

INSPECTION REPORT

HATCH WARREN INFANT SCHOOL

Basingstoke

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116137

Headteacher: Mrs D Collard

Reporting inspector: Mrs Kay Cornish
21080

Dates of inspection: 30th April – 3rd May 2001

Inspection number: 196620

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gershwin Road Off Brighton Hill Basingstoke Hampshire
Postcode:	RG22 4PQ
Telephone number:	01256 350313
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr P Waggett
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21080	Kay Cornish Registered inspector	Mathematics; Art; Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage; Equal Opportunities; Special Educational Needs; English as an additional language.	The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9163	Geoffrey Humphrey Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20671	Jon Palethorpe Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Music	
21313	Harold Galley Team inspector	English; Information and communication technology; Physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30253	Yvonne Lawrence Team inspector	Religious education; History.	Pupils' attitudes values and personal development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hatch Warren Infant School is situated on the outskirts of Basingstoke. There are slightly more boys than girls on a roll of 259. The school's roll is about the same as other primary schools nationally. Children are admitted to school in the September of the school year in which they reach their fifth birthday. Children's attainment on entry to the reception classes is widely diverse, but mainly above average. Literacy and numeracy attainment is above expectations on entry, but children's creative development and listening skills are below. There are nine classes, averaging 29 pupils. There are three classes per year in the age group four to seven years. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, at two per cent, is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is 14 per cent, which is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need under the DfEE Code of Practice¹, which, at 0.4 per cent, is below the national average. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is 3 per cent, which is slightly above the expected level nationally. No pupils have been excluded. The majority of pupils attend some form of pre-school education before starting at Hatch Warren, and most move on to Hatch Warren Junior School, which is on the same site, when they leave at the age of seven.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hatch Warren Infant School is a highly effective school that provides a very good quality of education. It helps pupils to make good progress in their learning and achieve very well in all aspects of their education. Pupils' attainment is well above the national averages in English, mathematics and science and well above the expected levels for art and design. Pupils attain above the expected levels nationally for most other subjects. Teaching is predominantly good with very good, and occasionally excellent, features. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent. Personal development and relationships are excellent. Behaviour is very good. The headteacher leads with imagination and purpose and has the active, very good commitment of governors and staff. The school is clearly effective in establishing very good community links, whilst there is every indication that the school is moving forwards very successfully. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is predominantly good, with very good and occasionally excellent features.
- Pupils' attainment in reading is exceptional and excellent.
- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science, and art and design is well above the national averages and expected levels by the end of Year 2.
- Relationships, personal development and attitudes to school are excellent and ensured by the hard working staff.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is predominantly very good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy head, senior management team and governing body are very good, and include a strong focus on the very good professional development of all staff.
- Financial management and daily administration are of a high standard.
- The school's links with parents and the community are very good.

What could be improved

There are no major areas for development. A few minor areas for improvement are in the process of being rectified.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

¹ The DfEE Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities to ensure that all pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the previous inspection in March 1997. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced. Standards have been raised in all key subjects and in most others, and reading standards are in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. More precise assessment procedures have been implemented which enable individual target setting for all pupils and better planning for lessons. Educational inclusion has been improved so that higher attaining pupils' needs have been more closely identified and extended opportunities given to these pupils within the school's curriculum. Investigative and problem solving skills in science and mathematics have been given more focus following advice from the local education authority's inspectorate and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's documentation. All previous key issues have been rectified successfully. The new issues identified are closely linked to current national educational developments.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				
	all schools				similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	A	A	A*	A*
Writing	B	A	A	A	B
Mathematics	A	A	B	A	B

Key

very high A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

A means that the school is in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally.*

The school is successful at maintaining high attainment, well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, by the end of Year 2 compared with all schools nationally. Reading standards are excellent. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment is well above average for reading, writing and mathematics. These standards have improved since the previous inspection, when pupils' scores in the National Curriculum tests were above national averages. They are now well above. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged, are successful, and their results in National Curriculum tests reflect this. Trends over time from 1996 to 2000 are upwards and higher than the national trend for key subjects, reflecting good improvement. Boys' performances in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded the national averages compared with girls at the school. Both boys and girls exceeded the national averages for the end of Key Stage 1². During the inspection of 2001, standards observed were above the expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1. Reading is excellent. Speaking and listening, writing, mathematics, science and art and design are well above national averages or expected levels. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology and design and technology meets the expected levels nationally. In religious education, pupils' attainment is above the expected level of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' attainment in all other foundation subjects is above the expected levels nationally.

No subject was observed to be unsatisfactory. Pupils' attainment in literacy is well above average. An area for development in writing is to encourage pupils to be creative and spontaneous during some chosen writing sessions and not to be hampered by pupils' traits to be over cautious about correctness in writing styles. Numeracy standards have risen since

² Key Stage 1 refers to pupils in Years 1 to 2.

the previous inspection and there are strengths in solving problems. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is consistent in all classes and very good. All pupils receive very good support including pupils with English as an additional language. These pupils make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards individual targets and very good progress in reading. Children in the Foundation Stage³ have maintained their above average attainment of the Early Learning Goals⁴. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress, and, apart from creative development which is broadly in line, some children exceed expectations. Current pupils throughout the school make good progress in learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are enthusiastic and purposeful in lessons. They are very happy to come to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good at all times. Pupils are always polite. There were no signs of bullying or harassment of any groups or individuals.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils are mature, sensible and trustworthy, reflecting a confidence in feeling valued. Relationships are excellent at all levels.
Attendance	Attendance is very good and much above the national average. Authorised and unauthorised absences are low.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good with very good and excellent features	Good with very good and excellent features.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

During the week of the inspection, the quality of teaching was predominantly good with very good features and occasionally excellent aspects. Out of 51 lessons observed, four per cent were excellent, 29 per cent were very good, 55 per cent were good and 12 per cent satisfactory. No lessons were unsatisfactory. This is a picture of high standards in teaching and an improvement from the previous inspection when 12 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The impact of the good and better teaching has been substantial in raising the consistency of pupils' learning. A minor weakness in teaching is noted in the inconsistent application of good marking throughout all pupils' recorded work. The school is already attempting to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop confidence in imaginative, lively writing, with an improved, refined style. Whilst the Foundation Stage provides good activities for developing indoor creative play, the outdoor creative play opportunities are in need of further development. Teachers have identified this as a target and begun its improvement already.

Strengths are in the quality of teaching of reading, factual writing, mathematics, science and art. Teaching in information and communication technology (ICT), and design and technology is never less than satisfactory. Features of the best teaching include high expectations of

³ From September 2000, the term 'Foundation Stage' refers to children's education from the age of three until the end of reception year.

⁴ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals', comprised of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they enter Year 1. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literature; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development.

academic performance, behaviour and discussion. The management of behaviour is very good throughout. Teachers deploy teaching assistants very efficiently, so that their talents and strengths support pupils to a high standard. The school excels in developing excellent relationships so that a well structured, exciting ethos for learning exists, which is conducive to a high quality interchange of understanding between pupil and teacher. Teaching has a good impact on pupils' standards, learning, attitudes and behaviour. It is a strength of the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Meets all the National Curriculum requirements. Good broad range of all subjects for four to seven year olds. The school is educationally and socially inclusive, and ensures equality of access and opportunities for all of its pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The good influence permeates right through the relationships at the school. Pupils' needs are identified early so that good support can be given promptly.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for the pupils whose main language at home is not English is very good. Very good support in Cantonese and Japanese has been provided on a one to one basis, periodically, by Hampshire's Bilingual Learners Support Service.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall very good. Very good provision for pupils' moral and social development, and good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The high quality of provision contributes significantly to the school's very good ethos.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers and teaching assistants know and understand their pupils very well and care for their personal and academic needs in a sensitive and supportive way. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic progress are very good, as is the use of assessment data to inform and guide lesson planning. Child protection procedures are very good. All staff ensure that pupils learn in a safe, clean and attractive environment which is well maintained.

Parents' views of the school are very good. Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are well informed about their children and the school. The school is an orderly community offering a warm welcome. It receives very good support from the Friends of Hatch Warren Infant School and the local community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher leads with imagination and purpose, giving sensitive support to staff. She has an excellent grasp of the school's strengths and needs. Her loyal and conscientious deputy brings flair to the role model of teaching and commands very good respect. The headteacher is strongly supported by her senior management team and subject co-ordinators, who have a very good understanding of the development and provision of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	There is very good leadership in shaping the direction of the school. The astute Chair of Governors gives regular and good support and is well informed of recent educational developments. The governing body has a very good grasp of the school's strengths and needs and ensures a clear focus in the school's work on raising standards. Governors give good, practical support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's improvement plan is very good, comprehensive and provides a clear programme of action. The school has already identified most of the minor issues, and plans are already being implemented. Monitoring and evaluating of the whole school's progress is very good.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its budget prudently so that current pupils benefit immediately. Financial planning is very good. As a result, the school has moved out of a deficit budget to one that will protect the costings of the school's improvement plan. Financial management and daily administration are highly efficient. Resources are used efficiently and the school applies 'best value' principles thoroughly. The school gives good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The very good educational standards their children achieve. • Children are happy and well behaved. • Children are motivated, confident and enjoy their learning. • Teachers and staff are welcoming and create a calm, friendly atmosphere. • The school provides good information on all matters. • Being able to visit the classrooms on a Wednesday after school and talk informally to teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A greater range of additional activities outside of lessons. • Better arrangements for collecting children in reception classes to reduce congestion.

Inspectors completely agree with the positive views expressed, particularly in relation to the educational standards achieved. Taking into account the enrichment of the curriculum through the quality and range of visitors to the school and trips to places of historical and cultural interest, the inspectors conclude that the range of additional activities is satisfactory. With regard to the congestion at the end of the school day, the inspectors agree that

alternative arrangements to reduce the concentration in one area should be investigated and that the present provision is unsatisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. During the previous inspection, pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 was mainly above national averages, although English was well above. This has improved. Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is well above, and standards in most other subjects are above the expected levels. At the time of the previous inspection, children in the Foundation Stage were above the expected levels nationally by the beginning of Year 1. This has been maintained, with added improvement in mathematics, although children's creative development is lower.

2. In National Curriculum tests for 2000, reading standards, when compared with national benchmarks for all schools, were well above the national average and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The school's performance in writing was well above the national average. In mathematics, the school's performance was well above the national average. According to teachers' assessments, the school's performance in science was very high when compared with the national average. Pupils make good progress. All pupils were well challenged and in all of the core subjects mentioned, a larger proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 3. In reading, well over half of pupils attained Level 3, which is exceptional. Pupils' performance, compared with similar schools, was very high in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics.

3. Trends over time from 1996 to 2000 were upwards and higher than the national trend for the core subjects of reading, writing, mathematics and science, reflecting good improvement. Boys' performances in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded national averages and compared with girls at the school. Both girls and boys exceeded the national averages for the end of Key Stage 1. The success of boys, compared with the national picture, can be attributed to:

- Teachers who motivated them to read early and fluently, with appropriate texts which appeal to boys;
- The quicker pace of lessons;
- The change and variety of tasks within lessons;
- Teachers' good, firm management;
- A strong encouragement to be independent.

4. During the inspection, standards were mainly above the expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1. Reading was excellent. Speaking and listening, mathematics, science and art standards were well above average. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology and design and technology meet the expected levels nationally. In religious education, pupils' attainment is above the expected level of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' attainment in all other subjects is above the expected levels nationally. This is a very good picture of overall high standards and of improvement since the previous inspection.

5. The previous issues to improve pupils' mathematical, investigative and problem solving skills, and to improve pupils' experimental and investigative skills in science, have been resolved. These features of learning are now strengths.

6. Pupils' attainment in literacy is well above the average. Pupils have very good skills for analysing texts and discuss the printed word with good perception and understanding of plot, characterisation, and resolution of conflicts in stories. Writing standards are above average. Pupils write with fluency and confidence, although the school has recognised that standards

lag behind those in reading. Pupils write in correctly structured sentences, in a range of styles and genre. Their work is well linked to other subjects, such as history, and this helps their literacy skills significantly. An area for development in writing is to encourage pupils to be more creative and spontaneous during some chosen writing sessions and not to be hampered by pupils' traits to be over cautious about correctness. Teachers have recognised the need to rectify this balance and have planned opportunities for pupils to extend their personal expressive writing. Handwriting and presentation are of a very high standard. The good implementation of the literacy strategy is consistent in all classes and well supported by teaching assistants and parents.

7. Numeracy standards have risen since the previous inspection and there are strengths in solving problems with very good flexibility in using numbers. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a very good knowledge of the value of digits within numbers and calculate accurately when adding and subtracting numbers to 100 or more. The majority recognise two and three digit multiples of 2, 5 and 10. The majority know by heart the facts of the 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 multiplication tables. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is consistent in all classes and teachers' planning reflects this.

8. All pupils receive very good support and educational inclusion is very good. Pupils with English as an additional language at home, receive extra support with effective translation, so that pupils become well integrated and educated in all the subjects of the National Curriculum. For example, in a practical science experiment, a pupil was effectively helped to measure a seed and plant it in his pot of compost, recording his measurements in tabular format. This was done through a translator in Cantonese.

9. Provision for special educational needs is good throughout the school. Pupils are identified very early and they make good progress towards their individual targets. Their progress in reading is very good and they often attain standards in line with the nationally expected levels. All pupils have individual targets in their core subject workbooks and in their individual annual reports to parents. These help to raise pupils' progress in learning. Higher attaining pupils are well challenged and consistently achieve well above average results. Due to the uniform planning of the curriculum by teachers across each year group, all groups of pupils receive their educational entitlement.

10. The impact of team leaders and all staff upon pupils' progress in learning is significant. There is careful analysis of test results and of pupils' work in order to monitor and maintain consistent progress. The impact of co-ordinators of subjects has been very positive in raising standards. The overall picture of pupils' attainment and learning is very good indeed, and strongly reflects the good influence of teaching and provision.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to build upon its successes of nurturing confident pupils who are highly motivated learners. Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are excellent, an improvement on the good standards noted in the previous inspection report. Pupils arrive punctually for lessons, with many coming early to choose library books with their parents. Pupils are focused and attentive at the beginning of lessons, move purposefully to their learning activity and engage with full attention. This focus is maintained in lessons through a good pace and variety of strategies by teachers to hold children's interest. The pupils are eager to please, answer questions and share their work. They always listen courteously to others' responses. In history, for example, pupils were 'detectives' and excitedly discussed and described what they thought a Victorian object was used for, whilst the rest of the class listened and then offered their ideas. Pupils' concentration is very good and is developed from the moment they start school so that they sustain concentration over time. In reception, children maturely follow the school routines and are ready to start their learning immediately. They work thoughtfully when, for example, engaged on independently finding and matching initial sound names. Pupils enjoy the full

range of their learning and take great pride in presenting neat and colourfully appropriate work, with care taken over mounting and display in their books, classrooms and corridors.

12. Standards of behaviour continue to be consistently very good and a strength of the school, as in the last inspection. Pupils are always polite in lessons and around the school. Each class has its own rules and all the pupils follow the school's 'golden rules', with pupils moving between activities and to the hall in an exemplary manner. They are trusted to behave well when outside playing, when carrying out independent investigation work and completing jobs. The management strategies used by teachers to promote excellent behaviour have a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and learning. Within the school, the positive atmosphere promotes an environment of collaboration and support, free from any form of bullying or racism. All ages take real pleasure in receiving rewards and sharing successes in the weekly 'smiley assembly'. Pupils play very well together and show great respect for their teachers and assistants. They have a good sense of respect for property. They handle equipment and materials with pleasing care and skill when, for instance, handling artefacts. Pupils show a very good ability to sustain interest and concentration.

13. The personal and social development of pupils is excellent and continues to be a major strength of the school. Pupils form constructive relationships and are considerate to each other with, for example, a small group adapting their play to include a boy who had just broken his arm. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good. Teachers and assistants treat pupils with respect and consideration. Each pupil is a valued member of the school and this nurtures an atmosphere of children confidently learning, exploring and responding. Pupils work well and happily with partners in lessons and at break times. In the lunch hall, they are well mannered; eat and chat sensibly and respond to instructions from supervisors.

14. Pupils' attendance is very good, at 96.7 per cent for 1999/2000, has improved since the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence is slightly lower than the national average and procedures for monitoring and managing this are exemplary. Pupils arrive punctually for school and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is predominantly good with some very good and excellent features. During the week of the inspection, out of 51 lessons observed, four per cent were excellent, 29 per cent were very good, 55 per cent were good and 12 per cent satisfactory. No lessons were unsatisfactory. This is a picture of high standards in teaching and an improvement from the previous inspection, when 12 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Very good teaching was observed in each year group. The impact of the good and better teaching has been substantial in maintaining or raising the consistency of pupils' progress in learning. This is particularly noticeable in the core subjects of reading, writing, mathematics and science. The teaching of reading is outstanding.

16. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is predominantly good with very good and excellent features. It is very good for reading and mathematics. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the impact of good teaching has maintained the standards of children on entry and improved upon their attainment in listening, reading, mathematics, creativity and personal, social and emotional development.

17. The teaching of English and literacy at Key Stage 1 is usually good so that pupils reach well above average levels by the end of Year 2. The teaching of reading is exceptional and the teaching of writing has improved through its focus in the school's improvement plan. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy thoroughly and this enables pupils to experience a wide range of good quality texts. Extra time has been planned for writing tasks which are closely linked to other subjects, such as a study of the Victorians in history, and in producing front pages for their own newspapers when using information and communication technology. Teachers are still analysing further ways of improving the creative and imaginative element of pupils' writing styles.

18. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy is good overall, and occasionally very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and implement its main principles thoroughly when planning lessons. Teachers teach the basic skills of counting and recording most competently and place good emphasis on the correct way to record calculations neatly and logically. Teachers encourage precise use of mathematical terms by pupils. Pupils are taught to calculate numbers confidently and to measure carefully. The teaching of shape, space, magnitude and capacity is good. Since the previous inspection, the issue of the need to improve pupils' mathematical investigations and problem solving skills has been improved significantly. The teaching of these aspects is now a strength.

19. In science, teaching is mainly at least good and half the lessons observed were very good. The previous inspection's issue to improve experimental and investigative work has been thoroughly rectified with more opportunities given to pupils and good encouragement to observe carefully and record their findings. Science activities are well chosen in order to interest and excite pupils and they relate well to the learning objectives of the National Curriculum. There is good all year round use of the school's site for the study of plants and creatures in their natural habitat.

20. The quality of teaching information and communication technology is never less than satisfactory, as indicated through small group work under the supervision of teaching assistants, through an analysis of pupils' printed work on display and through discussions with pupils. Teachers work in close collaboration with the teaching assistants so that pupils are given extra opportunities to develop basic skills first hand on computers. The teaching of word processing and data handling is strong. The teaching of modelling is satisfactory but does not challenge pupils sufficiently to extend their skills in this area.

21. The teaching of religious education is good. Teachers value pupils' ideas and, as a result, pupils make thoughtful and considered responses in discussions. The teaching of Christianity is good, as are the instructions given about the values and traditions of other non Christian faiths, such as aspects of Hinduism and Judaism. Teachers' planning is closely linked to the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers have strengths in questioning so that pupils are encouraged to reflect with good insight. The development of pupils' spirituality and personal insight through religious education is good.

22. There is very good teaching of art and design. Teaching in all other subjects is good with very good features observed. Outstanding features of the best teaching include high expectations of behaviour, discussion and academic performance. Planning of lessons is good with very good consistency of opportunities offered to pupils of the same age in different classes. Good planning of the content of subjects is closely linked to the National Curriculum. Teachers are very good at teaching the basic skills so that pupils record their work logically with very good presentation. The management of pupils' behaviour is very good. Teachers use support staff and resources most competently. Daily assessment and knowledge of pupils' standards are good. There are very good procedures to track pupils' progress over time and to plan for tasks and targets in lessons. As a result, teachers know pupils well. The use of homework is good and consistent. The teaching of reading is excellent.

23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good; it is very good for reading. Tasks, and literacy and numeracy lessons, are adapted successfully to suit pupils' particular needs. Teaching assistants work in close collaboration with teachers and the school's special educational needs co-ordinator. The planning of individual education plans is detailed and informative and links closely to the content of lessons which other pupils receive. These individual plans are implemented thoroughly by teachers and teaching assistants. The eight pupils whose main language at home is not English, are well supported and taught. Currently three pupils enjoy a one to one working relationship with visiting specialists from Hampshire Bilingual Learners Support Service. The periodical support received enables

these pupils to learn the same subjects as others, mainly through the interpreters' translations of the teachers' instructions.

24. The main area for development in teaching is to extend still further the good start made in teaching confidence, imagination and fluency when pupils write their own personal, expressive thoughts. Some marking gives clear guidance for pupils to improve, finish or correct work, but this is not consistently applied throughout. At the Foundation Stage, an area for further development is for teachers to extend the opportunities for creative, imaginative play outdoors.

25. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, and it has a significant impact on pupils' learning, attitudes and behaviour. Teaching has a very positive impact on the excellent relationships which exist in the school.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

26. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with a programme for religious education which is soundly based on the locally agreed syllabus. The school has a good programme for developing pupils' personal, health and social education and has an effective sex education policy agreed by the governing body.

27. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good and is firmly based on the areas of learning recommended for this age group. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the children in their care and the curriculum is effectively tailored to meet their individual needs. Children are well prepared to begin work at Key Stage 1.

28. The curriculum for pupils at Key Stage 1 covers all subjects thoroughly. The school has developed a very useful range of programmes of study that support teachers in their planning and which ensure that pupils build on their skills in careful steps as they move through the school. Provision in English and mathematics has been strengthened by the frameworks of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The school has implemented both strategies very effectively. Teachers are alert to opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills in all lessons. For example, as part of their history work, Year 2 pupils visited a 'Victorian School' in Reading and this led to some superb, extended pieces of written work as pupils were inspired to record their recollections of a fascinating day. To support their science work, pupils have constructed simple block graphs to illustrate their findings based on a database drawn up about 'Ourselves'. Information and communication technology is well used most effectively in many subjects to support pupils' learning. Word processing is especially well used to develop pupils' written work, and the presentation of work is enhanced by the varied use of colour, different fonts and underlining.

29. Curriculum planning is good. A feature of work across the school is the consistency of opportunities offered to pupils of the same age in different classes. This owes much to the careful year group planning by teachers and to the effective monitoring role of the subject co-ordinators. The school maintains some aspects of its long tradition of topic work and this leads to good links between different subjects.

30. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is very good. Health education has a high priority and children are inducted into good routine habits as soon as they join the school. When Year 2 pupils are asked why they should wash their hands after planting their broad bean seeds, they answer with confidence and clarity. The importance of exercise is well known to pupils and they can explain why it is essential to warm up before vigorous activity. The school does not offer any after school activities for pupils. This is a deliberate policy based on the notion that, after a hard day's work and with reading and spelling homework still to be done, children of this age need a period of rest after school. Although a minority of parents are unhappy with this stance, the majority support it. Despite

the lack of after school clubs, the curriculum is extremely well enhanced by a wide range of visits to places of local interest, such as the 'Victorian School' in Reading and the 'Rain Forest' in Newbury. The school has close links with the Police and Fire services which visit the school, and pupils especially enjoyed a visit from the Royal Air Force, who inflated a life raft in the hall. During the inspection, the curriculum was brought to life by the visit of an excellent storyteller who inspired a love of books in pupils throughout the school.

31. The school's provision for special educational needs is good. Pupils are well supported by detailed individual education plans and pupils are especially well catered for when working with special teaching assistants. These staff work very closely with class teachers, and have established warm and constructive relationships with the pupils they support, successfully encouraging them to take a full and active part in lessons. The monitoring of individual education plans is rigorous and, as a result, the work presented to pupils is well matched to their needs. Provision for pupils whose main language at home is not English is very good. Very good support in Cantonese and Japanese has been provided on a one to one basis, periodically, by Hampshire's Bilingual Learners Support Service.

32. The school has good links with partner institutions. As a result, children are well prepared to start school and are equally well prepared as they move on to the junior school at the age of seven. The school provides very effective support for new teachers who join the staff. This has ensured a consistency of provision over a long period of time.

33. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and a strength of the school.

34. There is good provision for pupils to develop their knowledge and insight into values and beliefs and everyone within the school community is valued. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities in daily acts of worship and religious education lessons to develop their spiritual awareness and self knowledge. Daily acts of worship are good and ensure that statutory requirements are met. Each week there is a special assembly to celebrate pupils' achievements, and displays around the school invite pupils to reflect upon and value each other's work. Pupils are given the chance to appreciate the wonders of the natural world, as when children in the reception class were shown a newborn baby.

35. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The promotion of the difference between right and wrong underpins much of the school's work and is constantly referred to in lessons and assemblies. The use of praise and rewards encourages good conduct and a caring attitude. Teachers regularly devote time to the notion that we should treat everyone with respect.

36. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop socially, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community. Within each class, pupils have a range of tasks and responsibilities to encourage them to take an active part in the life of the class. The very good social development of pupils is underpinned by excellent relationships at all levels throughout the school. All staff are good role models for the children in their care. Charitable fundraising activities for organisations such as 'Help the Aged', arouse pupils' awareness of the needs of others in the community.

37. There is good provision for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the richness of other cultures. The school strives hard to ensure pupils gain valuable firsthand experiences through visits to places of local interest, such as churches. The school celebrates a range of festivals that are important to different groups within the community; these include Diwali, Holi and Chinese New Year, as well as all the main Christian festivals. During the inspection, pupils were made aware of why the May Day festival is important and they learnt about various traditional activities, such as maypole dancing. In subjects such as art and music, pupils learn about the cultural contribution of British artists, such as Lowry and Constable, as well as learning about other artists, such as Matisse and Pollock. The school has a good range of musical instruments from different parts of the world. In the purchasing

of resources, the school is sensitive to the need to reflect cultural diversity in order to provide a broad curriculum for all its pupils.

38. The school has worked hard and effectively to maintain the very good provision outlined in the first inspection report.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The support and guidance given to, and the care taken over, the welfare of pupils are very good. Teachers and teaching assistants know and understand their pupils very well and care for their personal and academic needs in a sensitive and supportive way. Parents attending the Ofsted pre-inspection meeting, and those who returned questionnaires, confirmed that they are pleased with the way in which the school cares for their children.

40. Health and safety procedures are diligent and include very good arrangements for first aid. Personal hygiene practice is very good, with hand washing before meals and after practical activities a well established part of pupils' normal school routine. Child protection procedures are effective and all members of staff are well briefed and alert. The headteacher and her deputy are the designated child protection co-ordinators. The school has established close links with all appropriate outside agencies.

41. The policies and procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The management of behaviour is consistent throughout the school and incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with effectively and sensitively. The policies and procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance and punctuality are exemplary. Overall the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good and have been very well maintained since the previous inspection.

42. The school has very well developed procedures for assessing pupils' academic development, ranging from assessing children on entry in the reception year to National Curriculum tests in Year 2. There are comprehensive assessments made in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science that are used well to guide lesson planning. In English and mathematics, they are further used to set individual targets that are placed in each of the pupils' exercise books as reminders. This is good practice. There are thorough assessment procedures in all non core subjects. Assessment criteria are indicated in the planning, and simple but useful records are kept on each pupil. Systematic monitoring of progress is an integral part of teaching and learning. There are effective tracking sheets, records are consistently kept updated, and there are helpful portfolios of work indicating work covered and levels of attainment.

43. Marking is done regularly and is overall sound. However, the good marking is not consistently applied in all classes. Written reports to parents are of good quality for the core subjects, the English section being particularly helpful with information on achievement and areas for development. Targets for improvement are included with the report. Sometimes, information on non core subjects is less helpful, when comments refer to interest and enjoyment rather than attainment and achievement. The Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is well addressed, and good use is made of pupils' individual education plans. Overall, the quality of assessment procedures has improved significantly since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The consensus view of the parents who attended the Ofsted pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires, was that the educational standards achieved by the school are very good. Parents are united in the view that children are happy at school, well behaved, confident and motivated, and enjoy their learning. Parents expressed the view that teachers and staff were welcoming and created a calm, friendly atmosphere.

45. Parents appreciate the opportunity of being able to visit their child's classroom every Wednesday to see the work being done and talk informally with class teachers. It was felt that the school provides good information and that the parent curriculum workshops were particularly helpful. Inspectors completely agree with the positive views expressed, particularly in relation to the educational standards achieved.

46. A significant number of parents expressed concerns about the limited range of additional activities outside of lessons and about the current arrangements for collecting children, particularly from reception and temporary Year 1 classrooms at the end of the school day. The waiting area is very confined and the pathways through and around the area serve both the infant and junior schools and become very congested.

47. With regard to the additional activities outside of lessons, inspectors conclude that, taking into account the enrichment of the curriculum through the quality and range of visitors to the school and trips to places of historical and cultural interest, provision is satisfactory. With regard to the congestion at the end of the school day, inspectors agree that alternative arrangements to reduce the concentration in one area should be investigated.

48. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. There is a very good induction programme for new parents and they are encouraged to become involved with the school. There is a regular flow of information on the curriculum and current topic work, and many opportunities for both formal and informal consultation.

49. The home-school agreement clearly defines the expectations and responsibilities of the school, parents and pupils. The home-school diaries are well used as a communications medium between parents and teachers, and there is a clear understanding regarding the work that pupils are expected to do at home in support of their learning. Overall, the contribution of parents towards the learning of their children is very good.

50. There is an active Friends of Hatch Warren Infant School that organises social and fundraising events and contributes much practical assistance with school projects. Overall, the impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is very good. The strong partnership and support of parents reported in the previous inspection have been maintained and remain strengths of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The current leadership and management of the school contribute most effectively to pupils' all round achievement. Since the time of the previous inspection, the strong leadership has been maintained and improved upon. Leadership and management are now very good.

52. The headteacher leads with imagination and purpose, giving sensitive support to staff and clear educational direction. She has an excellent grasp of the school's strengths and needs. Her deputy headteacher is loyal and conscientious; she brings flair to the role model of teaching and commands very good respect from pupils and staff. The headteacher is strongly supported by her senior management team and subject co-ordinators, who have a very good understanding of the development and provision of their subjects, which is reflected in their very thorough audit and action plans for their subjects. All staff co-operate well as a team and are strongly committed to maintaining the excellent relationships and the good educational and social inclusion of all pupils at the school.

53. The school's improvement plan is of a very high standard and innovations are carefully costed. There is a clear focus in the school's work on raising standards, which are high. All the issues of the previous inspection have been rectified. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced so that pupils' literacy and numeracy attainment is still rising. The school has correctly identified the need to develop children's creative play in reception, and to extend pupils' creative style in writing at Key Stage 1. The need to improve information and communication technology software for all

subjects of the curriculum has been identified. Assessment procedures, identified as an issue in the previous report, are now very good, and a strength. Their improvement has been significant in informing about standards and for improving pupils' attainment.

54. The governing body is very good in its effectiveness in fulfilling its responsibilities. The astute Chair of Governors gives regular and good support, being well informed of recent educational developments and the importance of the influence of information and communication technology for communicating widely. The governing body has a very good grasp of the school's strengths and needs and has improved budgeting to maintain high standards. Governors are well informed and give very good leadership in shaping the direction of the school. Governors visit regularly and adopt a 'pairing' support system with teachers. There is very good share commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed. The governing body fulfils all its statutory obligations.

55. The management of educational inclusion is very good. All higher attaining pupils are very well challenged, as the exceptional reading results accurately reflect. The way the curriculum is planned within year groups, takes close account of the needs of all pupils so that targets are precise and equal opportunities are fulfilled. The management of special educational needs is good. The documentation is up to date and includes thorough assessment and recording by the co-ordinator for special educational needs and staff. Monitoring of pupils' progress is thorough. Training for teaching assistants is very good and teachers use their support staff very efficiently. Accommodation and resources for special educational needs are good. The governor with a close interest in special educational needs keeps the governing body well informed about the school's special educational needs provision and is aware of the proposed national changes for such needs.

56. Provision for the pupils whose main language at home is not English is very good. Good support in Cantonese and Japanese has been provided on a one-to-one basis, periodically, by Hampshire's Bilingual Learners Support Service. In addition this service has secured a grant from the New Opportunities Fund to set up a homework club after school on the combined Hatch Warren Junior and Infant site. The club will be targeted particularly at ethnic minority pupils and will celebrate achievements in languages and provide support for parents in how to support their child's education at home.

57. The delegation of staff to management responsibilities for the curriculum is clear and well managed by the headteacher. This has helped new staff to settle well into the school. Co-ordinators have a clear grasp of key changes in the National Curriculum's development and give very good support and role models to staff, whilst monitoring teaching and standards most efficiently.

58. The school is well staffed to teach the curriculum. There is a good number of teaching staff who are appropriately qualified to teach this age range. There is a good mix of experience, ranging from teachers having taught at the school since its change to an infant school nine years ago, to a newly qualified teacher. Induction for new teachers is very effective. Professional development is well organised. Teachers are provided with opportunities to enhance their professional skills and, through this development, support the future growth of the school. They keep up to date with modern developments through in-service training and they are given opportunities to develop within the school by taking different year groups. Expertise is 'bought in' for music teaching, and this is well used across the school. Teachers are building on their expertise in information and communication technology, where training is proving beneficial and is having a positive impact on standards.

59. There is a good number of teaching assistants and they are well qualified and well trained, and provide very effective complementary support for the work of teachers. They are involved in planning meetings, and fully understand their role in and out of class. Additional support is provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator, and a specialist teacher for pupils with English as an additional language, visits for some pupils. All this support contributes to the good quality of provision and the high standards that the school achieves.

60. The accommodation is good and is well maintained to give a bright and attractive appearance. High quality displays throughout the school provide a stimulating learning environment. Displays promote an interest in literacy, numeracy and other topics and celebrate the work of pupils. A variety of good quality two-dimensional and three-dimensional displays, some by pupils and some for pupils, considerably enhance the ambience in the school. Separate rooms for music/drama, one for food technology, and another for small group work for pupils with special educational needs, enable activities to take place in an appropriate environment and have a positive impact on learning. In addition, there is a main hall that serves a variety of purposes, such as whole school assemblies and physical education lessons. There are adequate outside areas for such activities as play for the under fives, science and physical education. The library area is attractive and well used by pupils, helping to give them a love of books and of reading. The school buildings are well maintained both internally and externally. The school is located on an attractive landscaped site that provides good play, sports and nature study facilities for pupils of all ages.

61. Pedestrian access to the reception classes and temporary Year 1 classrooms is shared with the adjoining junior school, and this results in considerable congestion at the end of the school day when parents are collecting their children. Alternative arrangements are being investigated.

62. The general level of resources to support learning is very good in most subjects. The resources are of very good quality, particularly in music, and are well labelled and stored, and are easily accessible. In science, there are occasions when a greater quantity of equipment, such as magnifying lenses, are required. The library is well stocked with books appropriate to the age and ability of pupils.

63. The school's financial and daily administration are highly efficient, due in a large part to an experienced administrator and her able assistant, and the very effective finance committee. New technology is used very efficiently to link the local education authority's computerised system with the school's office. Governors are provided with regular monthly budget information. There is a good financial policy showing clear financial delegation, and a register of pecuniary interests is maintained regularly by the governing body. The school's educational priorities are monitored carefully for their financial implications. The recommendations of the local education authority's recent audit report have been implemented successfully.

64. The use of specific grants, the very good financial support from the Friends of Hatch Warren Infant School and the very good community links ensure that the school's basic budget is well supplemented. Finances through the devolved allocation of the 'Standards Fund' have been used prudently to improve teachers' information and communication technology skills, maintain teaching assistants and improve design and technology areas. Sponsorship for training has been good.

65. There is very good use of teaching assistants to support staff and pupils, and the school's learning resources are used to the maximum, particularly the halls, computers and well resourced library. Daily administration ensures that the school operates calmly and efficiently. The school applies 'best value' principles thoroughly. The effectiveness of the school is very good. Pupils' attainment and learning are well above the national average and expected levels overall, and educational inclusion is very good. The school's improvement plan is comprehensive and well supported in its financial implications. Priorities for development are clear. There is very good leadership and the quality of relationships is excellent. Pupils' attitudes to school and personal development are excellent. Behaviour is very good and the quality of good, and very good, teaching impacts strongly on pupils' learning. There has been good improvement since the positive report of the previous inspection, whilst there is every indication that the school is moving forward very successfully. The school gives good value for money, therefore maintaining the previous

report's evaluation. This inspection identifies no major issues for the school to improve further.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. There are no major issues for the school to improve further. However, headteacher, staff and governing body, in conjunction with the local education authority should consider the following minor issues:

- Improving the exit arrangements for pupils after school to avoid congestion.
(Paragraphs: 46, 47, 61.)
- Continuing to improve creative outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage.
(Paragraphs: 53, 75.)
- Continuing to improve pupils' creative writing skills at Key Stage 1.
(Paragraphs 6, 79.)
- Improving information and communication technology software for all subjects.
(Paragraphs: 53, 99 and 113.)
- Ensuring that the good marking of pupils' recorded work is consistently applied throughout.
(Paragraphs: 24, 43, 82, 137.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	29	55	12	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	259
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5
Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	36
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	44	40	84

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	43	43
	Girls	38	40	38
	Total	80	83	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (96)	99 (97)	96 (96)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	43	44
	Girls	40	38	40
	Total	82	81	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (98)	96 (97)	100 (99)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	159
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	261

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	461,354
Total expenditure	471,211
Expenditure per pupil	1,785
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,554
Balance carried forward to next year	-7,303

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	259
Number of questionnaires returned	114

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	17	1	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	80	17	0	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	33	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	37	4	2	1
The teaching is good.	74	22	2	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	35	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	31	4	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	20	1	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	36	5	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	89	28	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	30	1	3	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	22	17	10	24

Due to rounding percentages do not total 100.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

67. Children are admitted to the three reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they are five, and make good progress against the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. The results of children's assessment on entry to the Foundation Stage show that their attainment, whilst widely divergent, is generally above the level expected nationally for their age, apart from creative development, which is below, and personal, social and emotional development, which is in line. Children maintain good progress in their learning and attain levels at the end of the Foundation Stage which are above the expected Early Learning Goals overall. Creative development is broadly in line with national levels at the end of the Foundation Stage.

68. There is a very good induction programme for new children and their parents. Both are invited into school in the July prior to children officially commencing. The three reception teachers visit children and parents in their homes before children start school. By the end of September, all children attend full time. There are good links with local playgroups and nurseries and the school is studying the possibility of building its own nursery on site, with the aid of the local education authority. The school ensures that no child in the Foundation Stage is excluded or disadvantaged. The planned curriculum provides a rich and stimulating learning environment, although the school has identified the need to provide greater opportunities outdoors for creative play and has a planned programme of action to improve this aspect. There is good leadership of the Foundation Stage and very good leadership in language and mathematical development. An area for improvement is to complete the provision for extra facilities outdoors and to improve the considerable congestion at the end of the school day, when parents collect their children.

69. Since the previous inspection, provision for the under fives has been maintained to the same high standard, with added improvement for mathematics, although creative achievement is less, due to the lower standard of this aspect when children enter the Foundation Stage.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Teaching is good so that children make confident relationships. Children are in line with the expected levels on entry, but with weaker listening skills. They make good progress so that, by the time children begin Year 1, their personal development is above expectation. Children are mature, work and play together well, and are co-operative with adults. Staff take extra care to provide children with good role models. As a result, children take turns with equipment, and behaviour is very good. Children are encouraged to be independent: for example in personal hygiene and in putting on aprons to protect their clothes. They are very confident about exploring new situations: for example playing in the role play area which is currently a 'Three Bears' Cottage', and in speaking to the whole class about events which have happened to them.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Teaching of language and communication is mainly good and very good for reading, so that children reach above the expected levels of the Early Learning Goals. There is very good use of teaching assistants to help children select books. Children benefit from good story telling so that they notice the difference between spoken and written forms. Children are taught thoroughly to use a variety of cues when reading and have a good knowledge of the alphabet's names and sounds of letters. Most children are well on the way to conveying meaning through mark making and many make good attempts at writing recognisable words. Children have good speaking skills which are developed systematically through many

opportunities given for conversation. By the time children reach Year 1, their listening skills have improved and they are at the expected level for this aspect.

Mathematical development

72. The teaching of mathematics is predominantly very good. Occasionally it is excellent. As a result, children make very good progress in learning numbers, and overall good progress in all aspects of mathematics. Children's attainment is above the expected level nationally and sometimes well above. Children are very good at counting and recognising numbers to 20 correctly. They understand addition and counting backwards. Higher attaining children are well challenged and can add two numbers to seven and ten. Children's mathematical language is very good, particularly of positional direction. Most recognise and name accurately two-dimensional shapes, such as circle, triangle and square. In their creative modelling using bricks, blocks, ramps and toy vehicles, children correctly use the terms 'forwards', 'backwards', 'reversing', 'under', 'over', 'up' and 'down'. Teachers have recognised that children's pattern making and understanding of magnitude are weaker and have planned to rectify these aspects.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Teaching of this area is good so that above average standards on entry are maintained to above average attainment at the beginning of Year 1. Children have a thorough understanding of the seasons and the cycle of seeds and fruits. They have a good knowledge of materials in the home. Very good imaginative use is made of the role play area to increase children's knowledge of the Three Bears' breakfast, and how to write the address of their cottage. Their attempts at making wagons for the bears, out of construction kits, show a good understanding of how vehicles move and how big the chassis has to be to hold a teddy bear.

Physical development

74. Teaching in this area is good so that attainment is maintained at above the expected level at the end of the Foundation Stage. Good use is made of both halls for gymnastics and dance. Children travel lightly with good balance and move in a variety of ways, such as skipping, hopping and twisting, with good awareness of space. Children use wheeled toys effectively within the safe, enclosed outdoor area for these activities.

Creative development

75. Teaching in this area is good so that children's standards on entry, which are below expected levels, are improved through good learning and are in line with the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Children mix different colours carefully to make their paintings of their own houses look accurate. Their drawings of closely observed objects, and those from memory, are of a high standard. Children know a variety of songs and have satisfactory awareness of the effects of percussion instruments when played. Children make good use of the role play area and co-operate well to act out a narrative. Teachers plan to provide for further creative development through the outdoor area and this is identified and costed in the school's improvement plan for next term.

ENGLISH

76. Standards in English in the tests for seven year olds in 2000 were well above the national average, and well above those achieved by other similar schools. Standards in reading are especially strong and place the school in the top five per cent nationally. Standards in writing were well above the national average and above those of other similar schools. The performance of more able pupils in the 2000 writing tests did not quite match the very good results in other areas of the subject. The proportion reaching the higher level (Level 3) was only just above the national average and broadly in line with other similar schools. Test results have risen over the last four years in line with the national trend. Although girls achieve slightly higher standards than boys, the difference is no greater than that seen nationally. Inspection evidence reflects the test results.

77. When pupils enter the school, their listening skills are below average. Pupils are given frequent opportunities across the curriculum to take part in discussions and to practise skills in speaking and listening. Pupils make good progress and achieve standards well above average by the end of the key stage. All teachers provide clearly structured opportunities for speaking and listening within the literacy hour. They patiently insist on pupils' developing the basic skills needed for orderly discussions, and give consistent support and encouragement to promote confidence in taking turns and speaking clearly and audibly when addressing the class. In interviews with inspectors, pupils in Year 2 spoke with considerable confidence and panache, and used a wide vocabulary to describe their experiences in school.

78. The school gives reading a very high priority from the day pupils start school and this commitment is given tremendous support by parents. Pupils throughout the ability range quickly develop a good grasp of letter sounds and this helps them to tackle unfamiliar words. A particular feature in reading is the excellent attitudes that pupils have throughout the school. Inspectors talked to a large number of pupils about their reading and all pupils spoke with enthusiasm and pride about the books they had read. The excitement that books can generate was summed up by one Year 2 pupil who said, "I just love reading. As soon as I get home I zoom up the stairs with my book in my hand. I can't wait to get started." These exceptional attitudes owe much to the teachers and teaching assistants, who read stories with great skill and commitment, and ensure that a wide range of attractive books are always on display in each room. The school's superb library makes a very positive contribution to reading for all pupils. It is packed full of a wide range of colourful fiction and non fiction books, has a range of comfortable and inviting seats, and is enhanced by interesting displays, models and artefacts. Another major factor in the excellent progress in reading is the tremendous support given by parents. Pupils are expected to take their reading books home every day and parents are asked to fill in their child's 'reading diary' after listening to, or reading with, their child. This constant, repetitive practice underpins the excellent progress made over time.

79. Standards in writing are good and pupils make good progress. The school recognises that standards in writing lag behind those in reading, and that more able pupils in particular, need more opportunities to develop higher level skills. To tackle this, the school has focused this year on giving more time to pupils to be involved in extended writing tasks, and inspection evidence indicates that this strategy is already paying dividends. A strength of pupils' written work is the emphasis given to using complete, correctly structured sentences. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to write in a range of styles, including personal accounts, news, poems and letters, as well as writing about their work in subjects such as history. Pupils' accounts of a recent visit to a 'Victorian School' in Reading showed great thought and described life in such a school with feeling and wit, especially when they recalled the caning of a naughty child! The presentation of written work is very impressive; pupils show considerable pride in their work, and all work is done very neatly. Pupils are determined to spell words correctly and, although this is a commendable trait overall, it sometimes has a negative impact during independent writing sessions when the objective is to create and convey ideas. Some pupils spent far too much time searching for spellings in their own word books, in dictionaries and even spent some time with their hand up awaiting adult assistance

in order to spell a word correctly. The impact on their written work was that it lacked spontaneity and ended up rather stilted (but correctly spelt!). The subject co-ordinator recognises that, in order for more pupils to reach the higher level at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils need to develop more of a 'have a go' attitude to spellings in extended, personal writing sessions.

80. Standards in writing and spelling are well above average. From the time pupils start school, the agreed handwriting policy is strictly adhered to and high expectations are conveyed to pupils. The care and discipline with which pupils approach their work are impressive. Pupils always write the date in their best handwriting, underline it neatly with a ruler and attach their line guide carefully with paper clips.

81. English teaching is good. A characteristic of teaching is its consistency across the school. There were no unsatisfactory lessons; indeed, only one lesson observed was judged to be satisfactory. Of the remainder, over three-quarters were good, with the rest being very good. Several common strengths distinguish good teaching in the school and combine to promote good learning. All lessons use clear learning intentions which are shared with pupils at the start of the lesson. Often, teachers put the lesson in an easy to follow context by recapping on what was covered in the previous lesson. Teachers' planning makes good use of the structure of the literacy hour and enables pupils to experience a wide range of good quality texts. The management of pupils is excellent and all classes have a warm, friendly and purposeful atmosphere. Teachers' explanations are always clear and easy to understand and their speech is a good role model for pupils. This factor is especially important for the small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, who are effectively supported. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils have a range of interesting topics to stimulate written work and this leads to some impressive poetry on themes such as 'spring' and 'colours'. Teachers make very good use of computers to develop pupils' word processing skills. This has led to pupils in Year 2 producing high quality 'front pages' for imaginary newspapers, incorporating text and pictures.

82. Although the verbal feedback given to pupils about their work is very useful and often conveys what needs to be done next to improve further, the marking of pupils' work is variable. In some classes, the marking of written work does give pupils a detailed idea of the strengths and weaknesses of their work, but generally, marking consists of little more than simple comments such as 'well done'.

83. Teachers' records of pupils' progress are very good. A detailed record of each pupil's progress in all aspects of English is kept and this enables teachers to present work that matches the needs of each pupil.

84. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual education plans which are followed carefully and this results in good teaching which is well focused. Teaching assistants work very closely with teachers and support pupils very effectively. The work of such assistants is especially effective when pupils work on computers. In these sessions, pupils' vocabulary is extended through the use of games such as 'Granny's Garden', which pupils thoroughly enjoy.

85. The management of English is very good. The co-ordinator has a good grasp on the strengths of work in English and has high expectations of herself and her colleagues. This is best exemplified by her attitude to standards in writing; although they are above the national average, she is not satisfied and is working hard with colleagues to improve standards further. Teachers' plans are carefully monitored, and resources, which are very good, are superbly organised so that maximum use can be made of a wide range of high quality aids to learning. There is a good portfolio of assessed pupils' work. Standards are monitored and a demanding and ambitious action plan has been agreed with staff in the ongoing quest to maintain and, where possible, raise standards further.

86. Provision in English was described as very good in the previous inspection report. The school has succeeded in ensuring that such high standards have been maintained and that levels of attainment have continued to improve. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

87. The results of 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in mathematics show that pupils' attainment was well above the national averages of all schools. Compared with similar schools, test results were above the average levels for pupils at the end of Year 2. Taking trends over time, from 1996 to 2000, results show an upward trend in line with the national average. The performance of boys over three years, up to and including the year 2000, was better than the national averages and exceeded that of girls. The school's performance at the higher Level 3 was above the national average. Higher attainers perform better than other higher attainers nationally. Pupils in need of extra support are well provided for; their needs are identified early and they often reach their individual education targets, showing appropriate progress in learning. This is a very successful picture of pupils' attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 1. Since the previous inspection, when pupils' attainment was above the national average, there has been good improvement.

88. During the inspection, the standards observed in mathematics of the present pupils were well above the national averages by the end of Key Stage 1. At the beginning of the key stage, pupils' attainment is above the expected level. They make good progress in their learning of all the programmes of study for mathematics. The very good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. As a result, a significant majority have a very good knowledge of all the attainment targets of the National Curriculum for their age group.

89. In Year 1, a significant number of pupils recognise numbers to 100, they order tens and units to 100 accurately, and add two or three numbers together to 50. Many subtract a number from 20 confidently. They count in twos with confidence, recognise odd and even numbers, and have a high success rate in doubling numbers. Most two and three-dimensional shapes are labelled by pupils correctly. Pupils' handling of coinage is of a high standard.

90. By the end of Year 2, at least a third of pupils recognise and write numbers to 1000 and know what each digit in a three-digit number represents. They accurately count on in steps of 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10, and recognise two digit and three digit multiples of 2, 5 and 10. Most pupils estimate numbers to the nearest 10 and calculate correctly, adding and subtracting numbers to 100 or more. The majority know by heart the facts of the 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 multiplication tables. Most record money accurately in decimal notation. Pupils' problem solving is good and pupils show very good flexibility with numbers when solving problems and when investigating. Higher attaining pupils use all four operations to solve mathematical problems written in words. Pupils use standard metric units of length and mass carefully and accurately. They recognise items which are heavier or less than one kilogram in weight. Most read analogue time and neatly represent data in tables, graphs and charts.

91. Teaching is good overall and occasionally very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and give good emphasis in lessons to the principles set out in the strategy. They teach the basic skills of counting and recording most competently. Teachers carefully plan lessons together in year groups, so that all pupils throughout each year receive the same entitlement. Evaluation and ongoing assessment procedures are very good and recorded regularly. The methods and organisation teachers employ are highly efficient, such as the good emphasis on encouraging pupils' precise use of mathematical terms and the correct way to record calculations neatly and logically. Classrooms and displays are focused clearly in order to reinforce pupils' independence and their mathematical awareness. There are very good links

with other subjects, such as science and design and technology. The positive impact of good teaching ensures pupils' good progress in learning.

92. Teaching has a very good impact on pupils' attitudes to the learning of mathematics. Pupils are confident, willing to discuss their work and are conscientious. During lessons, behaviour is very good and the enthusiasm of pupils, particularly in practical activities, is very rewarding to observe. Relationships are excellent, so that pupils co-operate with each other, such as when sharing coinage. They have a high degree of independence when selecting apparatus to aid their written calculations. As a result, they make consistently good progress in their learning.

93. Pupils are managed well and teachers insist on high standards of behaviour. Teachers are adept at challenging pupils to think creatively about their tasks. Resources are very good, well organised and used to the maximum in order to secure pupils' understanding of the conservation of number, place value, and shape and space. Resources are matched well to each year's objectives in the National Numeracy Strategy. Computers are very much in use in mathematics lessons to reinforce learning and compile graphs. Individual targets printed in pupils' workbooks help them to overcome their difficulties. The teaching assistants and volunteers have a clear understanding of their roles and ensure that pupils are given a secure knowledge base and that pupils with special educational needs are well supported.

94. There is excellent leadership in the subject. The monitoring of the subject is ongoing to ensure that informative records and assessment sheets are passed on to the next teacher, and that the National Numeracy Strategy's objectives are consistently applied throughout all lessons. The school has a good portfolio of pupils' assessed work. A very efficient use of all staff, students and volunteers, frees teachers to work in more depth with smaller groups of pupils at a time. The subject of mathematics has a high profile in the school and it impacts well on pupils' social development. Since the previous inspection, the issue of the need to improve pupils' mathematical investigations and problem solving skills has been improved significantly. These aspects are now strengths.

SCIENCE

95. In 2000, teachers assessed science standards as very high at Level 2, the expected level of achievement, when compared with other schools nationally. At the higher Level 3, standards were well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, results at Level 2 were still very high, and were above average at Level 3. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of the present Year 2 pupils is well above average. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection, and has been brought about by consistently good teaching and detailed and effective planning, particularly for experimental and investigative science, which was an area identified as in need of improvement last time.

96. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of the parts of their body, and the need to stay healthy. Linked with design and technology, they plan and make healthy snacks and meals. They know which appliances use electricity, and that some heat up, give light, make sound, or move. They understand and can construct a simple circuit with battery, bulb and wires, and know that the bulb will not light if the circuit is broken. Pupils can identify a range of materials such as wood, metal, plastic and glass, and know that some are chosen for specific uses, like glass in a window and fabric for a jumper. They know that materials can be changed by heating. For example, they have made bread into toast and know that it can't be changed back, and they have melted ice into water. For this experiment, pupils were able to find out which area of the school was warmest by timing how long it took each ice cube to melt. Experimental and investigative work is used well in science. For example, with materials, pupils have tested for sinking or floating, magnetic or not, waterproof or not and when dealing with food, what happens when materials are heated. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to make the tests fair, and the factors that will lead to a fair test. All this has interested and excited pupils, and has been a contributory factor to their improved levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional

language are well supported and join in with all activities. Some of these pupils in Year 2 are withdrawn for science and given help in a smaller group, enabling them to make similar progress to all others.

97. Three-quarters of the teaching observed was at least good, and half was very good. There are a number of strengths that account for pupils' very good progress and these are:

- Detailed planning with clear learning objectives which are made known to pupils;
- Good questioning techniques which cause pupils to think carefully, thereby deepening their understanding;
- Well chosen activities which interest and excite pupils, and relate well to the learning objectives;
- Good use of experimental and investigative work, encouraging pupils to observe carefully and record their findings;
- Well organised and prepared lessons, with all apparatus, equipment and materials readily accessible;
- Very good pupil management with good relationships, leading to a purposeful working atmosphere;
- Very good attention to health and safety issues.

98. Areas which could be improved are:

- Developing pupils' independence by allowing them to take more responsibility for their work, particularly in experimental and investigative work;
- When pupils have been excited by their task, allowing them to get on with it without dampening their enthusiasm with too many stoppages;
- Being prepared to develop scientific aspects which arise, even when they are not in the plans. For example, when talking about safety with electricity, there was some confusion about the connection between water and electricity. A few moments spent on very basic ideas about conductors and insulators would have helped, and would have linked well with design and technology and the uses of certain materials.

99. The subject is very well led and managed. Planning is very well organised and comprehensive, ensuring a good coverage of all aspects. Plans and pupils' work indicate that topics, such as electricity and healthy eating, are re-visited at various times, and that at each visit, after a brief recap on what has been done before, pupils are taken further forward. However, care needs to be taken to ensure that pupils are taken forward, and do not simply repeat work done before. Assessment is an integral part of planning, and assessment procedures are mostly used well when planning future work. There is a good portfolio of pupils' assessed work. Good links with other subjects are utilised, particularly in English, art, design and technology. The subject manager monitors planning and pupils' achievements, including National Curriculum assessments, but monitoring of teaching and learning is still being developed. There is limited use of information and communication technology for such tasks as recording and communicating results of experiments and making a database with collected data. Some resources are very good, such as the quantity and quality of books on science in the library, but the school has insufficient information and communication technology software for science. There are new curriculum aspects being tackled, and the school now teaches science to a whole class rather than to groups. On occasions this means that there are insufficient resources available.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Provision for art and design is very good and pupils' attainment is well above the nationally expected levels by the age of seven years. This is an improvement from the previous inspection, when standards were above the expected level by the end of Key Stage 1. There is very good progress in pupils' learning. All pupils are well challenged in the subject of art and design so that educational inclusion is very good, and pupils with special educational needs often produce work in line with the nationally expected levels. Although

very little teaching of art was observable during the inspection, there is strong evidence that there is very good development of pupils' skills.

101. Strengths are in pupils' skills in drawing, from memory and of closely observed natural and man-made objects. Colour mixing of paints is of a high standard. Paintings show clean lines, bold expression and good perspective. Interesting tasks are given to pupils. There is very good use of the work of well known artists. Teachers ensure that lively, colourful displays are interactive and educational. There are very good links with other subjects being taught and, as a result, pupils' learning is meaningful.

102. By the end of Year 2, pupils show good progress and maturity in interpreting the style of Matisse, Mondrian and Pollock. Some of this work is computer generated art, depicting abstract designs. Monoprints of flowers against a single colour background, show good co-ordination through a traced outline drawn freehand. Art linked to a topic about the Victorian era is of a large scale collage of paper and fabric, and shows an interesting feature of the backview of pupils and their teacher, a bespectacled, black gowned school mistress facing her class. Around the school, pupils have cleverly illustrated a timeline of key events in eras of English history up to 2000. Shoe designs of roller blades and pastel and charcoal drawings of natural objects show remarkable accuracy of detail by pupils aged seven.

103. At Year 1, pupils have created collages of resistant and malleable materials to depict objects and vehicles of the future, showing a high degree of imagination. Their closely observed black and white drawings of bicycles and carefully represented spokes in bicycle wheels reflect much maturity and skill in shading and accuracy. Silhouettes of trees on single colour backgrounds, painted Japanese style with black, watered paint, are rarely seen to such a standard in pupils as young as Year 1.

104. Pupils' present and past work reflects very good, and occasionally excellent, teaching which ensures very good learning. There is very good use of reproduction posters of famous artists' work to initiate perceptive understanding of the artists' mood and style. As a result, pupils make good progress in abstract designs and in the careful application of paint and shading. Teachers ensure very good links with literature, environmental and physical science, physical education and history: for example pupils' paper collages of insects and butterflies and circular seasonal pictures over the year. Teachers ensure very high standards in large scale collaborative wall friezes: for example, pupils' creation of large, life size figures in the school's hall on the theme of 'Ways we move in PE', shows imaginative use of rolled newspapers for 'ropes' and 'ladders' to 'climb'. All the figures, dressed in gym kit, demonstrate movements of climbing, stretching, balancing, rolling, turning, crawling and twisting. Pupils are often observed interacting with such lively, imaginative displays.

105. Teaching is overall very good. The impact of the very good teaching and planning on pupils' attitudes and behaviour is positive. Pupils have very enthusiastic attitudes to the subject of art and design. They express their emotional responses imaginatively. They are attentive, ask perceptive questions, and even very young pupils are independent in choosing materials and colour. Most show good pride in their finished works and talk animatedly about how they were created.

106. Leadership in art is excellent. A careful progression of pupils' skills has been planned for over six terms through a broad range of media. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' art and design standards closely. A good portfolio of samples of selected pupils' work reflects the yearly programmes of study for art and design, which ensures a secure progression of skills. All staff work very hard to make interesting displays linked to the annual curriculum. Art and design is valued throughout the school as an enlightening activity to communicate ideas and emotions in the visual form. The subject makes a highly effective contribution to pupils' spiritual and personal development, and as an enrichment to other subjects.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. The school teaches some subjects in blocks of time, rather than for a short period each week. For this reason, it was not possible to observe any design and technology lessons during the inspection week. However, scrutiny of work and talking to pupils about what they have done, indicate that pupils' work at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with standards generally seen for pupils of this age, which is similar to the standards seen during the previous inspection.

108. Younger pupils gain a lot of valuable experience by using construction kits. They are very proud of the models they make, and are keen to try out those with wheels. When designing, pupils use pictures to develop and communicate their ideas. For example when they designed a waterproof hat, and a vehicle with moving wheels, they drew pictures of their designs first. With the hat, they selected the material they wanted to use, and were later able to test how waterproof it really was. These were good links with the science curriculum. Similarly, valuable experimental work was done after pupils had made their vehicles when they tested to see how far they would go. They were able to discuss why some went further than others, and could make suggestions about how they would change the design next time. Pupils have opportunities to use a range of materials. Food technology is addressed well and good use is made of the food technology room for preparing and cooking food. Activities range from designing and making a healthy snack using fruit, to mixing the ingredients and making biscuits. Pupils use a range of tools, mostly for cutting and joining, including the use of a saw when cutting axles for vehicles.

109. The subject is well managed, with comprehensive planning and appropriate assessment procedures in place. Good curriculum links are made, particularly with science and art. There is a good portfolio of pupils' assessed work. The co-ordinator has formal and informal discussions with other teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that everybody knows how to approach each topic. The good involvement of teaching assistants, and sometimes parents, enables pupils to receive extra help and supervision, thus having a positive impact on learning. The areas where improvement could be made in pupils' work are: increasing the use of information and communication technology when developing design ideas; and employing simple finishing techniques to improve their products' appearance.

GEOGRAPHY

110. The school teaches some subjects in blocks of time rather than for a short period each week. For this reason, it was only possible to observe one geography lesson during the inspection week. However, additional evidence from talking to teachers and looking at their plans, talking to pupils, and scrutinising their work, indicates that pupils' work at the end of Key Stage 1 is above the standards generally seen for those of this age. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The previous weakness in providing opportunities to extend the more able pupils has been resolved, partly through more detailed planning, and partly through the identification of higher attaining pupils and a greater awareness of their needs.

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are able to express their views about the local environment. For example, they visited the local playground that had been vandalised, and were keen to make suggestions for improving it. They produce maps and plans using appropriate keys, such as their 'Treasure Island' maps. The travels of Barnaby Bear have helped pupils to recognise how faraway places compare with their own locality. In particular, some good work was produced on Malaysia, where pupils used books, photographs and the Internet to find out a number of similarities and differences with England, the weather being one of the most noticeable! Fieldwork skills are developed during investigations outside the classroom: for example when Year 1 pupils give clues on how to find their 'Secret Place'. Good attention is given to correct geographical vocabulary, and key words are identified in planning. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are included in all activities and are given extra support where needed, particularly with the recording aspects.

112. In the only geography lesson observable, teaching was good. Scrutiny of teachers' plans and assessments, and scrutiny of pupils' work, indicate that most teaching is likely to be at this good standard. Planning is thorough and comprehensive. It clearly indicates lesson objectives and assessment opportunities. Questioning is used effectively to encourage pupils to think about their tasks. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the work to be covered, and have high expectations of their pupils. Pupils are well managed, with good organisation and control, and resources well prepared and used. Pupils listen attentively and settle quickly to their written tasks.

113. The subject is very effectively managed. The policy and programmes of study have been updated, and provide a very good basis from which year groups can make their lesson plans. This means that there is equality of opportunity across the year, and that pupils are able to build upon the knowledge, skills and understanding they have acquired in earlier lessons. A portfolio of work is being developed which provides useful indications of work covered and levels of attainment, although more detailed annotation would make this even more useful. Monitoring of plans and pupils' work is thorough, although monitoring of teaching and learning is still being developed. Whilst some use is made of information and communication technology, this area too, is still being developed.

HISTORY

114. As in the previous inspection, pupils' standards of attainment in history, by the end of the key stage, continue to be above national expectations and pupils continue to make good progress. They have a good knowledge of the passage of time. Pupils sequence events and use appropriate words and phrases when talking about the past. A group of pupils enthusiastically described how they made their timeline and focused on particular events linked to their present history focus and earlier projects.

115. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good and mark an improvement from the previous inspection. Pupils are keen to talk about their knowledge of past and present when discussing Victorian artefacts. They understand why events happened and the consequences of decisions taken by people who lived in the past. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a good knowledge that transport changes were significant in Victorian times, and have a very good understanding of chronology.

116. Pupils make good progress through the key stage. They learn to use books and pictures to research information about the past. They gain information about history through the use of varied artefacts and are beginning to look critically for clues. Pupils' visit to a 'Victorian School' in Reading gives them the opportunity to experience life as a child in Victorian times. The quality of work and display indicates this is a very valuable experience. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language make good progress and are well supported. The more able are suitably challenged and produce high quality work.

117. From the lessons observed during the inspection, teachers' planning and discussions, and the standard of pupils' work, the quality of teaching ranges from good to excellent, this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Planning is appropriately integrated into topic blocks and teachers make good use of pupils' own experiences to promote an understanding of how things change over time. The best teaching skilfully uses a range of probing questions to encourage children to think carefully, using historical evidence to back points of view.

118. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a good overview of history and there are clear plans to implement further use of information technology to enhance learning. The development of pupils' skills is systematically planned for and there are good assessment systems in place for evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum and of pupils' ongoing learning. A high standard of resources, including photographs, books and artefacts

has been maintained. There is a useful portfolio of levelled work which clearly reflects pupils' developing knowledge and skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

119. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. This is mainly as a result of the wide range of opportunities that pupils have for experiencing the different aspects of the subject. Year 2 pupils are able to programme a moving toy and design their own 'front pages' for an imaginary magazine, including headlines and pictures. Their designs are enhanced by the use of various fonts and different colours. Pupils are able to organise information which they then represent in colourful graphs. For example, pupils collected information about themselves, including data about age, height and eye colour, and then used the computer to illustrate this information in an easily understood format. A particular strength of work in this subject is in word processing. Pupils are adept at changing letter sizes and fonts and are able to present their work in a variety of styles. They have a good understanding of the keyboard and use terms such as 'caps lock', 'backspace' and 'delete' with confidence.

120. Although no actual lessons were observable during the inspection, an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' plans, as well as discussions with pupils, indicate that teaching over time is at least satisfactory. Teachers work in close collaboration with teaching assistants and most of the work observed during the inspection consisted of small groups working outside the classroom under the supervision of teaching assistants. These sessions are very effective indeed in giving pupils firsthand experience of computers and provide a great deal of practice in developing basic skills. However, they are less effective in teaching pupils new skills, or on building on skills that individual pupils demonstrate during the lesson. Many of the lessons observed involved pupils using a program called 'Granny's Garden'. This proved very popular as it requires pupils to read instructions on the screen and answer questions and make choices in order to solve problems. It is effective in developing pupils' reading and writing skills and provides useful keyboard experience as pupils type in their responses, but does little to improve pupils' skills in 'modelling' within an information and communication technology programme of study.

121. A strength of teaching is the assessments that are made of pupils' progress as they move through the school. This enables teachers to develop a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of each pupil and to provide work that is well matched to individual needs.

122. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support work in other subjects. Apart from the effective use of word processing to support pupils' written work, computers are used to develop the graphical representation of information in mathematics lessons. A 'music explorer' program enables pupils to use a keyboard to compose their own tunes, and the Internet was used to support pupils' investigations into Malaysia as part of their geography work.

123. The subject is well led by an effective ICT co-ordinator. The school has a thorough scheme of work that provides useful guidance to teachers in their planning. The practice of teachers in each year group planning together is effective in ensuring that pupils in different classes are provided with the same range of learning opportunities. The co-ordinator has collated a very useful portfolio of pupils' work that illustrates work in different aspects of the subject, as well as indicating the standards required to reach the different levels of the National Curriculum. The school has worked hard to improve resources, the range of which has improved since the last inspection. Resources are now judged to be satisfactory. The school has used funds from national initiatives sensibly and plans are presently in place to make more use of the Internet as well as to use computers to improve record keeping in the library.

124. Overall, the school has made good progress in this subject since the previous inspection.

MUSIC

125. Pupils enjoy their music making activities and attain standards above those expected for pupils of this age. In particular, they sing with enthusiasm and a good deal of control. They keep well in time and well in tune. They know a number of songs by heart, many of which involve counting, clapping, or other actions. They perform these particularly well, usually managing to clap on the beat in the right places. Pupils handle musical instruments with a great deal of care, and play them sensibly and sensitively. They work very well in small groups, rehearsing their pieces and performing them competently to others. They are developing a good understanding of elements of music such as tempo, and can sing and play at different speeds. They recognise that different symbols can be used to represent sounds, and when composing, create their own symbols. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language take full part in all activities and achieve as well as other pupils.

126. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. The school is fortunate to have the services of a specialist teacher who takes every class once each week. These music lessons are of good quality, sometimes very good, and pupils are provided with rich musical experiences in performing, composing, listening and appraising. Lessons usually contain a variety of activities that interest and motivate pupils. The teacher's very good musical knowledge and understanding enable her to challenge pupils appropriately, thus extending their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils are well managed and kept well on task with good teacher pupil interaction. Very occasionally, the pace of the lesson is too slow, and opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their skills in playing instruments. Apart from the specialist teaching, all pupils have another music lesson where they practise their singing. Teaching here is good, and pupils are taught to sing a variety of songs, many of them requiring actions and clapping. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these lively sessions and make good progress with their singing. However, when a whole session is taken with no new material being learned, progress is not as good as it could be. When teaching new songs, thought should be given to using an overhead projector, on some occasions, to enable the older pupils to use their literacy skills of reading.

127. The subject is soundly led and managed, although inevitably, with the specialist teacher, who is the subject co-ordinator, in school only once each week, there are difficulties in liaison with other teachers. Some attempts are made at providing follow up work, as was seen with the reception children. However, very often, lessons are taught in isolation with little or no follow up, thus restricting the value to pupils and therefore their progress. Fortunately, the lessons the pupils are receiving are of good quality, enabling them to achieve good standards. The curriculum is carefully thought out and provides pupils with a good variety of activities appropriately linked to the National Curriculum. A simple assessment scheme enables teachers to indicate pupils who have not achieved the lesson objectives, or those who have exceeded them. A good portfolio of photographs of musical activities has been compiled. There are very good musical resources, with good quality percussion instruments. These are well stored and labelled, and made easily accessible for pupils during lessons. Pupils' attainment, the quality of teaching, and the management of the subject, are all very similar to the judgements in the last report.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. During the inspection it was only possible to observe two physical education lessons, a dance lesson in Year 1 and a games lesson in Year 2. This was partly because many lessons are timetabled for Friday, after the end of the inspection, and because some lessons during the inspection were postponed to accommodate a visiting storyteller.

129. In both lessons, standards of attainment were higher than normally seen from this age group. In dance, pupils are developing their awareness of space very well indeed and move with ease and confidence. They balance lightly on their toes and skip and march in time to

the music. Facial expressions are very good and reflect the mood of the music and movement. In games, pupils throw and catch balls and beanbags with good technique, and some more able pupils have already developed the skill of moving as they throw and catch a ball. Batting skills are good as pupils demonstrate both a good stance as well as a correct grip. More able pupils show good anticipation and timing when striking the ball.

130. The teaching observed in the two lessons was good. Lessons are well planned, are action packed and give pupils plenty of opportunities to develop their skills. Effective use is made of pupil demonstration to show others an impressive performance. Teachers give pupils effective, evaluative feedback so that they can develop a sense of what they need to do to improve further. In both lessons, the management of pupils was very good. The excellent attitude of pupils of all abilities is a feature of work in this subject. Teachers keep detailed records about the progress of every pupil and this enables the work presented to be matched to the different needs of individual pupils.

131. The subject is well led by an effective subject co-ordinator. She has developed a very useful scheme of work that tracks the development of skills throughout the school in gymnastics, dance and games. She has produced a useful portfolio of photographs of pupils at work to illustrate different aspects of the work to be covered. The monitoring of plans ensures consistency so that pupils receive the same experiences regardless of which class they are in. The subject is well resourced and teachers and their assistants make very good use of resources in lessons.

132. The good overall provision reflects a very similar picture to that described in the previous inspection report.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. Evidence obtained from lesson observations, together with work from pupils' books and on display, review of planning and discussions with teachers and pupils, confirm that attainment at the end of the key stage is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Good progress in learning and good provision overall has been maintained since the previous inspection.

134. In Year 1, pupils develop an awareness of Christianity through the stories they hear about the life of Jesus. They are familiar with the major events of the church year of Harvest, Christmas and Easter. This is developed in Year 2, with pupils' writing showing good progression in their extended writing of Holy Week. Pupils sensitively explore, through discussion and written work, values around trust and appreciation. Pupils develop very good understanding of citizenship by reflecting upon their own set of class rules and the school's 'golden rules', and participating in discussions which effectively promote pupils' moral development. Pupils are given the opportunity for quiet reflection and 'thinking time' during collective worship and lessons, whilst in circle time⁵ they are encouraged to express their feelings and listen to each other's point of view. Pupils learn of the values and traditions of both Christian and non-Christian faiths, such as studying Diwali and Holi from the Hindu faith.

135. As in the previous inspection, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, continue to make good progress in religious education. The more able are suitably challenged to think and express their feelings around religious stories. Sufficient time is allotted to the subject and teachers implement the agreed detailed scheme in a consistent manner. Teachers are confident teaching religious education and their subject knowledge is good in all areas of the scheme. Pupils' work is carefully and sensitively presented both in books and on display in the classroom and corridors. It is of consistent high quality. There are good planned opportunities across the curriculum to

⁵ In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle, and through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues that concern all of them.

promote pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures, including a special Hindu wedding ceremony performed for the children.

136. Pupils have positive attitudes towards religious education. They are interested in the stories they hear and are very eager to contribute their ideas. Pupils make thoughtful and considered contributions to discussions in lessons and circle time.

137. The quality of teaching is good from the small number of lessons observed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In the most successful lessons, teachers' subject knowledge, well structured planning, good pace and the valuing of pupils' ideas have a positive impact on attainment. Teachers within the year group share the planning and are confident about teaching the full range of topics. Work is regularly marked but would benefit further from a constructive future learning focus or progress comments being included.

138. The co-ordinator has maintained a good scheme of work and this is monitored and amended by the year group leaders during implementation. The co-ordinator has built up a varied range of good quality resources and artefacts for both the teaching of Christianity and the Hindu faiths. These include photographs, books, artefacts and posters; they are well catalogued and stored. They promote good learning and progress. The resources for collective worship themes are comprehensive and varied. There is good contact with the local Anglican church to support pupils' learning, and a variety of speakers visit the school to bring alive the focus. Cross-curricular links are good with teachers taking opportunities to explore and discuss the awe of nature in science lessons when for example pupils are making close observations under the microscope. The new co-ordinator has identified the potential positive impact of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning further. A useful school portfolio to illustrate pupils' progress in the acquisition of knowledge and skills has been developed.