in all of the subjects inspected, except for art, where standards are above average. Able pupils achieve well because teachers set them challenging work. Less able

pupils, and those with special educational needs, also achieve well because they are given good support in lessons.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.** Parents reported that behaviour and attitudes deteriorated over the period when there was no permanent headteacher in post, but there has been very substantial recent improvement, so that the school now has a very positive ethos. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and are encouraged to behave well, not simply because of the threat of sanctions but because they have chosen it as the right thing to do. Girls and boys from different social and ethnic backgrounds work and get on well with one another. They enjoy and are proud of their school. They are well motivated, work with concentration in lessons and are keen to learn. Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided is good.** *National Curriculum* requirements are fully met and the curriculum is enriched through a very good range of extracurricular activities. The school is increasingly making links between subjects so that, for example, pupils learning in history about the Romans use what they have learnt in art, design and technology and physical education. There are good links with the local community and with other schools, including the neighbouring secondary school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. Parents are kept very well informed and the school has developed a very effective partnership with them that helps them to help their children learn. Pupils are looked after very well and they feel that their views are strongly valued. They benefit from very good guidance and support, based on careful tracking of how well they are doing, and this is helping to raise standards of achievement. The school is very well resourced and has some first-rate facilities within an enviable four-acre site, but though the school has been successful in establishing a very good climate for learning, its climate control is a problem: classrooms are very hot at the height of summer and are cold in winter!

**Teaching and learning are good.** Lessons are very well planned so that work is closely matched to pupils' different abilities. Teachers have high expectations and, in the best lessons, the pace is brisk so that pupils work hard and get a lot done. Questioning is used well to confirm that pupils understand and to ensure that all are fully involved in the lesson. Teachers make effective use of ICT to help make lessons interesting. They get on well with their pupils and are consistent in following the revised school aims to ensure that pupils are encouraged to make the right choices rather than just do as they are told. In some lessons, however, opportunities are missed for pupils to develop and express their own ideas and apply what they have learnt to solve problems. Teaching assistants provide good support, particularly to pupils who need extra help, including those with special educational needs. Homework is used well, and pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They value also the good marking and assessment.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The quality of leadership and management is very good.** The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. He has been highly effective in precisely identifying and putting into practice what needed to be done to restore the ethos of the school and to raise achievement. He has been successful in building a very effective leadership team that has together driven forward the very good recent improvement. Governance is good. Governors are supportive of the school and ensure that all legal requirements are met. They have helped to keep the school together during its past difficulties.

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

Parents and pupils express favourable views of most things about the school. Some parents voiced concerns over bullying but discussions with pupils confirm that these are mostly historic. Pupils express confidence that any rare incidents of bullying are dealt with well.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Further develop opportunities for pupils to apply what they have learnt in carrying out their own investigations and problem-solving.
- Explore options for better regulating the temperature in classrooms.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects**

Standards are average in English, mathematics and science. Boys and girls are now achieving well in all subjects.

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

- Pupils' achievement – which slipped following the period when the school had no permanent headteacher in post – is now good as a result of the good teaching.
- Able pupils do well because teachers set them challenging work.
- Less able pupils, and those with special educational needs, achieve well because they are given good support in lessons.

#### **Commentary**

1. Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school as well as how well they do in lessons. Pupils are of broadly average ability when they join Bell Farm Junior, as measured by the results of the test they took when they were in Year 2 of their infant schools. The current Year 6 had below average skills in writing when they started in Year 3.
2. The table below shows the average points scores attained in the Year 6 tests in 2004 (with the 2003 scores in brackets). One point represents roughly one term's progress, so the table shows, for example, that pupils in Year 6 last year were, on average, nearly a term ahead of pupils nationally in science but about half a term behind the average in mathematics. Although pupils had taken the 2005 tests before the inspection, no comparative data was available at the time of the inspection to enable inspectors to judge the results in comparison with those of other schools. Test scores in 2005 were broadly similar to those in 2004.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.7 (26.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.5 (26.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.4 (29.5)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 114 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. In the past, Year 6 test results have been above average but they have slipped in the last three years as a result of the disruption over an extended period when there was no permanent headteacher at the school. With a much more settled learning environment and good teaching throughout the school, pupils are now making good progress. Work seen in Years 3 to 5 indicates that standards are beginning to rise again, with much work that is above average. In the current Year 6, standards are above average in art, and average in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education (which were all of the subjects inspected in full). This shows that pupils in the current Year 6 have achieved satisfactorily over the period since they joined the

school in Year 3 but, taking account of how well pupils are currently doing in lessons throughout the school, achievement at Bell Farm is now good.

4. In the 2004 tests, girls did better than boys, and by a larger margin than seen nationally. Given that that year group included almost twice as many boys as girls, this contributed to depressing the overall test scores. The leadership of the school has been successful in encouraging boys' performance, to the extent that inspectors found no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls. Past results have also suggested that pupils have not done as well in mathematics as in other subjects, but inspectors found that, throughout the school, pupils are now achieving well in this subject, particularly as a result of the action taken over the past year to support pupils identified by the school as not doing as well as might be expected from their infant school test results. Pupils' achievement in lessons is good because work is carefully matched to their abilities and builds on what they have learnt before. This means that able pupils achieve well because they are set challenging work. Less able pupils, and those with special educational needs, achieve well because they benefit from good support, both in terms of the match of work to their ability and the help they are given in lessons by teaching assistants.

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

Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils' personal qualities are very good and their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered very well. Attendance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are enthusiastic in lessons and keen to learn.
- The school has been very effective in developing pupils' increased sense of responsibility for their own actions.
- The school prepares pupils very well for life in multi-cultural Britain.
- More could be done to improve attendance.

### **Commentary**

#### ***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	426	9	3
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0

Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	9	0	0

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

5. In the last inspection report, behaviour was described as very good. It is now good. Parents say that standards of behaviour deteriorated badly during the period when there was no permanent headteacher at the school. However, the current headteacher has introduced a new behaviour policy which is having a beneficial impact. This is best seen in formal occasions such as assemblies, when behaviour is very good. Pupils are consistently encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and consider the impact of them. A significant minority of parents expressed concern regarding bullying at the school. During the inspection, pupils spoke of their confidence that on the rare occasions when incidents occur, the school took immediate and effective action to deal with them. At lunchtimes, for example, the lunchtime supervisors have a very clear understanding of how to deal with any such instances. There have been nine fixed term exclusions involving three pupils. Despite the school's attempts to work with the pupils and their parents, severe behaviour issues resulted in their permanent exclusion.
  
6. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic in lessons and the wide variety of extracurricular activities offered by the school. They respond well to teachers' high expectations and work hard: listening carefully, and settling to individual or collaborative work sensibly and without fuss. Pupils' very good attitudes, which maintain the high standard found at the last inspection, contribute to the good progress they make. The inspection took place in a period of extremely hot weather but, despite the conditions, pupils maintained concentration throughout the day. Pupils' enthusiasm extends to their involvement in the many clubs and other activities offered by the school. Pupils are proud of their school and want to contribute to it through the many responsibilities such as the school council. Year 3 pupils talk positively about the help they receive from the Year 6 pupils who help them as learning mentors. The mentors also help in classes, running games during wet weather.
  
7. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which at the last inspection was good. In assemblies and in lessons, pupils are given many opportunities to consider and reflect upon their principles and beliefs. They develop an understanding that they have choices and that good behaviour is a positive choice not a response to imposed discipline. Pupils are encouraged to be active members of the school as a community. They react positively to the improvements to the dining hall and are committed to the rules of behaviour that they helped to form. The school works very well to prepare pupils for life in multi-cultural Britain. Through assemblies, lessons and visits, pupils are introduced to the beliefs and practices of a wide variety of faiths and cultures.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	4.2
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
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.*

8. Attendance is satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. The school has established satisfactory systems for monitoring absence although parents are not contacted on the first day of any unexplained absence. However, levels of absence remain in line with the national average and unauthorised absence remains above the national average, in part because the school has become stricter in its discouragement of lateness – with pupils recorded as absent when they are very late. Punctuality, which records show was very poor last year, has been significantly improved with the introduction of the bell to Bell Farm. As a result, punctuality is now good and lessons start promptly.

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

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The curriculum is good and very well enriched by a wide range of extracurricular activities. Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Pupils benefit from very good guidance, care and support, and the school has built a very effective partnership with parents.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lessons are very well planned to help pupils to build on what they have learnt before.
- Teachers have high expectations and ensure that work is well matched to pupils' different abilities.
- Most lessons have a brisk pace so that pupils work hard and get a lot done.
- Marking gives pupils good guidance on what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers make good use of ICT to help make lessons interesting.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop and express their own ideas when they undertake problem-solving activities.

### **Commentary**

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10 (21%)	24 (51%)	13 (28%)	0	0	0

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

9. Teaching and learning are good, which is similar to the judgement in the last inspection report. Assessment is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. Effective monitoring of teaching and learning by the school's leadership team has resulted in a commendable consistency between the four classes in each year group, with all teachers following the school's revised aim to encourage pupils to make the right choices rather than just do as they are told. Teachers have good subject expertise and they have a good relationship with their pupils. Teaching assistants work effectively alongside class teachers, providing well-focused support to pupils who need help with

their learning, including those with special educational needs. It is as a result of this good support that these pupils make good progress.

10. Lessons are very well planned, making effective use of assessment information, so that work is closely matched to pupils' different abilities. This is true even within the English and mathematics classes that are organised into ability sets, so that the range of different abilities within the sets is properly catered for. This very good planning helps to ensure that pupils are able to build effectively on what they have learnt before.
11. Throughout the school, all lessons have clear learning objectives with success criteria that are explained to the pupils so that they know what it is that they are expected to learn. Teachers generally return to these at the end of the lesson, involving the pupils in assessing for themselves and indicating to the teacher whether or not they feel they have achieved the success criteria. Teachers do not always record this information, however, so that sometimes, particularly where the end of the lesson is a little rushed, the indication from some pupils that they are not sure they have understood can go unnoticed.
12. Teachers have high expectations, both of behaviour and of pupils' work. Work is challenging – contributing to pupils' good achievement in lessons – and, in most lessons, activities are varied and time is used well. In these lessons, when pupils are set tasks to complete, they are given strict time limits. As a result, pupils work hard and get a lot done. In some lessons, however, teachers' introductions go on too long, with pupils expected to sit listening passively for half an hour or more.
13. Every classroom has an interactive whiteboard, which links a computer to a video projector, and teachers use this technology effectively to help make lessons interesting. Good use is made of questioning, both to check that pupils understand and to ensure that all are fully involved. Although pupils are expected to put up their hands rather than call out answers, teachers do not just take answers from those that volunteer them – firing questions also at those who may be more reluctant to volunteer so that every pupil is kept on their toes.
14. The headteacher and leadership team have correctly identified improving pupils' problem-solving skills as a whole-school priority. Although increased emphasis is being given to problem-solving activities and investigations in science, teachers often give too much direction to the pupils. As a result, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop and express their own ideas and apply what they have learnt to working out techniques and solutions of their own.
15. Homework is used well to build on work in lessons, and pupils know what homework to expect. Older pupils appreciate that their regular homework is a helpful preparation for the challenges of secondary school. Marking and assessment are good and are strongly valued by the pupils. In English, assessment is very good because marking gives very clear guidance to pupils on exactly what they need to do to improve their work and comments are followed up in subsequent marking. In some other subjects, including mathematics, there are examples of very good marking, but sometimes work is merely acknowledged with ticks, and opportunities are missed to formally record or follow up points for improvement. The school has correctly identified this in its own monitoring of assessment and has prioritised plans to focus further on improving assessment.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum provided by the school is good. There is a very good range of extracurricular activities. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils benefit from a very good range of clubs and other extracurricular activities.
- The school's very good range of resources is used very effectively to enhance learning.
- Some classrooms get too hot in summer and are cold in winter.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to achieve well.

### **Commentary**

16. The school's curriculum is broad and well balanced and fully meets the requirements of the *National Curriculum* and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It is reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure that it promotes both learning and the personal development of pupils effectively and also provides good equality of access and opportunity. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum. Classrooms are organised well and displays make them interesting and attractive. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects and the school has taken effective steps to tackle the weaknesses identified in the last inspection by making more effective use of ICT to support learning in English, mathematics and other subjects.
17. Pupils in all year groups benefit from the very good range of well-planned extracurricular activities and visits and visitors to the school that enrich and promote learning. The opportunities for pupils to take part outside the school day in sporting activities, music and the creative arts are very good and pupils also have the opportunity to go on a number of residential visits in order to broaden their experience of the world they live in.
18. Although the school is very well resourced and benefits from spacious indoor learning areas and extensive outdoor facilities, some classrooms suffer from extremes of temperature. They are much too hot and stuffy at the height of summer and evidently too cold in winter. This inevitably affects pupils' concentration, and this was evident during several lessons observed during the inspection. During one afternoon religious education lesson in Year 6, some pupils were visibly perspiring even though the doors and windows were open and a fan was in use. It was to their great credit that most pupils achieved well in learning about religious beliefs and practices even though the classroom was unintentionally generating Middle Eastern climatic conditions.
19. The good support of teaching assistants, working in close partnership with class teachers, enables pupils with special educational needs to take a full and active part in lessons. The special educational needs co-ordinator has developed very effective procedures for the early identification and close monitoring of pupils with possible learning, emotional, physical or behavioural difficulties. Pupils who are assessed as having special educational needs are provided with individual education plans that precisely detail the support they require. These plans are implemented very well and contain specific targets for pupils to achieve which feature suitably small steps in learning. As a result, pupils with special education needs achieve as well as other pupils in all year groups.

## Care, guidance and support

The school provides a very good standard of care and very good advice and guidance for its pupils. There are very good arrangements to seek and act upon pupils' views.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good systems ensure that pupils work in a safe and secure environment.
- Pupils benefit from very good guidance and support to help ensure they achieve their best.
- There are very good relationships between pupils and members of staff.
- The school uses surveys and the school council to seek pupils' views and act on them.

### Commentary

20. In the last inspection report, the standard of care was judged to be satisfactory. It is now very good. The school has a very positive ethos where every child is valued as an individual. Termly site surveys are carried out which involve both staff and governors. These surveys, and the ongoing logs kept by staff, help to ensure that any potential hazards are quickly rectified. The school is clean and tidy, with pupil volunteers, who take a pride in their school, collecting litter around the play areas at lunchtime. Child protection procedures are very good and all staff have received recent training. There are very effective routines for dealing with minor accidents and administering medicines. Recent improvements to the dining hall provide pupils with a pleasant environment and healthy eating is encouraged through the new menus and salad bar. Risk assessment is well established for visits, and the governors regularly review the school accident book so that problems are recognised and dealt with. This is a large site and very good care is provided by the team of lunchtime supervisors.
21. Pupils benefit from very good advice and support – which is an improvement on the last inspection when it was good. Induction procedures are very thorough. Very good liaison with the two main local infant schools ensures that the needs of individual pupils are well met. Parents and children then have the opportunity to visit the school and meet the staff and other pupils. Parents also receive a very comprehensive welcome pack and Year 6 pupils act as mentors to new arrivals helping them to settle into their new environment. Pupils who are likely to experience particular problems transferring to the main secondary school receive additional targeted support and counselling. Academic progress is carefully monitored and used to provide specific, attainable targets that assist pupils to improve their standards of achievement. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and pupils' personal development is very well founded on children's ability to make choices.
22. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the academic progress and personal development of pupils with special educational needs are very good. Information about pupils is used very effectively to produce individual education plans of good quality. Parents are encouraged to be involved in both the drawing up of these plans and also in their reviews.
23. As in the last inspection, pupils play a very full part in the life of the school through the many opportunities they are given to take on responsibilities. Pupils' views are regularly canvassed through surveys, and there is a very effective school council. Pupils feel that they have been listened to over issues such as the provision of equipment in the playground and the behaviour rules in the new dining hall, which they renamed the *Tuck Inn*.

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

The school has very good links with parents and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Links with the other schools and the wider community are good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are provided with very good information about the school and their child's progress.
- There are very good links with the neighbouring secondary school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 6.
- Strong community links have resulted in improved resources for the school.

## **Commentary**

24. Most parents express positive views about the school, have confidence in the headteacher and recognise the very strong recent improvements. The partnership with parents is very good. Staff are readily accessible and the headteacher is out at the front of the school and in the playground before and after school. As a result, any concerns can be easily raised and problems quickly dealt with. Office staff are welcoming and the caretaker is on duty at the school entrance before and after school to help supervise the safe depositing of pupils by car. There is an active parent teacher association and a number of parents assist in school.
25. Parents receive very good information about the school and the progress of their children. When children join the school, parents receive a very comprehensive welcome pack containing routine information and a booklet on how to help their child learn. Annual school reports are very detailed and contain individual targets for the following year. Parents receive very good information about the curriculum and particularly value the recent parents' evenings on literacy and numeracy. The school has introduced a new professionally designed website. It gives parents access to a wide variety of information, including detailed pages on every subject area. This enables parents to provide very good support for their children's learning at home and at school.
26. Overall links with other school and colleges are good, which is an improvement on the satisfactory links found at the last inspection. The school works closely with the main local infant schools to ensure children's induction is handled well, but partnership with the wider group of local primary schools remains at an early stage of development. There are good links with all the secondary schools in the area and a very strong partnership with the neighbouring secondary school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. As a result, the transfer of pupils is very smooth. These links also help to broaden the curriculum with, for example, a teacher from the neighbouring secondary school taking a group of more able Year 6 pupils for mathematics. There are good links with the nearby Kingston University with the school providing a number of student-teacher placements.
27. The school plays an active part in the community and a number of groups make use of its facilities. A partnership is being developed with the children's charity UNICEF and children raise funds for the local hospice. Good links with two large, locally based companies have provided significant funds and resources. Very good links with the local church and the Woking mosque provide pupils with a valuable insight into the beliefs and practices of world religions.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The quality of leadership and management is very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Management and the leadership of other key staff are very good. Governance is good and all statutory requirements are fully met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has precisely identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and has been highly effective in restoring the very positive ethos of the school.
- Staff with leadership and management roles have been very effective in driving forward recent school improvement.



- Governors are supportive of the school and have developed the confidence to offer constructive criticism and guidance to the headteacher and leadership team.

## Commentary

28. The headteacher was appointed in January 2004 after a series of short-term temporary interim headteachers following the illness and subsequent retirement of the previous permanent headteacher. Parents confirm that the instability during this interim period resulted in a sharp falling off of standards, attitudes and behaviour. The headteacher has been highly effective in reversing this decline. He has built a very effective leadership team that has resulted in very good recent improvement.
29. School policies have been revised and are consistently implemented, so that, for example, all staff encourage pupils to make moral choices rather than simply obeying imposed school rules. There has been an investment in redecorating and improving the school environment, both to promote learning and to help raise pupils' self-esteem. The school day has been reorganised, so that, for example, assemblies are held to give a calming and thoughtful start of the day rather than, as previously, as an activity scheduled just before lunch. Pupils have a growing pride in their school and are keen to do their best, and their very positive attitudes to learning are now contributing to their good achievement in lessons.
30. Weaknesses in subject leadership identified in the last inspection report have been very successfully tackled, so that every subject is well or very well led, and staff with leadership and management responsibilities are given appropriate training, support and time to carry them out. Teaching is very effectively monitored, precisely identifying what needs to be improved in order to raise the quality of learning and pupils' achievement. For example, the universal use in lessons of success criteria ensures that every pupil knows what it is they are expected to learn. The areas for development identified in this report correspond with priorities already in the school improvement plan, and careful monitoring of performance, for example of the difference in test scores between boys and girls, has been used effectively to focus support to improve the progress of pupils at risk of underachievement.
31. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good, with very effective systems set up to help in the early identification, assessment and monitoring of pupils with learning difficulties. As a result of this structured approach, individual education plans are realistic with specific, attainable targets. This is a key factor in enabling pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as other pupils throughout the school.
32. The school had a substantial underspend brought forward from previous years, amounting to around 20% of its annual income. Around half of this was spent last year on improvements to the buildings and resources and the school has plans for making appropriate use of the remaining surplus.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,406,723	Balance from previous year	288,813
Total expenditure	1,555,292	Balance carried forward to the next	140,244

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Expenditure per pupil	3,295
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33. Governors are supportive of the school and do a good job. They know the school well, and several visit regularly. Governors have had a difficult time in helping to keep the school on course through the period of instability caused through the successive changes of leadership, and they have been successful in retaining parental confidence through this period. The difficulties that the school went through have helped to strengthen the governing body and given governors increased confidence in constructively questioning the headteacher and leadership staff, so that, for example, governors have a very strong appreciation of the need to ensure that the school achieves *best value*, in terms of improved results as well as good value for money, in its spending decisions.

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

*English was inspected in full and is reported below. French was sampled.*

34. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 learn **French** and standards are above those of most pupils at this age. Teachers' planning shows how the language is developed as pupils move up the school. In the lessons seen, which were good, pupils learnt new vocabulary and simple phrases. They were able to repeat these and then use them in conversations about their feelings. Pupils are enthusiastic and confident. This subject makes a good contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills and cultural development.

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Good teaching helps pupils make good progress in learning.
- Assessment information is used very effectively when planning work for pupils.
- Resources for teaching all aspects of English are very good.

#### **Commentary**

35. Achievement in English is good throughout the school. This was reflected in lessons observed during the inspection and also in the standards of pupils' work over time. Able pupils in all year groups achieve well because they are set challenging work whilst less able pupils, including those with special educational needs, also achieve well because of the good support they receive in lessons from class teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and have developed very good attitudes to the subject. Pupils presently in Year 6 attain standards in line with the national average in all aspects of English even though they entered the school with below average writing skills. They have had to endure the disruptive effect of successive temporary changes in the leadership of the school and have still made good progress in learning and achieved well.
36. Very effective whole school planning ensures that all aspects of English are covered in depth. Pupils are taught in ability sets, but even within these sets work is matched carefully to pupils' different capabilities. As a result, pupils make good progress. By Year 6, pupils read fluently, with many able to use deduction well to explain the meaning of texts and characters in stories. More able pupils explain why stories are interesting and identify the crucial features of the characters in them. Year 6 pupils talk and listen confidently and display evidence of a widening vocabulary. They join in class discussions with reasoned arguments and logical explanations when, for example, explaining how to write an effective and persuasive advert for a drinks product. Written work is well presented throughout the school and marking is usually helpful to pupils who wish to improve their work although, on rare occasions, it is sometimes just descriptive or congratulatory.

37. Teaching and learning are good. In one very well taught lesson to Year 4 pupils focusing on analysing funny stories, the teacher linked work very well to the various abilities of pupils and used a very good range of strategies to ensure that they were given opportunities to practise and develop their understanding of adverbs and their use of different tenses of verbs. The pace of the lesson was brisk, the tasks were challenging and the teacher ensured all pupils worked hard. As a result, achievement was very good.
38. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, but there has been very good recent improvement. The subject is very well led and managed and the school now has a very firm idea of those areas requiring further development if standards are to continue to rise. Though attainment in Year 6 is presently in line with the national average, the school has correctly identified the need to continue to improve standards in English as a continued focus of whole-school improvement planning. This has resulted in the school developing very comprehensive systems to monitor and evaluate the attainment of pupils in all year groups on a regular basis and to measure their individual achievement over time. Pupils identified as not making enough progress are easily identified and are then provided with effective extra support in order to boost their learning. The level of data analysis and the implementation of action taken in response to the analysis are very thorough and are already helping to raise standards. Resources for teaching all aspects of English are very good and are used very effectively to enhance learning. The school library is especially well stocked.

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

39. Cross-curricular links are used effectively to develop and use literacy and language skills in other subject areas. Teachers encourage pupils to join in discussions at the beginning and end of lessons in subjects such as ICT, history and mathematics, and this helps to improve their confidence and to widen their vocabulary. Many lessons feature structured opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes and this contributes significantly to their good progress and achievement in developing language and literacy.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Challenging and interesting lessons are helping to raise standards and pupils are achieving well.
- Assessment procedures are very good and the information is used well to set work which is matched to pupils' different abilities.
- The pupils' ability to use and apply their understanding of mathematics through problem solving is not developed well enough.
- Resources are used well during lessons to help pupils to understand.

#### **Commentary**

40. By Year 6, standards are close to the national average. Despite the drop in standards since the last inspection, they are now rising as a result of very good management and consistently good teaching. Since they joined the school, Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress.

The work in their books and in the lessons shows that they are now achieving well, as are the pupils in Years 3 to 5. Setting arrangements, following careful analysis of assessment information, provide well for all pupils including the most able and those with special educational needs.

41. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan lessons well and make sure that activities are well matched to pupils' different abilities. They give clear explanations and demonstrate examples effectively by projecting computer images onto a screen. Teachers use questions skilfully to involve all pupils, check their understanding and to help them build on what they have learnt before. They give the pupils the opportunity to discuss their ideas, which ensures that all the pupils join in. The good teaching of basic number facts is reinforced well in lively sessions at the beginning of each lesson. However, generally, pupils are not given enough opportunity to apply what they have learnt to solve problems, apply their skills and develop their own thinking. When given the opportunity, pupils enjoy the challenging work and they are keen and contribute their ideas. In a very good lesson, pupils responded readily and rapidly to the high expectations and challenging questions which involved reasoning as well as basic calculation skills. Teachers mark work regularly, and most give feedback to pupils so they can see how to improve their work. This was most effective where teachers referred to how well the pupils had met the aim of the lesson. In some cases, however, marking merely takes the form of ticks and crosses and this gives little guidance to pupils on what they need to do to do better. Homework is used very effectively to follow up work done in class and to prepare for future work.
42. The leadership and management of mathematics are very good. The subject is led with high aspirations for raising standards. Staff are provided with good support and role models for the skilful teaching of mathematics. Teachers' assessments of how well pupils are doing are analysed very closely and used very effectively to keep track of pupils' progress and identify and target support for any pupils at risk of underachieving.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

43. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in other subjects. These links are especially effective in science, where pupils apply the skills learnt in mathematics to make careful measurements, calculate averages and record data on graphs. ICT is used to reinforce and extend the work in lessons.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A substantial amount of work is covered each year, with good links to other subjects.
- There is a good emphasis on vocabulary and accurate recording.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to explore scientific ideas or think for themselves in practical lessons.
- Teachers use questions effectively to involve all pupils and find out what they understand.

### **Commentary**

44. In the 2004 national tests, standards were average, although they were above the average of similar schools. Standards have declined in recent years and are not as high as they were reported in the last inspection. Work in pupils' books show that

standards are now beginning to rise again. Pupils are achieving well, with a secure knowledge of the topics they study. This is because each year group has completed a substantial amount of work, covering the appropriate areas of the curriculum. However, there is not enough emphasis on pupils' own response to scientific investigation or the opportunity for them to think for themselves and write up their ideas.

45. Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons are well planned and the good use of interactive whiteboards makes explanations clear. Other resources are well prepared and support learning well. At the beginning of each lesson, the success criteria are shared with pupils so they know what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson. Discussion between pupils and teachers ensures that ideas for the planning of investigations are valued. Effective questioning assists pupils in making predictions about what they think might happen in their investigations. They are encouraged to use scientific vocabulary and consider what would be a fair test. There is a good balance between class activity and group work. In some lessons however, teachers tell pupils exactly what they will do and in these lessons learning, though satisfactory, is less effective. Pupils are not always clear about what they have learned, skills are not developed and their scientific understanding is not secure. This is partly because these activities are too directed by the teacher. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to plan and carry out an experiment to find the answer to a given question.
46. Marking shows teachers' high expectations of accuracy and presentation, so pupils' books are well organised and neat. Good links with ICT are used to enhance learning for pupils – both for researching facts and in checking their work. Homework is set regularly to follow up work done in class or prepare for a lesson. Reference to other subjects such as geography, music and mathematics in lessons makes the subject more pertinent. Frequent use of the local environment and visits enrich the subject and pupils' learning and understanding.
47. The subject is well led and managed. Regular assessments, as well as pupils' performance in national tests, are carefully monitored. This information is used to identify areas for improvement. The need to develop scientific enquiry has been identified and an emphasis on investigative work has already been planned. Leadership and management ensure that opportunities to develop science in other subjects are created and that computers are used effectively to support teaching and learning. Teachers' lesson plans are checked, along with the standard of pupils' work, and lessons are observed and staff given feedback to help them to further develop their expertise in the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is very well resourced for teaching all aspects of ICT.
- Attitudes towards the subject are good.
- The quality of teaching is good.

### **Commentary**

48. Standards of attainment in ICT are similar to those expected nationally in Year 6 and most pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn and achieve well. Resources for teaching ICT are very good and are used very effectively. There has been good improvement in provision since the last inspection, which then criticised the fact that ICT was not used sufficiently to enhance learning in other subject areas. The school has now addressed this concern in full. There has been a conscious decision by the school to focus on improving all aspects of the ICT curriculum. As a result, funding has been used very effectively to invest not only in a comprehensively resourced ICT suite but also to ensure that pupils have access to a good range of modern computers and other related equipment in their classrooms. This has been a key factor in improving the use of ICT to enhance learning in other subject areas. In addition, interactive whiteboards and video projectors are situated in all classrooms and are used effectively to make learning more interesting and enjoyable for pupils.
49. Pupils have regular opportunities to build their knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT in all year groups. This was evident from pupils' work and also from discussions with older pupils, who talked about the subject enthusiastically and were keen and interested in all aspects of ICT.
50. Teachers appear confident when using ICT, and the quality of teaching is good, overall. In the most successful lessons, for example a lesson to Year 4 pupils on searching databases, teaching was stimulating and work was well matched to pupils' abilities. In addition, the class teacher and teaching assistant worked as a very effective team to ensure pupils finding difficulty with their learning were very well supported. This resulted in pupils being engrossed in their work and their achievement was very good. When teaching, though satisfactory, was less successful, the level of support for pupils varied and tasks were not always as fully matched to pupils' abilities and previous learning. This meant they did not all achieve as well as they could.
51. Leadership and management are good. The school monitors both teaching and pupils' attainment effectively and has a good idea of the strengths of provision and of priorities for further development if standards are to continue to improve.

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

52. The use by pupils of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory, overall, and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are now given regular opportunities to use the internet and to develop and use their ICT skills in other subjects, for example science, mathematics, history and literacy. Use of ICT in other subjects by teachers is good.

### **HUMANITIES**

*Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. Geography and history were sampled.*

53. In the one **geography** lesson seen, Year 3 pupils made satisfactory progress in learning about the flora and fauna of the layers of the rain forest because they were enthusiastic about the topic and because the research tasks they were set were appropriately matched to their abilities.

54. In the **history** lesson seen, the teacher made very effective use of a *PowerPoint™* presentation to engage Year 4 pupils' enthusiasm for learning about Ancient Greece. As a result, pupils made good progress learning about the roles of gods and goddesses in the everyday life of Ancient Greeks.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learn *from* different religions rather than just facts about religious festivals and customs.
- The quality of teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Concentration sometimes suffers when the classrooms get hot.

### Commentary

55. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils in Year 6 attain the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus. However, pupils achieve well throughout the school because they learn from different religions as well as the basic facts and features of the major world faiths. For example, pupils in Year 4 learning about Islam's tenets on charity engaged in thoughtful discussions on the nature of charity and on practical ways in which they could help others. Pupils achieved well because the teacher was able to successfully challenge the pupils' preconception that charity was just about giving money to those in need.
56. Year 3 pupils learn about the life of Jesus and the importance of ceremonies such as baptism to the Christian faith whilst pupils in Year 4 are given opportunities to enhance their knowledge of not only Christianity but also Islam. By Year 5 pupils compare Hindu and Christian marriage ceremonies and also learn about the meaning of parables. Year 6 pupils study the Hebrew bible and compare different religious beliefs. Pupils' work displays a growing understanding of the importance of different faiths and religious traditions and the multi-cultural nature of modern society.
57. The quality of teaching of religious education is good and this is reflected in the standard of pupils' recorded work over time and also in their good attitudes to learning. In a very effective lesson about the reasons why Hindus celebrate Diwali, teaching was stimulating and work tasks were well matched to the different abilities and previous learning of pupils. There was a strong multi-cultural element to the lesson and good use was made of laptop computers to enable pupils to search the internet for more information about the importance of Diwali. In addition, the teaching assistant provided good support for less able pupils. As a result, attitudes to learning in this lesson were very good and nearly all pupils achieved very well in developing their knowledge and understanding of the similarities and differences in relation to Christian and Hindu religious traditions. A common factor in lessons that, though satisfactory, were less successful, was the debilitating effect of the excessive heat in classrooms. This represented a barrier to learning because it made concentration difficult for pupils and sometimes affected their achievement.
58. Leadership and management are good. Resources are also good and are used effectively to promote learning, as are trips to places of worship – which help to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject and bring it to life. Links between religious



education and other curriculum areas, such as literacy and personal, social and health education, help to give the subject greater meaning for pupils.

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

*Art and design was inspected in full and is reported below. Design and technology, music and physical education were sampled.*

59. No **design and technology** lessons were observed but all the work seen was of at least average standard, with some good quality examples. Work in pupils' folders and on display shows that pupils have a good understanding of designing, making and evaluating products. They are also taught specific skills, such as sewing with different stitches. They have good opportunities to undertake substantial projects with a range of materials. For example, they make moving monsters from a range of materials in Year 3 and money containers in Year 4. Year 5 pupils investigate boxes in everyday use before designing and making their own. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to plan and model fairground attractions with different mechanisms. The quality of the finished products varies, but is usually at least satisfactory, and there are examples of good quality products in several classes.
60. In the **music** lessons seen, pupils achieved well. Year 6 pupils paid great attention to the lyrics of the John Lennon song *Imagine*, which contributed well to their spiritual development. Pupils sang with great enjoyment in their singing assembly and made good progress in following the teacher's signals for dynamics. Because of the teacher's good relationships with the pupils, they show increasing confidence as more and more of them volunteer to sing solo to lead the rest of the group. Pupils have the opportunity to join several choirs, including one run by the caretaker. They rehearse for different events during the school year, including the local music festival. A number of pupils benefit from instrumental music tuition and attain above average standards in their playing.
61. Two **physical education** lessons were observed. One was good and the other was satisfactory. The lessons were well planned to develop pupils' skills with a suitable warm up and cool down. Year 3 pupils co-operated well when practising skills of bowling and batting which were used in a modified game of rounders. Pupils understood the rules and played enthusiastically, despite the heat. Year 4 pupils used their measuring skills to record how far they jumped and to set themselves targets for further improvement. The well-attended after-school clubs for sport make a very good contribution to the provision for this subject. Pupils do well in competing with other schools, especially in swimming and athletics.

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils like art and are confident to try out new ideas and techniques.
- Sketchbooks are used well to try out ideas.
- There are good links with other subjects.

## Commentary

62. Standards in art and design are above average. Pupils work effectively in a wide range of media. Their skills are developed systematically, and this is exemplified by some of the work on shading in their sketchbooks. By Year 6, their drawing skills are well developed, as shown by their Pop Art designs. They work carefully and imaginatively to produce work of good quality and achieve well. A strength of much of the work is that it is developed systematically over several weeks, so that the finished product shows improving techniques, and is often of a high standard. ICT is used effectively throughout the school to reinforce and illustrate different artistic effects. Good links with history, science and literacy provide an interesting and purposeful stimulus for work.
63. Teaching and learning are good. In a very effective lesson in Year 6, a good balance was achieved between pupils applying the skills they had learnt about perspective to the imaginative design of a 1960s album sleeve. Pupils are interested in lessons because teachers explain and illustrate techniques clearly, enabling, for example, pupils in Year 4 to create African masks in the style of Picasso. The good range of resources are used well to ensure pupils acquire a range of skills and experience.
64. The subject is led and managed well, and pupils' enthusiasm for art is stimulated by the high quality of display which shows off some of the best of the pupils' work, including a striking series of studies of the techniques used by Van Gogh, reproduced using a variety of media. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

*Personal, social and health education (PSHE) was sampled. Citizenship is not taught as a separate subject, although elements of citizenship are included in the personal, social and health education lessons.*

65. **Personal, social and health education** is taught very effectively as both a discrete subject and through integration into other subjects. Sex and relationships education, and alcohol and drugs misuse are also effectively included in this provision. In addition, *Circle Time* – where pupils sit in a circle and take turns to discuss their views and concerns – also supports effectively this aspect of the curriculum. As a result of this structured approach, pupils gain in self-esteem and learn to respect one another. They also have the opportunity to express their views about the school through an elected school council.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
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	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and Colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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