

INSPECTION REPORT

BOTLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southampton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116273

Headteacher: Sian Tomlin

Reporting inspector: Brian Gosling
22453

Dates of inspection: 4 – 7 February 2002

Inspection number: 221599

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: 52 High Street
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Alison Stubbs

Date of previous inspection: February 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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22453	Brian Gosling	Registered inspector	Mathematics History Information and communication technology Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements
19419	Susan Boyle	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21034	Stewart Smith	Team inspector	English Geography Physical education English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18393	Joy Donovan	Team inspector	Art and design Music Foundation Stage Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
30705	Graham Stephens	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
14906	Brian Male	Team inspector		Teaching assistant support

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Botley Primary School is situated in the village of Botley close to Southampton and is larger than most primary schools. There are 282 pupils: 155 boys and 127 girls. Eight pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and these eight pupils have English as an additional language. There are no travellers or refugees. Thirteen per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. There is an above average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, whilst the proportion of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is below average. When children begin at the school, their attainment is variable but below the county average overall.

There have been significant changes since the last inspection. Five teachers have joined the staff, including the deputy headteacher, who is the assessment manager, and the planning of the curriculum has been significantly improved. The school no longer uses the old Victorian building, which was opened in 1856, following the extensive building works, and the accommodation now offers the school many good learning opportunities on a single site.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Botley Primary is a good school that provides an effective education for its pupils. When they start school, children's attainment is below average overall and, by the time they leave the school, they achieve well in all subjects and very well in English, physical education and religious education. This is because of the quality of teaching, which is good throughout the school. The very good leadership has established effective teamwork to improve the range and relevance of the curriculum and teaching. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now at least satisfactory in all subjects.
- Pupils are happy and they behave well. They have very positive attitudes to school.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and very effective links are established between the different subjects of the National Curriculum.
- The procedures for using assessment to plan lessons are highly effective.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development, which is very good for their moral and social development. The school cares well for its pupils.
- The school is led and managed very well. All staff work together very well as a team that is committed to school improvement.
- Parents have an extremely high regard for the work of the school and their support for the school is outstanding.

What could be improved

- The established role of subject leaders does not provide all of them with the opportunity to monitor the teaching of their subjects.
- The outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage is not good enough.
- Attendance is well below the national average due to the extended holidays taken by some families during term time.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 2000. Since then it school has secured very good improvement that is reflected in all aspects of its work.

The school has addressed with commitment and enthusiasm the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection report. The curriculum has been developed very effectively: statutory requirements are met fully, assessment procedures are used very well to guide the planning of the curriculum, schemes of work have been developed that clearly identify links between subjects, and resources for learning have been improved. The quality of teaching has improved by securing good, new appointments to the school, by careful monitoring of teaching and by providing training and support within the school. Teachers have developed high expectations of pupils, and the quality and presentation of their work have improved greatly. Consequently, standards have improved in virtually all subjects since the last inspection.

Furthermore, the learning environment has greatly improved following the addition of new accommodation on a single school site. The management structure of the school has developed and is now very effective in monitoring the work of the school and leading colleagues in securing improvements. The school has developed very effective procedures to assess pupils' learning which are used well to guide the planning of work for pupils. Alongside the detailed setting of targets for pupils' progress, this is having a significant impact on the rapidly improving standards achieved. The school has improved so much that it is virtually unrecognisable from that depicted in the last inspection report and shows good capacity to improve further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	C	B	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	D	D	E	
Science	C	A	C	C	

The table shows that, although standards are satisfactory or better in English and science, they are not high enough in mathematics. Nevertheless, the school's detailed records show that most of these pupils had made the nationally expected progress since Year 2 and some made much greater progress. The school has determined to raise standards in all subjects and mathematics in particular. This is being achieved through the detailed monitoring of pupils' progress and the careful planning of their next stage of learning. The evidence of the inspection is that this is having the desired effect, and steady but secure improvements are being made. Most pupils are now attaining the nationally expected standards in mathematics and many are exceeding them. At the end of Year 2 in 2001 the school's results were close

to the average in writing but below the average in reading and mathematics. This group of pupils had an unusually high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and there had been disruptions caused by long-term staff absence. Nevertheless, the good systems that the school has put in place are ensuring that the pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are making suitable and increasing progress.

The school has set challenging targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics that are above the national average, and the indications are that it is likely to achieve these targets. Pupils are set by ability for lessons in English and mathematics in all year groups. The school has recognised the importance of improving its test results as the trend in its results is currently below the national trend. The significant improvements that the school has made in its leadership and management, the planning of the curriculum and the quality of teaching ensure that pupils achieve suitably in all subjects and well in English, religious education and physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to learn. They maintain concentration on their tasks very well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, overall. The behaviour of many pupils is very good. They are courteous and friendly, and they work and play together well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are very responsible, they work together well and they enjoy good relationships.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The attendance rate is well below the national average. This is due to the extended holidays taken during the school year by some families.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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.

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. All lessons seen in the Foundation Stage were good or very good, and in Years 1 to 2 teaching was good or very good in almost two thirds of the lessons seen. In Years 3 to 6 more than two thirds were good or excellent, with almost one third very good or better. Some lessons seen with the oldest pupils were excellent.

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. This has been achieved through a number of measures that include a good programme of professional development, the organisation of teachers into teams with a team leader to monitor and guide

planning and assessment, and a very good system to monitor pupils' learning. This assessment is used very effectively to plan lessons that carefully match the level of difficulty within the activity to pupils' individual learning needs, which ensures that they achieve learning objectives securely before moving on to the next stage of learning. The planning for every lesson notes the previous learning of each pupil and this is particularly effective in the teaching of English and mathematics, where the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and securely. By this method the school ensures that the needs of all pupils are met. Consequently, they respond well to lessons and have very positive attitudes because the tasks they are given are achievable and also challenging. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils, their work shows a high degree of effort and they take pride in presenting it well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced, and the school has established very effective links between the different subjects of the National Curriculum. Statutory requirements are met fully.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes suitable provision for these pupils and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are a few pupils with English as an additional language and their progress is similar to the other pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development and good provision for their spiritual development. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Assessment procedures are excellent and teachers use these assessments very effectively in planning the next stage of learning for each of the pupils in their class.

The school is highly effective in its work in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership of the school that is highly effective. She is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and the leadership and management team. There is a clear commitment to school improvement by all members of the staff, who work together very effectively as a team. Team leaders are effective in guiding and monitoring the work of a group of teachers. The role of subject leaders has

	been developed well, but not all of them have the opportunity to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. Statutory requirements are met fully and the governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses that enable them to play an active role in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance well. All teachers in management positions have a clear understanding of what works well, and effective action is taken to secure improvements where they are needed.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is very effective in supporting educational priorities, and the principles of best value are applied well.

The school's accommodation is very good following the recent building works. There are an appropriate number of teachers and a good number of teaching assistants. The resources for learning are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
Parents have a very high regard for all areas of the work of the school. In particular, all parents who expressed an opinion agreed that the school is well led and managed, the teaching is good, their children make good progress and they feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or concerns. This is very high praise indeed.	There are no significant areas of concern for parents.

Inspectors note the high regard that parents have for the work of the school and agree that their views are well founded.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children start at the school, their attainment is variable but the school's detailed records show that it is below the county average overall. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and, by the time they enter Year 1, most children attain the Early Learning Goals¹ for their age.
2. The school's results² in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were close to the national average in writing but below the national average in reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained the nationally expected Level 2³ was close to the national average in mathematics and science but below the national average in reading and writing. Similar results are found when a comparison is made with schools that have pupils from similar backgrounds. Not enough pupils attained the higher Level 3 in each subject. These results are not high enough. However, this group of pupils contained a large proportion (40 per cent) with special educational needs and their learning had been disrupted by long-term staff absence.
3. At the end of Year 6 in 2001 the school's results in the national tests were above the national average in English and close to this average in science, but they were below the national average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained the nationally expected Level 4 was close to the national average in English, below the national average in mathematics and well above the national average in science. However, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 was well above the national average in English, close to the national average in science but, again, below the national average in mathematics. This indicates that, although standards are good in English and satisfactory in science, they are too low in mathematics. The school recognises this and is committed to raising standards in all subjects. However, the school tracks pupils' attainment through the school in detailed records. These show that almost all pupils in Year 6 in 2001 made the nationally expected

¹ On Early Learning Goals: QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1 in six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; personal social and emotional development; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development. The Foundation Stage continues until pupils enter Year 1, when they begin Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

² On the school's results: An average points score provides schools with a single statistic with which to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools. At Key Stage 1, the National Curriculum levels of attainment are given a score; for example, in mathematics Level 1=9 points and Level 2=15 points, and so on. The average test score achieved by a school is calculated by adding up all the scores achieved by the pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. These comparisons are the ones used in the figures printed in the summary of the report. When the percentage of pupils attaining a particular level is compared to that in other schools, this is stated clearly in the text.

³ On Levels: The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that, by the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

progress of two levels of the National Curriculum since Year 2 and a few pupils made better progress than this. Nevertheless, the attainment of pupils in mathematics and science was not as good as that of pupils in schools that had similar results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1997, although it was better than pupils in those schools in English. This indicates that the quality of teaching and learning has not been good enough throughout previous years in mathematics and science.

4. There are very positive signs of improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in the school. The careful way that the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented ensures that they are effective. Teachers have revised their long-term plans and established good links with other subjects in order for pupils to develop and improve their basic skills. The new buildings and improved resources offer better opportunities for learning, but the greatest impact is being made by the very skilful use of the assessment of pupils' learning to inform future planning. This ensures that pupils' learning is organised systematically and that they are very secure in their knowledge and understanding before moving on to new learning, which, because it is based on secure foundations, is effectively achieved. The staff of the school has worked very hard as a committed team to establish this new system and it is already showing benefits for pupils' learning.
5. These new procedures in planning and assessing pupils' learning are helping to raise standards, which the inspection found to be satisfactory in mathematics and science and good in English in both key stages. Their continued use is necessary to raise standards further as the trend in the school's results to 2001 was below the national trend. Most pupils are now attaining the standards expected of pupils of their age nationally, and many are exceeding them.
6. The school is committed to the principle of inclusion for all pupils. It keeps a list of gifted and talented pupils, some of whom show a particular aptitude for mathematics, and teachers are aware of who they are. A detailed record is kept of the progress made by each individual pupil from teachers' records and a careful analysis of national test results. The school has introduced optional tests at the end of each year to inform this analysis. As a result, it can be seen that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are making at least satisfactory progress. The relative attainment of boys and girls varies from year to year and shows no clear pattern. The school has noticed the relatively greater use of the computer suite at lunchtimes by boys and is trying to increase its use by girls.
7. The school sets targets for individual pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. It also sets targets for teaching groups in English and mathematics, and for year groups in reading, writing and number. These targets are often clearly visible in classrooms. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are now making good progress. The arrangements for assessing and monitoring attainment and progress in the school are very good and are reflected in the work of pupils with special educational needs. Annual reviews are detailed and identify progress and future targets for the pupils.
8. Standards have improved in all of the non-core subjects since the last inspection, although no judgement was made on standards in music in the last inspection report. By the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment is good in religious education and physical education. Standards are satisfactory in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music. Standards are no longer unsatisfactory in any subject.

9. The attainment of children when they start school is currently below the county average. However, their attainment has not always been this low and was average at the time of the last inspection. Consequently, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and, by the time they leave the school, they achieve well in English, religious education and physical education. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in all other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' have very good attitudes to school. They like coming to school and enjoy their lessons. At the start of the day they come into classrooms and expect to settle down to work. In this, they have developed very good working habits. Pupils work particularly well in the part of the lesson where they are expected to complete a task that has been set by the teacher. At these times they show great commitment by concentrating well and trying hard, and, when they find the task difficult, by sustaining their effort.
11. Pupils' behaviour is generally good, although it does vary. It is never less than satisfactory, but in many lessons it is very good and sometimes it is excellent. As pupils move around the school they behave well and are often courteous, showing this by opening doors and standing aside respectfully for adults. Pupils are often quite fidgety in assembly and they sometimes take advantage of the noise coming from the kitchen to chatter to each other.
12. At the time of the previous inspection the number of pupils excluded from school for fixed-term periods was well above the national average. Behaviour has improved since the previous inspection, and the number of exclusions has declined steadily over the past two years. There were five exclusions last year, but there have been no exclusions since the start of the present school year.
13. Pupils' personal development and relationships are good. They generally get on well with each other. They are especially good at working together in lessons and they cooperate well in these situations. The introduction of playground equipment has encouraged pupils to play together and to share, and they generally do this well with few disagreements. Pupils show great sensitivity and care towards those who have physical disabilities. They like their teachers and relate well to adults. They happily talk to adults about their school and feel valued members of the school. Pupils volunteer for jobs around the school and carry out their responsibilities well.
14. Attendance levels at the school are unsatisfactory because attendance is well below the national average and unauthorised absence is well above the national average. These figures represent a fall in attendance and a rise in unauthorised absence since the last inspection. The reason for this is that parents are increasingly taking their children on holiday during term time, and sometimes for extended holidays.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage, is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the attention given to the quality of teaching in all subjects, particularly lesson preparation and daily assessment that ensures that work is well matched to the ability and needs of the pupils. The headteacher, who returned to her post after a long period of absence immediately before the last inspection, has worked together with senior staff to

engender a good team spirit within the school and all members of staff have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching. They have been well supported by the local education authority and have attended appropriate training courses that have also had a positive impact. Almost two thirds of the lessons observed were good or better and one lesson in four was very good or better. No lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. All lessons seen in the Foundation Stage were good or very good and, in Years 1 to 2, teaching was good or very good in almost two thirds of the lessons seen. In Years 3 to 6, more than two thirds were good or better, with almost one third very good or better. Some lessons seen with the oldest pupils were excellent. The detailed examination of pupils' work confirmed that the quality of teaching observed was a true reflection of what is normally found in the school, with an emphasis on the consolidation of understanding in mathematics given a high priority. The quality of teaching is consistent across year groups and all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well by the teaching assistants and they also benefit from good teaching.

16. The strengths of teaching observed in the school are:
 - schemes of work, with useful cross-curricular links, that support planning well;
 - useful ongoing assessment that informs detailed day-to-day planning, ensuring that the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are met;
 - very good monitoring and support, especially in literacy and numeracy;
 - high expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' work;
 - good marking of pupils' work that shows them how to improve and is closely linked to their targets;
 - teaching assistants that are well trained and effective;
 - the good relationships between pupils and teachers.

17. Since the last inspection, schemes of work have been reviewed and cross-curricular links explored fully. This enables teachers to plan in great detail, making the curriculum interesting and relevant for the pupils. For example, in Year 3/4 classes, under the theme 'Grand Prix', pupils experience teaching in literacy, mathematics, design and technology, art and design, and science. This work is well planned to ensure good teaching and effective learning opportunities, many of which are based on practical activities that involve and motivate all pupils. Teachers are establishing higher expectations of pupils' work and, as a result, the quality and presentation of their work have improved greatly since the last inspection.

18. Teachers use daily assessments very effectively not only to find out what pupils already know, but also to ensure that subsequent lessons build upon their existing knowledge. This is one of the major strengths of the good teaching in the school. Most lessons begin with a review of previous learning, and the current learning objective is then shared with the pupils, giving them a clear focus for the lesson. At the end of lessons pupils review with the teacher what they have learned. For example, at the end of a science lesson a pupil in Year 3 explained that, 'Friction is a force that slows things down and when we turned our bubble wrap over there was too much friction and our car wouldn't roll'. All teachers fully and consistently implement the marking policy. Marking is of a consistently high quality and supports pupils' knowledge of their own progress. Pupils know and use the marking symbols in their books, which are linked to their own target cards.

19. In the most effective lessons teachers articulate their words clearly and use, and encourage the pupils to use, an appropriate subject vocabulary. For example, at the beginning of a successful mathematics lesson the teacher asked the pupils to explain

the meaning of the word 'properties'. Anticipating that the Year 3 pupils involved might find this a difficult word to describe, the teacher had prepared clear explanations that she placed on the board as a focus for discussion. As a result, the pupils used the word confidently as they proceeded to classify and describe shapes. Teaching is less effective where explanations are too long and complicated, causing the pupils to lose interest and slowing the pace of the lesson, or where the teacher's explanation does not use the appropriate vocabulary, as in a science lesson where the teacher referred to an iceberg that 'shrank'.

20. Teachers' management skills are good and they are usually positive in their comments, adopting a friendly and supportive style. This, combined with skilful questioning pitched appropriately to meet the needs of individual pupils, creates a positive learning ethos where pupils are not inhibited about asking for clarification if necessary and where they are keen to do well. For example, in Year 1 the teacher says, 'You're listening so well that this afternoon we're all going to be scientists. They are people who look closely, measure, ask questions and find answers'. The pupils respond with a sharp intake of breath, excited and motivated at the prospect of their new role as scientists. In a Year 2 class, the teacher says, 'Well done! Look, everyone! He's got straight on with his work', and most of the class copy this example immediately. The management of pupils is less successful when it is negative, with the emphasis on sanctions rather than on rewarding the positive aspects of their behaviour.
21. The inspection of this school included a focused view of the contribution of teaching assistants to teaching and learning in literacy and mathematics. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to both literacy and numeracy across the school. The quality of teaching support is good overall and sometimes very good. Teaching assistants have good relationships with the pupils and they are very effective at managing behaviour. They are clear in their explanations and have a good understanding of the learning objectives of the lessons in which they are involved. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning by ensuring that concentration is sustained and that pupils have the specific support that they need to make progress. The support that pupils receive from teaching assistants enables them to experience success and this raises their self-confidence and improves their attitudes to school. Teaching assistants are most effective when they have a defined role with a group of pupils. For example, in the opening session of a literacy lesson in Years 3 and 4 when all pupils work together with the teacher, pupils were allocated to different teaching assistants and the teacher planned activities when they would work together. When the teacher said, 'Now turn to your adult', pupils worked on defined tasks with a teaching assistant. This maximised the effect of the teaching assistants and provided good pace through the session. There is also good support from teaching assistants in such specific programmes as 'Sydney', which is a literacy programme for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The assistants work closely with teachers, giving either verbal or, occasionally, detailed written feedback on the progress of pupils.
22. Teachers work well collaboratively, planning lessons in groups of three under the guidance of a team leader. They share ideas, enthusiasms and experiences and consequently pupils benefit because of the breadth of experience that is focused and channelled into maximising teaching and learning opportunities.
23. All teachers and teaching assistants have a very good level of awareness of the needs of the full range of pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching for these pupils is good overall and they mostly achieve well against prior attainment. For example, in a science lesson a Year 6 pupil felt that he would need to

use 'a measuring thing' for an experiment on evaporation. The teacher seized the opportunity to introduce the term 'measuring cylinder' and went on to explain the importance of accurate measurement if the experiment was to be successful. In Year 2, the teaching assistant, working with a group of pupils with special educational needs, used questions skilfully and consequently the pupil explained, 'We couldn't measure round the ice cube with a ruler because it wasn't bendy, so we used a piece of string instead'.

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

24. The quality and range of curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are good and meet the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum, the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The curriculum provides breadth and balance at all levels and aspects of social, moral, spiritual and cultural education make significant contributions to the curriculum. There are strengths in the way the curriculum is planned and organised and curriculum planning has many excellent features. Subject leaders have developed high-quality, whole-school schemes of work that are linked to clear and progressive targets for the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. This provides progression in pupils' learning and continuity across the school. The quality of long-term and medium-term planning is good, and teachers' daily planning is very good in every lesson and is a strength of the school. The learning objective of the lesson is central to the planning and always shared with the pupils. Perceptive and appropriate evaluations of previous lessons, including ongoing assessments, inform future teaching, which impacts well on pupils' progress. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
25. The development of schemes of work and the hard work of subject leaders in ensuring the progressive development of pupils' skills provide a systematic teaching programme that consolidates previous knowledge and understanding and allows the school to set and achieve targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics. Assessment opportunities are built into a curriculum that works as a unit, based on strong cross-curricular links. A good example of these links can be found in the theme of 'Grand Prix' in Years 3 and 4 where lessons in dance, literacy, design and technology, science, and art and design are all inter-related and contribute to each other. A feature of teachers' planning is the regular daily assessments in all subjects as part of each lesson evaluation, and the clearly different tasks that meet the differing needs of individual pupils, especially in group work in English, mathematics and science. This is a further significant improvement since the last inspection.
26. The school has continued to implement and refine the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these are linked to the whole curriculum, which helps to improve the skills of all pupils. A strength of the school are the opportunities provided for pupils to develop sustained writing activities, which are linked to high teacher expectations of quality and presentation. The school's target-setting procedures for individuals, teaching groups and year groups are very good and include targets in writing, reading, mathematics and most foundation subjects. These targets include expectations for what is to be achieved by the end of each lesson, by the end of each assessment cycle and by the end of the year. They are firmly established as part of the school's procedures to raise standards.

27. The school provides good opportunities to enrich the curriculum through the number and range of visits and visitors to school. These are always linked to cross-curricular themes. In discussion, pupils in Years 5 and 6 talk confidently about visits to museums in London, such as the Imperial War museum, linked to a study of World War II, and the British Museum during a study of ancient Egypt. There are also geography trips to Old Portsmouth, Eling Mill and Botley localities, residential trips to Little Canada and regular visitors to their school. This work is supported by the range of displays around the school, including one on the trip to Little Canada and evidence in the 'theme' books. In Year 1 pupils write a wanted poster for the character 'Buster Nose' and their excitement reinforces their learning when they receive a fax back from Hampshire police saying they arrested a villain called 'Buster Nose' last night.
28. The provision of extra-curricular activities is extensive and ranges from after-school sports clubs in cricket, football and netball, to lunchtime dance sessions for the Morris Dancing team, the choir, and music, art and computer clubs. All of these make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The school provides a satisfactory programme for personal, social and health education, which incorporates sex education, health education and drug awareness. This is effectively promoted through circle time⁴ as well as other lessons.
29. The school has a good range of links with the local community and the church. For example, the Morris Dancing team is involved in dance festivals and visits to senior citizens' homes. Local businesses generously support the school fair. The school effectively raises its profile in the community. Relationships between the school and its partner secondary schools are very well organised and supportive, which ensures a smooth transition for the pupils at the age of 11. Pupils are well prepared for the changes that they will encounter through induction days and visiting teachers.
30. The school has good links with teacher-training institutions and regularly welcomes students to work at the school. A student was conducting her third teaching practice at the school during the inspection and spoke warmly of the support and professional development the school was providing.
31. The school makes suitable provision for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress. The school has made good progress since the last inspection report and planning for all lessons is now very carefully matched to the needs of individual pupils. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice⁵ for special educational needs and is suitably prepared to introduce the new Code of Practice. Teachers keep individual education plans in their planning folders so that they can be referred to as they plan for lessons. Although the individual education plans are of variable quality, the teachers' planning for lessons is of such high quality that this does not adversely affect the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are very well supported in lessons and occasional withdrawal groups by both teaching and learning-support assistants, and this has a very positive impact on their progress. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum, and if they are withdrawn from lessons

⁴ On Circle time: this is the provision of a discussion period which provides good opportunities for pupils to talk about issues that face them in everyday life.

⁵ On SEN Code Of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that 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.

this is carefully planned to ensure that they do not always miss the same subject. Appropriate adaptations are made to ensure that pupils with physical needs are fully included.

32. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Teachers listen carefully to them and respond in ways that show that they care and are interested. In this way, they help pupils to understand about listening to others and valuing what other people have to say. Through the curriculum, and particularly in science, pupils are enthusiastic and excited by their learning, and are developing a sense of the world and their place in it.
33. Provision for moral development is very good. Rules are prominently displayed, and pupils are clear about them. Teachers rarely have to remind pupils about classroom rules. Pupils know the rules for the playground; for example, which areas are for 'hoopla' and which are for skipping, and they are clear about the appropriate use of playground equipment.
34. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. There are very good opportunities for pupils to contribute to the day-to-day running of the school. Older pupils volunteer for these responsibilities, which range from helping at lunchtimes in the dining room or answering the office telephone, to going into the reception classes to help younger pupils with their learning. The recently formed school council is already having a significant impact on pupils' social and personal development by giving them very good opportunities to represent their peers in a democratic forum. The residential visit for older pupils gives them good opportunities to work and play together in a setting away from home.
35. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. The school provides a focus for the local community and performs at village functions. For example, pupils take part in the school's music festival and a parent, with support from the school, is planning a musical production. Pupils play instruments in assembly, but opportunities to see and hear live performances are limited, although the school visits a good number of museums and places of interest to link with the curriculum. Pupils have effective opportunities to study world religions and have studied other cultures; for example, the Caribbean, and written their own poems based on Caribbean poetry. There have been visitors to school from other cultures, and pupils have opportunities to visit places of worship such as a Hindu Temple. There are dual-language signs prominently displayed around the school and some dual-language books to support the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school is providing a good level of pastoral care and support for its pupils. Teachers know the pupils well and pupils are happy to go to them with concerns. A good example of this and the support given by teachers occurred one morning during the inspection. A Year 6 girl was very distressed about a breakdown in her friendship group. She told her teacher, and her teacher responded to this in a very sensitive and caring way, arranging to see the girl again at a later date. As a result of this the girl went to her lessons in a much calmer state and confident that her teacher would help her. It was handled so well by the teacher that the rest of the class was unaware of the incident, thus sparing the girl any embarrassment.

37. Child protection and health and safety procedures are good. Child protection arrangements are well established and effective. The health and safety policy is very well supported by a governor and is well thought out and rigorously applied. The person in school who is responsible for health and safety has received training for the role.
38. The school monitors pupils' behaviour well and is generally effective in promoting good behaviour. However, the approach to managing behaviour is inconsistent. Some teachers are particularly effective at managing behaviour. They have established very good relationships with pupils and are quick to recognise and praise good behaviour and, in this way, they reinforce positive behaviour. However, some teachers who have not established such effective relationships with pupils are inclined to be negative in their approach to behaviour. This is seldom effective, and runs counter to the school's ethos of valuing and respecting pupils.
39. The school has good systems in place to deal with bullying. Pupils know what bullying is and know that they must tell an adult if they feel they are being bullied. There is a 'bully box' for those pupils who feel more comfortable sending a note. A member of staff is a trained counsellor and she takes responsibility for talking to pupils who are experiencing difficulties of this type.
40. The monitoring and promoting of attendance are not entirely effective. The school has, until recently, been without the support of an education welfare officer. During that time it has regularly sent letters to parents dissuading them from taking holidays during term time and the governing body recently wrote to parents on this matter. The school is consistent in its approach to granting permission for holidays and follows up pupils' absence and lateness. It also keeps an overview of individual pupil absence to detect patterns of absence. The school has been particularly successful in promoting punctuality, with the result that pupils arrive punctually at the start of the day. However, given the fall in attendance since the last inspection, it is now appropriate for the school to develop a more rigorous approach to attendance issues, and to promote high attendance more actively in order to raise parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of full attendance.
41. The school is effectively monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development through the personal, social and health education programme, and particularly through initiatives such as the school council.
42. The school's procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are of high quality. Assessment opportunities are built into the curriculum plan on a rolling calendar. Informal assessment takes place daily in the form of teaching evaluations on lesson plans that include assessments of individuals and groups of pupils. These inform future teaching and are a significant strength of the school. In literacy, pupils are developing their own ability to evaluate their work and the work of others as 'response partners'. In physical education, pupils evaluate the performance of others and this contributes to their improvements. Assessment is supported by the outstanding work of teaching assistants, who make regular assessment notes of the progress in knowledge and understanding of individuals and groups of pupils during literacy lessons. These are again linked to the teacher's own assessments and evaluations.
43. Clear target setting is in place for the improvement of year groups, which is reviewed each half term and is supported by individual pupil tracking records. The management and use of these procedures are very good. In all lessons the learning

objective is made explicit at the beginning and permeates the whole lesson. Pupils then evaluate how well that intention has been met. Teachers and support assistants keep detailed records to monitor pupils' progress, and the school's results in the national tests are analysed thoroughly. Class targets for improvement in reading, writing and mathematics are set and displayed in all classrooms. New targets for improvement are designed for each new section of work. The headteacher and the assessment manager use assessment information to analyse strengths and weaknesses and inform the work of 'booster' groups in Year 6 and the workshop groups in literacy and mathematics. This is a strength of the school and is improving performance in literacy and mathematics. The assessment manager is now consolidating good practice throughout the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents' views of the school are extremely positive and supportive. The great majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agreed with the positive statements about the work of the school. There were no areas of concern. An unusually high number of parents attended the parents' meeting in support of the school. The views of parents are very much more positive than they were at the time of the last inspection.
45. In the relatively short time since the last inspection the school has established very good links with parents. Parents feel very comfortable approaching staff and the arrangements at the start of the day, whereby many parents bring their children into the classroom, give them the chance to talk informally with class teachers and to see their children's work in the classroom.
46. There is an appropriate range of meetings and workshops for parents about the curriculum, and the school is sometimes able to offer crèche facilities to enable those parents who have younger children to attend assemblies and meetings. The school provides good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress with the class teacher at the three meetings held during the school year. In addition to this, there is a written report for parents at the end of the school year and the school has recently introduced a mid-year written report. These written reports are detailed and clear about the progress children have made. They state clearly the National Curriculum level of attainment reached in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and there are targets to help pupils to improve their work. Overall, the quality of information in pupils' reports is good. There is also good written information for parents of children starting in the reception class. Some of this is useful pastoral information and some is to enable parents to support learning at home, through games and activities. There is some information about the school curriculum, such as how reading is taught and how letters are formed, and there is a meeting for parents of children beginning in the reception classes. However, the school does not at present provide all parents details of the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is something it plans to do in the near future. The school does not have an Internet connection that would enable it to establish a web site, to provide information for parents about its work.
47. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is outstanding. Very many parents help in classrooms in a number of ways and their help is greatly appreciated by staff. Parents are appropriately involved in reviews of special educational needs and are kept well informed.

48. Other parents support the school by playing the piano in assembly or as members of the school council. The Friends of the School association is very active and well supported by parents. They work very hard and raise huge sums of money each year. This is used well for such projects as improving playground facilities. Most parents help their children with their homework, and the useful curriculum booklets that are produced every half-term keep parents well informed about the work their children will be doing and how they can help at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The school is very well led and managed by a conscientious, hardworking headteacher who provides strong leadership that has established an effective management structure and a mutually supportive team that shares a firm commitment to school improvement. The headteacher gives a clear direction for school improvement and is supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher and the leadership and management team. All members of staff are committed to improving the education of the pupils and there is a strong team ethos. This has enabled the school to move forward quickly so that all key issues from the previous inspection have been met well. The school has identified appropriate priorities for further development and benefits from an excellent capacity to succeed in them.
50. The level of staffing is well matched to the demands of the curriculum, and all subjects are effectively led and managed by the subject leaders. They all have a clear understanding of the planned curriculum in their subjects, but as yet their role has not been developed to allow them all the opportunity to establish clearly the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of their subjects. Nevertheless, the monitoring of teaching and learning undertaken by the headteacher and deputy headteacher has enabled the school to have a very clear understanding of the quality of teaching, and has led to good support and guidance that are improving standards. The induction of new staff is good and the systems for performance management are effective and well managed.
51. The inspection of this school included a focused view of how effectively teaching assistants are managed and trained to contribute to the teaching and learning of literacy and mathematics. Teaching assistants are well trained and well managed. There is a clear structure of management through the co-ordinator for special educational needs, and all teaching assistants are clear about their roles and functions. They are deployed effectively in terms of their expertise, and very good use is made of specific experience and qualifications such as counselling or training for special programmes such as 'early learning support'. There are good arrangements for induction and for continuing professional development that ensure that teaching assistants have the necessary training to be effective. A formal programme for monitoring the work of teaching assistants has just been started, but it has not had time to include all members of the support staff and so its effectiveness cannot yet be assessed. There are particularly good arrangements for teaching assistants to meet with their line manager and discuss matters of importance. This ensures that they are fully aware of the school's policies and procedures and realise how much their work is valued by the school.
52. The school focuses the work of the teaching assistants almost entirely on those pupils who have special educational needs. This means that they sometimes work with a very small number of pupils for whom their support is very valuable. Their impact is most effective when they work with groups of pupils with a clearly defined

role. An example has already been given of assistants being particularly well used during the opening session of a literacy lesson where they were allocated to groups of pupils who turned 'to their adult' for specific tasks. In the group-work session of this lesson, the teacher herself worked with the special educational needs group that needed most support, whilst the teaching assistants worked with other groups. This was a particularly effective way of focusing the teacher's expertise.

53. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is effective and knowledgeable. She is aware of the recent changes to the Code of Practice for special educational needs and is already planning how to incorporate them into the school system. She manages the planning and assessment cycle well and ensures that teaching assistants are well briefed and efficiently deployed. There is good liaison with external support services, who have a positive view of the provision made by the school. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is well involved and informed about the provision for and the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Regular reports are made to the governing body and in the governors' annual report to parents.
54. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and they have a clear view of their responsibilities. They are involved in all discussions that decide the direction of the school, including the school improvement plan, which is a very useful and detailed document that focuses the work of the school on effective improvement. The committee structure is effective and regular reports are made to the full governing body. Individual governors have taken responsibility for different subjects and aspects of the work of the school, and many are knowledgeable and well informed. Statutory requirements are met fully.
55. Financial management is very good. The school has a number of different sources of income, and all specific grants have been used for their designated purposes. This has enabled the school to fund the provision of the new accommodation, which has greatly enhanced the quality and range of learning opportunities. The school has a clear policy to carry forward a small proportion of its budget preferring, as the headteacher says, 'to use the monies available so as to benefit the pupils immediately'. The decision has been made to maintain a high level of staffing, particularly learning-support staff, and this is supporting pupils' learning effectively. There is a very generous provision of administrative and caretaking staff, who make a positive contribution to the efficient running of the school. All financial decisions are based on the priorities for improvement in the school improvement plan, and sound principles for ensuring best value are applied. The overall use of new technology to support management is sound, but it is currently limited by the lack of Internet access.
56. The school's accommodation is very good and the new building is already having an impact on pupils' learning. The school benefits from the use of additional rooms for music and special educational needs, a food technology area, a computer suite and a large and well-stocked library. The grounds are extensive and attractive, and there are plans to develop them further. Playground space is adequate, but the play area for the Foundation Stage does not provide the full range of opportunities for these children that it could. Resources for learning are good for English, music and physical education, and the good quality of the computer suite is making a significant contribution to raising standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to continue to raise standards, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) develop the role of subject leaders to enable them to clearly establish the strengths and weaknesses in teaching to plan for improvement in their subjects (paragraphs 50, 94, 120);
- (2) improve the outdoor play area for children in the Foundation Stage to provide a greater range of learning opportunities on a safe surface (paragraphs 56, 67); *(The school has recognised this need and has drawn up plans to improve this play area.)*
- (3) consider ways to promote good attendance (paragraphs 14, 40).

Minor areas for improvement:

- Raise the satisfactory standard of behaviour in some classes to the same high standard that is seen in other classes (paragraphs 11, 20, 38, 77).
- Consider the possibilities of establishing an Internet connection for pupils to use to find information and to provide information for parents (paragraphs 46, 55, 112).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	17	28	20	0	0	0
Percentage	3	25	42	30	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	282
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	96

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	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.6

School data	1.1
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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	17	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	18
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	30	31	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (85)	84 (91)	92 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	18
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	35	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (89)	92 (96)	92 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	24	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	20	26
	Girls	18	13	23
	Total	40	33	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (76)	66 (67)	98 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	24
	Girls	17	17	16
	Total	36	36	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (71)	72 (76)	80 (88)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	7
Chinese	0
White	236
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3
Average class size	25.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	204

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	5	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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	636,856
Total expenditure	649,515
Expenditure per pupil	2,082
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,239
Balance carried forward to next year	4,580

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	50

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	40	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	46	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	64	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	60	8	2	4
The teaching is good.	56	42	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	52	4	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	26	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	40	0	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	40	56	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	34	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	48	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	68	12	0	4

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

58. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the reception classes are good. Initial assessments made when the children first start school confirm that their attainment is, overall, below that expected for children of their age. However, by the time they start Year 1, most children have made good progress and are close to achieving the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning. Children achieve these standards because of good teaching and the wide range of activities provided for them, which have a positive impact on the way they develop knowledge, skills and understanding.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Most children make good progress in this area of learning and staff put an appropriately strong emphasis on developing these skills. All members of staff sensitively assist children's development of social skills, such as taking turns with equipment, and have high expectations of manners at all times. They provide excellent role models for the children, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. They foster friendly and trusting relationships and help children begin to understand the needs of others. For example, during a circle time session children take turns to say what activity they have enjoyed during the week. They listen well to each other and respond sensitively to those who take time to talk. Good opportunities are also provided for the children to make decisions and plan their own work. They are able to wait if an activity is fully subscribed, work together, share equipment and tidy up after themselves. Most children are interested in their play and learning activities, and concentrate for increasing periods of time. Behaviour is almost always very good and members of staff use praise effectively to establish appropriate behaviour.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Although many children in the reception classes have the expected level of speaking and listening skills on entry to school, this is not reflected in the level of their emerging reading and writing skills. A very good range of activities is provided to enable children to develop their use of language and there is a clear focus on this in every subject area. Imaginative play is well used; for example, children enthusiastically took on the roles of the Three Bears and Goldilocks, using excellent props provided by the staff. The teaching assistant and parent helpers were often to be seen joining in this play and skilfully extending the children's language.
61. Teachers demonstrate their own enjoyment of reading books to the children and their skills enable the children to listen well. Children can identify the characters' names in the story of Goldilocks and pick out detail in the text. In a group activity, most children re-tell the story, remembering and sequencing the main points. Many children already recognise a few words on sight and most can identify initial letter sounds. They enjoy books and can all tell the story from the pictures, while many can read a familiar, simple text with support from the teacher.
62. Writing skills are less well developed, although most children are able to write their own name, sometimes needing the help of a model, using a cursive script. Many

have still to develop control over the size and orientation of their letters. Good progress is made when the children are encouraged to use their developing knowledge of words and letter sounds to 'have a go' at their own writing. For example, some can write a simple sentence with support, using 'invented spelling'. One child wrote phonetically, 'der mummy ber I am sory for itig baby bers porij from godylocs'. However, the writing development of some children is still at the stage of writing isolated shapes and letters.

63. The quality of direct teaching in literacy lessons is very good and the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy are effectively taught through whole-class sessions. However, on occasions the attempt to teach the whole literacy hour and provide literacy activities for all the children at once results in some less valuable tasks being offered.

Mathematical development

64. In mathematics, the children are on target to achieve the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1 and they make good progress in their learning. Most children can count to ten and about half can count in tens to 100. The majority can identify the number that is missing from a number line up to ten, and many can do this to 20. They use basic mathematical language like 'more' and 'less' and most can use 'heavier' and 'lighter' accurately. They develop a good understanding of how to use a simple balance and describe what they are doing, such as, 'When it goes down it means it's heavier', and, 'It's up in the air because it's light'. During one lesson most were surprised to discover that the biggest parcel was not the heaviest, but they grasped the concept by the end of the session.
65. Teachers offer a wide range of activities to enable the children to practise and develop mathematical skills, and they enjoy making patterns in printing and using beads, sorting different objects and playing counting games. Number rhymes are sung enthusiastically with actions and effectively help those who are less secure in their mathematical understanding. Computers are also well used to enable the children to practise number skills in a pleasurable way.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Many children enter school with only limited experiences and general knowledge, but they quickly begin to understand more about the place they live in and how they and others grow from babies to adulthood. Members of staff encourage them to use all five senses to investigate a range of materials and experiences. During the inspection all the children had the opportunity to make porridge and were able to describe the ingredients used and how the texture changed when the porridge was heated. They recognise the rules for safety and express preferences for porridge with sugar or honey. Most children control a computer mouse with increasing skill and understand that their work can be printed. A few children use the keyboard to type their name. They all enjoy using the listening centre for stories and many can use the start and stop buttons independently. They also understand that they can record their own voice and enjoy listening to their version of the story of 'The Three Bears'. All the children use construction toys for building, and members of staff encourage them to talk about their structures and how to develop them.

Physical development

67. Most children have physical skills in line with those expected for their age group. In lessons, they run, jump and climb with growing confidence and are aware of others and the space around them. They understand the safety rules and the need to warm up and cool down. The children have daily access to a small, fenced tarmac area and have a few wheeled toys to use there. However, this area has only a limited range of equipment for pupils to climb, balance and jump on daily and there is only limited provision for them to extend role-play activities outside. The school has recognised this and has drawn up plans for improving the outdoor area. Indoor provision for physical development is good and the children are offered a good range of activities to enable them to develop fine motor skills. They use scissors, pencils, brushes, glue sticks, modelling tools and the computer mouse with increasing dexterity.

Creative development

68. Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills through role play, art and music. They enjoy making pastel drawings of an old bear and their efforts are lively and well observed. They use paper, wool and other collage materials carefully to make a Goldilocks mask and discuss how they might achieve the required effect. Musical development is good and all the children sing a simple melody, use quiet and loud voices, clap a steady beat and a simple rhythm, and join in with actions. Their performance of 'When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears' is impressive. They remember all the words, sing the melody well and use pitch and volume effectively. All enjoy using their whole body to dance to 'Jelly on the Plate'.
69. The quality of the teaching in the reception classes is good overall and, in half the lessons seen, it is very good. This ensures that children are able to make good progress in their learning. Teachers plan activities well to ensure that all areas of learning are covered well and that children can develop independence. The two teachers work closely as a team and are well supported by the teaching assistants, who make a very valuable contribution to the way in which children learn. All members of staff manage the children well and have high expectations of both learning and behaviour. Teachers assess children on entry to the reception classes and keep careful records that are effectively used to monitor the progress of individual children and to ensure that the lessons planned meet their individual needs.
70. The reception unit is well managed by the knowledgeable and effective early-years manager, who has established effective links with parents and the local pre-school group. Appropriate information is provided for parents before children start school and throughout the reception year. Parents are encouraged to read with their children at home and they are given helpful advice. Children start school happily because they are introduced to school routines sensitively. The planned curriculum and resources for learning are well matched to the needs of the children. The good provision in the reception classes has been maintained since the last inspection and there is now good provision for all areas of learning, including creative development.

ENGLISH

71. Standards in English are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls in English at either key stage. Although standards are rising in Key Stage 2, there are weaknesses in Key Stage 1. The school has identified these and has put in place target setting and support strategies that have been very effective in raising

attainment. The school has identified weaknesses in spelling, reading and writing and has systematically addressed these areas, which has improved the quality of teaching and learning. In Years 3 and 4, additional literacy support has been used effectively to improve the phonic skills and standards of spelling and writing for identified pupils.

72. By the end of Key Stage 1, speaking and listening skills meet national expectations and pupils make good progress. They listen attentively and respond appropriately to teachers' questions. Pupils are keen to contribute their thoughts and opinions, and listen well to each other's ideas. Pupils in Key Stage 2 attain good standards in speaking and listening, and continue to make good progress. Most pupils speak clearly and confidently, paying close attention to the comments of others, and they offer contributions that indicate that they have taken account of their views. Pupils have the confidence to ask when they do not understand, and there is a clear policy for pupils to share their ideas with the whole class. Pupils demonstrate maturity and responsibility in their thinking about various issues, such as in creating arguments from a shared text entitled, 'Should dogs be banned from parks?'
73. By the time they are seven, higher-attaining pupils read confidently and accurately, using an appropriate range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. They observe the cues to phrasing and expression offered by the punctuation, and they demonstrate their understanding of mood and characterisation well; for example, by changing their tone of voice to describe the main characters. Higher-attaining pupils develop personal preferences in their reading and talk about favourite books and authors with real interest and enthusiasm. They also understand most of the words in what they read and they have few problems dealing with different uses of language. However, many pupils are sometimes puzzled by the meanings of words and by deeper meanings hidden in the text, and a very few pupils occasionally struggle to apply their knowledge of phonics when trying to work out unfamiliar words. Most pupils know how to use information books to find things out, and have a sound understanding of the ways in which graphics and layout can be used to create specific effects.
74. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read and understand a variety of texts written for different purposes. For example, in a very good lesson observed they read and analysed a text used to construct effective arguments. They pick out the key phrases and words used by the writer and use them to produce balanced arguments of their own. Pupils know and understand the use of a formal, impersonal voice, connectives and optional connectives, and can give examples. They know how to establish a conclusion with the strongest element of the argument. Pupils are used to discussing their work with each other and they share their efforts with the whole class, which plays a significant role in establishing speaking and listening as strengths of the school. Pupils apply the conventions of formal debate successfully when they discuss the motion that 'Mobile phones in school should be banned'. They listen and show great respect for the views of others as well as acknowledging the conventions of taking turns. All pupils make good use of the school library, which is staffed by an excellent librarian for two hours a day. All pupils understand the main ideas in the stories they read and almost all read fluently and expressively.
75. The written work of most seven year olds is very well presented. Most pupils develop consistently neat, legible, well-formed handwriting and take great pride in producing their best work in this respect at all times. They write competently for a suitable range of purposes in English and in other subjects, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Almost all pupils understand the use of basic punctuation and they write in sentences, which are correctly punctuated. Higher-attaining pupils organise their

ideas logically, combine ideas skilfully within complex sentences, include descriptive detail when appropriate and generally match the style and vocabulary of their writing to its intended purpose and audience. Their stories are coherent and interesting, and engage the reader, while their written work in other subjects is well formed, organised appropriately and characterised by the inclusion of relevant technical terms. Most pupils have a good grasp of common spelling patterns and rules. They draw on their knowledge of these and on their general awareness of phonics when attempting to spell unfamiliar words. Common strengths of the written work of Year 6 pupils include technical accuracy and control. Most pupils produce well-formed cursive handwriting, spell most words correctly and use punctuation accurately. Most have learned to set out their work in paragraphs. Only the work of a few lower-attaining pupils fails to achieve these high standards. Handwriting has improved and is of a high standard throughout the school. The consistent implementation of a programme of work means that pupils learn to join letters early in Key Stage 1, and by the time they move to Key Stage 2 many are joining letters fluently. Although the presentation of pupils' work is of good quality, the school is aware of the need for more pupils in Key Stage 2 to write in ink for the majority of tasks.

76. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages and teachers use very good assessment procedures to inform their judgements about individual pupils' attainments. There is clear evidence that this data is used well to monitor progress and inform future planning. Consequently, pupils' attainment in literacy has improved over the last two years. The careful analysis of national test results and the well-focused use of assessment in both key stages have enabled the school to initiate the setting of literacy groups effectively. Activities provide suitable challenge for all pupils because there are clearly different tasks, even within ability sets. Pupils know and use their individual and group targets for improvement, which are supported by a very good system of marking pupils' work. All members of staff give praise and encouragement generously and make extensive suggestions as to how pupils can improve. Pupils know the marking symbols used to support their progress, and teachers often mark alongside the pupils. Teaching assistants work in partnership with the class teachers, and their assessment notes on individuals and groups of pupils provide good information on pupils' progress. Teachers' daily planning contains clear evaluations of both their teaching and an assessment of the previous learning of individuals and groups of pupils. The computer suite is used effectively in many classes to support work in literacy. Pupils draft their assignments directly onto the word processor or use specific programs to practise the conventions of spelling and grammar.
77. Pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum are well developed because teachers' plans contain a specific focus on cross-curricular links. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have consistently good attitudes to learning; they sustain concentration in most activities and usually behave courteously towards adults and other pupils. Pupils co-operate well during shared tasks, such as group reading and discussions. They are regularly challenged to share their work at the end of lessons and evaluate their progress for themselves. In the majority of lessons, teaching was good or better and it was never less than satisfactory. Teachers' planning contains perceptive teaching and assessment evaluations, work is planned to extend the most able pupils and tasks are modified for, and extra support is given to, those pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. Teaching assistants are well briefed, they interact well with pupils receiving support and with small groups, and they make a significant contribution to the pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work in partnership and take care to repeat or rephrase questions and instructions

when necessary to help pupils understand. This is a good strategy for those pupils who are at an early stage of English acquisition. All teachers plan their lessons well and make sure that pupils are aware of what they are meant to learn. They give clear instructions and explanations, and they monitor work in progress well during group activities. All teach basic literacy skills well and provide good role models for writing and reading aloud, selecting appropriate texts for work during the literacy hour. In the best lessons seen, teachers benefit from the very good working relationships they have established with their pupils. They value and respect each pupil's contribution, engage pupils as partners in the learning process, and raise their self-esteem by giving positive and constructive feedback on their achievements, irrespective of ability. Very good examples of the modelling of writing by teachers were seen in all these classes. There are some weaknesses in teaching. These involve a lack of pace, teachers' insecurity about lesson content and inappropriate or ineffective strategies for the management of behaviour, including a heavy emphasis on listening at the expense of more active learning methods.

78. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has worked hard to provide her colleagues with supportive schemes of work. She has been able to observe teaching, take lead lessons and support planning. She has a firm knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in her subject and is taking effective action to improve standards, especially in reading in Key Stage 1 through the provision of additional guided reading sessions outside the literacy hour and targeted support from classroom assistants. The improvements in planning, handwriting across the curriculum and the use of evaluations and daily assessments have raised standards. Resources are good and provide all staff with effective texts and back-up materials.

MATHEMATICS

79. Standards in the national tests in 2001 were not high enough, being below the national average in both key stages. However, the proportion of pupils who attained the nationally expected Level 2 in Key Stage 1 was close to the average. In Key Stage 2 the proportion of pupils who attained the nationally expected Level 4 was below average. However, because each pupil represents more than one percentage point, the improved performance of only one pupil would have led to the results being close to the average. Nevertheless, the school is committed to raising standards.
80. There are positive signs of improvement since the last inspection and, at the time of this inspection, standards are in line with national expectations in both key stages. This improvement has been achieved through a number of measures. The subject leader, who has good mathematical expertise, was appointed last September and provides good support for teachers in planning for the subject, as well as monitoring pupils' work and teaching and learning in the classroom. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and this, along with the employment of a part-time teacher to provide additional support, is having a demonstrable and positive effect. Pupils are now organised in ability groups in all years. However, the most significant factor in raising standards is the meticulous method by which teachers assess pupils' learning and then use this information carefully to plan tasks with a suitable level of difficulty to move each pupil on to the next stage of learning. By this method, teachers ensure that pupils meet learning objectives securely before progressing to the next level. Although this does not produce a dramatic improvement in standards, and takes time, pupils develop a secure understanding of mathematical practices. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, show confidence in and enjoyment

for the subject, which provide a secure basis for their future learning. Some of the older pupils are working above the levels expected of them nationally.

81. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop a good understanding of place value and the number system. Regular practice ensures that all pupils have a good mental recall of number facts to ten, and many recall number facts to 20 and are already developing their mental recall of some multiplication facts. They understand halves and doubles well and they use this understanding effectively in number work. For example, they recognise that $6+7$ can be solved by doubling six and adding one. Pupils recognise and name common two- and three-dimensional shapes well. They have a good initial understanding of reflective symmetry and they find more than one line of symmetry in common shapes, such as squares, rectangles and circles. Pupils use standard and non-standard measures, such as rulers and spans, to measure articles. The good links with other subjects provide opportunities for handling data and creating graphs. For example, pupils create graphs of the most popular characters in the story 'Percy the Park Keeper', which they interpret well.
82. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their good mental recall of number and multiplication facts through regular practice. Many pupils exceed national expectations and quickly find the answer to questions such as 15 multiplied by nine, and 258 divided by six. They work well with fractions and decimals and find the answers to two thirds of 150g, and 7.2 divided by three. Pupils confidently work with algebra and solve equations such as $3x+5=17$. Pupils work confidently with numbers as a result of the systematic way that they are taught. They understand and explain the terms 'median', 'mean', 'mode' and 'range' accurately, and work with co-ordinates in four quadrants by the end of Year 6. This systematic development of their learning was observed during the inspection in lessons that focused on shape. The lower-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 classify and sort triangles and quadrilaterals, whilst other pupils classify shapes using a 'decision tree'. They devise their own questions in groups to establish the properties of the shapes, such as how many sides or angles the shape contains. The older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are familiar with various triangles, including equilateral, isosceles and scalene, and know that the internal angles total 180 degrees. They also work out adjacent angles with ease. Pupils carry out investigations. For example, they use their knowledge that a triangle is half of a parallelogram to find its area and establish the formula $(b \times h) \div 2$. Pupils continue to develop their use of graphs with information about their favourite television presenters, for example. They interpret graphs correctly and use these skills to create graphs in other subjects.
83. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. This has yet to be reflected fully in the results of the national tests, but the evidence of the inspection is that standards are rising. This is due to the very careful way that assessment is used to inform planning for the next lesson. Teachers' plans for all lessons start with an assessment of previous learning and plans to build on this systematically for all pupils. Although pupils are set by ability in the subject, there are also a number of ability groups within each class. This allows teachers to address the learning needs of individual pupils, which they do well. Consequently, all pupils are suitably challenged as the work is matched to their learning needs and they respond with interest, confidence and enthusiasm. For example, in one lesson, co-ordinates in the first quadrant are understood well and, by the time the teacher introduces co-ordinates in the second quadrant, pupils recognise and suggest that these numbers have to be negative numbers. Teachers have suitably high expectations of all pupils, and most pupils complete their tasks in the time allowed. Lessons are happy occasions and pupils enjoy good relationships within the class that enable them to

work together well collaboratively. There is a good pace to most lessons and resources are used effectively to assist pupils' learning. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and the basic skills of numeracy are taught effectively.

84. The subject leader is successfully supporting teachers in the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, as well as teaching groups of pupils who experience difficulty in the subject. She monitors standards well in the subject and has benefited from working closely with teaching colleagues. A member of the governing body uses her experience as a mathematics teacher well to provide a high level of challenge for the higher-attaining pupils.

SCIENCE

85. The evidence of the inspection confirms the results of the national tests and teacher assessments in 2001 that standards meet national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards are rising because of strong leadership of the subject, teaching that focuses appropriately on meeting the needs of all pupils, including the higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, and an emphasis on investigative science.
86. The analysis of pupils' work shows that achievement for the majority of pupils is satisfactory, but that the improvement in teaching is having an impact in raising standards. Detailed planning is shared with the teaching assistants, who repeat, explain and consolidate teaching, helping to ensure a good level of understanding, and supporting pupils well in group work to enable them to be fully involved in lessons.
87. Pupils in Key Stage 1 explore different light sources and understand that darkness is the absence of light. They explore sound and one pupil writes that, 'Sound travels on an invisible wave'. A Year 1 pupil writes, 'It must travel on a magic carpet'. Pupils investigate the properties of different materials and carry out experiments to find out which material would be best for bedroom curtains in keeping the light out. They create electrical circuits and understand the function of a switch. They predict which objects will float and sink, and very good cross-curricular links are established with history as they study the journey and sinking of the Titanic. This work is followed up by an investigation into the effect of temperature on ice. Pupils develop very secure skills of scientific enquiry and begin to record their observations well, using detailed and clear explanations. They are also encouraged by teachers' written comments in their books, such as 'You have not explained why it didn't make a noise'.
88. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have investigated forces and studied the effect of gravity on, for example, an elastic band. They use information and communication technology well to present their results and they are confident when they explain how their line graphs are constructed. They construct a useful matrix to show the forces acting on spinners that they make. They understand the processes involved in the water cycle and use the correct language when describing it. They carry out investigations to demonstrate that plant growth is affected by temperature and establish good cross-curricular links with design and technology when they design an air freshener and describe how it might work. Pupils enjoy the practical aspect of the subject and explain clearly the importance of variables in their investigations. They develop an extensive scientific vocabulary and use it appropriately when describing work they have done.

89. Teaching is now good throughout the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan well and take great care to note and record ongoing assessments. This ensures that lessons build progressively on a very secure base of knowledge and understanding, and pupils are confident as they plan and carry out their investigations. In Year 2, a teacher asked at the beginning of the day, 'What do you think is going to happen to this block of ice?' The pupils tested their predictions by measuring the circumference of the block every hour using string. The teacher uses a digital camera well, taking photographs of the melting block of ice every hour and later displaying them, thereby helping the pupils to focus on and recall what has happened to it. In Years 3 and 4, pupils work together well as they roll cars that they have made down a slope covered in a succession of different surfaces to conduct an investigation into the effect of friction. In Year 6, pupils carry out an experiment to find out the factors that affect the rate of evaporation of a quantity of water. They apply their mathematical knowledge as they talk confidently about the line graphs that they use to record their results and they work systematically, co-operating well. In all classes, teachers have high expectations of the pupils. Lessons proceed at a good pace and time is left at the end of the lesson to enable discussions to take place that consolidate pupils' learning. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well and these pupils gain from the extra support that they receive, often contributing comments that demonstrate a good level of understanding. For example, a pupil in Year 2 explains that, 'The radiator made the ice melt and the water got colder'.
90. The subject leader, appointed shortly before the last inspection, leads this aspect of the curriculum well. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable, and has a very clear vision of how she sees the subject developing. She has worked closely with the local education authority's advisory staff and has reviewed the scheme of work to produce a document that supports teachers well in their planning. Although she has not formally monitored teaching, she is aware, through a scrutiny of work and teachers' planning, of standards throughout the school and she is determined to continue to raise standards.

ART AND DESIGN

91. Standards in art and design throughout the school meet national expectations and there is some work of a good standard. This represents good progress since the last report, when standards were unsatisfactory. The timetable and cross-curricular links ensure that there is now adequate coverage of the subject. During this inspection only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 2 and two lessons in Key Stage 1. However, judgements are supported by an analysis of teachers' planning and a scrutiny of the work on display, in pupils' workbooks and in examples kept by the school.
92. Pupils learn to use a range of techniques including drawing, painting, collage, printing and sketching. They use pencils, pastels, charcoal, paint, clay, fabric and ink with increasing skill as they progress through the school. Pupils study the work of other artists, such as Monet, and by Year 6 they produce creditable work of their own in the impressionist style. They can also make choices about colour, design and materials, and show a developing understanding of form, line and tone. The quality of pupils' work varies, but they all show pride in their work. In Year 2, pupils were observed making careful observational drawings, showing an awareness of how things look from different viewpoints, and developing their skills in the use of pencils, charcoal and pastels.

93. The lessons observed and the quality of work seen indicate that teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers increase pupils' understanding and appreciation by telling them what is good about their work and how it could be improved. They plan a good range of activities to cover each aspect of the National Curriculum and make effective links with other subjects. However, some lessons in Key Stage 1 are too long for pupils to sustain their concentration. Good planning ensures that skills are taught systematically and teachers have a good knowledge of the attainment of individual pupils. However, this emphasis on skills teaching sometimes results in only limited opportunities for pupils to produce complete works of art. This is reflected in the limited amount of art on display around the school. Pupils' attitudes are positive and they behave well, concentrate, persevere, collaborate and show appreciation of the work of others. Pupils are proud of their work, and displays around the school promote this, as does the award of certificates for artwork. Art and design support the development of cultural understanding through the use of artefacts from other subjects. Opportunities to reflect on their own work and that of other artists support spiritual development.
94. The subject leader is knowledgeable and has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She currently monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work but has not had the opportunity to observe teaching. Resources are satisfactory and well used.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. It was only possible to observe two lessons in the same year group during the inspection and therefore a secure judgement on teaching is not possible. Judgements on attainment and achievement are based on discussion with pupils and teachers, a scrutiny of pupils' work, both on display and recorded in photographs, and an examination of teachers' planning. Inspection findings are that standards are in line with those expected and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards have improved because:
- the subject leader has begun to revise the curriculum using national guidelines as a base and, although this work is not yet complete, the profile of the subject within the school has been raised;
 - the overall curriculum map ensures that teachers incorporate design and technology into their planning appropriately, ensuring continuity and progression throughout the school;
 - through practice, pupils are developing skills that enable them to meet the demands of the design and technology curriculum;
 - there are good collaborative work practices between teachers.
96. In Year 2, photographic evidence shows that pupils design and make puppets with joints that move and that they use different types of linkages. They join materials together and make wooden picture frames that, in turn, are used to frame drawn pictures of the Titanic, which establishes a good cross-curricular link with history. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make wheeled vehicles. They are justifiably proud of these and are able to describe in detail how they were constructed. They know that triangular corner pieces will make them strong and that the wheels must spin free of the axles. Skilfully led by their teachers, they understand the importance of evaluating their designs with regard to 'fitness for purpose' and all are able to explain how the design of the vehicles might be improved. These vehicles are used in science experiments on friction. Pupils in Year 6 use tie-dyed material, making a good cross-curricular link with art and design, to design and make a puppet. They assess the finished product

with regard to 'fitness for purpose' and detail how the design might be improved. They also design air-fresheners and explain how they might work.

97. Teaching was only observed in two classes in Years 3 and 4 and the quality of this teaching was good overall. Planning, as in all year groups, was detailed and useful, matching work to the needs of the pupils and ensuring that those with special educational needs are well supported and included in the lessons. Pupils in this group have a clear understanding of the processes involved in designing a product and assessing its fitness for the purpose for which it was designed.
98. The subject leader is revising the scheme of work following feedback from teachers and has a clear vision of what else needs to be done. She was released from class to support colleagues in Years 3 and 4 when their pupils were constructing their wheeled vehicles and this collaborative working and sharing of expertise are helping to raise standards.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Only two lessons of geography were observed during the inspection, both using the same theme, and teaching has elements of good practice. Evidence has been gained from pupils' work, the teachers' planning and discussions with pupils. These show that standards meet national expectations at the end of each key stage. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
100. In Key Stage 1, pupils' work shows studies of the locality of Botley, including the recreation ground, work of a contrasting locality and investigations into environmental issues. Strong links are found with other subjects, lately the voyage of the Titanic. In Key Stage 2, pupils' theme books contain work that builds on previous studies of Botley, such as the growth and layout of the village, exploring links to other places. Further investigations include visits to Old Portsmouth, contrasting locations such as the island of St Lucia, investigations of habitats and looking at settlements. Pupils conduct an in-depth investigation of the effect of water on landscapes under the theme of 'Down by the riverside'. All themes are firmly embedded in strong cross-curricular links. Pupils in Key Stage 1 identify key features of why people live in Botley. They express their own views well, using correct geographical terms.
101. In Key Stage 2, pupils' work shows evidence of a wider geographical location, explaining how features give character, and they use correct geographical vocabulary. They investigate rivers and the effect of water on landscapes. The school provides this subject within a two-year cycle of themes. The development of a strong scheme of work and targets for achievement have improved pupils' opportunities to develop their skills and they make sound progress.
102. In the lessons observed, tasks were clearly explained and sufficiently different to meet the needs of individuals with varying ability. The investigative work of groups of pupils and practical experience reinforce pupils' understanding of the effect of water on landscapes. This was further supported by the correct use of vocabulary and geographical terms. In discussions, pupils in Years 5 and 6 talked confidently about their studies of Botley and visits to the village, the park, Old Portsmouth and local rivers. Teaching encourages pupils to pose their own questions and make decisions about how to present their findings. There are examples of flow diagrams, the use of information and communication technology, pictorial representation and written description. Experiments encourage pupils to give explanations of the physical

effects of processes on the earth and on people's lives. Teachers use well-chosen resources to support teaching, such as photographs, maps, first-hand visits, investigations and experiments, and written evidence.

103. Activities are planned to support pupils who have special educational needs or English as an additional language and they are fully included, making good progress. The subject leader has only been in post since November. However, the subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Resources are adequate, but some are in need of up dating.

HISTORY

104. There were few history lessons during the inspection due to the organisation of the curriculum by themes, and only one lesson, in Key Stage 1, was seen. Evidence from this lesson, teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that standards meet national expectations at the end of both key stages and many pupils exceed these expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
105. Standards have improved as a result of the careful planning of the curriculum that ensures that all aspects of the subject are taught well. Furthermore, teachers pay careful attention to the pupils' development of historical skills and understanding. For example, in the lesson seen in Year 2, pupils' learning in a topic about the Titanic was assessed. Although all pupils had a good knowledge of the facts of the voyage, higher-attaining pupils were further challenged to consider the consequences and changes that resulted from the disaster. They were aware of the limited number of lifeboats and began to consider the regulations about lifeboats for future shipbuilding. This information is used by teachers when planning future lessons to decide the level of challenge that will be provided for different pupils.
106. Pupils develop their historical skills and understanding well. In Key Stage 1 they understand change over time through considering the seaside and realise that, whereas people used to take picnics, there are now burger bars. They use their scientific knowledge of materials to recognise that old toys are made of metal and wood, while new toys are made of plastic. Through Key Stage 2, pupils consider what life would have been like in different historical periods by, for example, finding out about school life in ancient Greece. They increase their knowledge of historical sources and analyse the evidence provided on Greek pots, evaluating the veracity of different interpretations. Their progress is monitored carefully by teachers, and assessment sheets in the front of their books are completed by both teachers, who assess the level of understanding, and pupils, who assess how well they have completed the task. For example, one pupil commented that, 'I could have written more on this topic'.
107. As only one lesson was seen, it is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. However, given the standards pupils attain and the improvement since the last inspection two years ago, it is likely to be good. In the lesson seen, the careful planning that matched the difficulty in the task set to the learning needs of different pupils ensured that all pupils were suitably challenged. As a result, they maintained concentration on their task and responded well to the high expectations of the teacher. Relationships are good and this leads to good behaviour, with pupils showing enthusiasm for and interest in the task. Teachers enliven lessons with a number of visits and visitors. There are visits to the British Museum to see ancient Egyptian artefacts and the Imperial War Museum during a study of World War II.

Local history is investigated in the village of Botley, whilst a Victorian classroom is experienced at Manor Farm. Members of the community share their experiences of past times. An ex-teacher talks about old toys to the younger pupils, and senior citizens from a local nursing home talk to pupils about their lives during World War II. These experiences enhance the study of history for the pupils and have a significant effect on the improving standards that they are attaining. The subject leader has an enthusiasm for the subject and her careful planning of the curriculum ensures that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed systematically and effectively as they progress through the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection and now meet national expectations at the end of both key stages. This improvement has been achieved in a number of ways, most significantly:
- the creation of a computer suite with 17 networked computers to replace the old computers that were in the school beforehand;
 - the timetabled use of the computer suite, which ensures that it is used regularly by all classes for one and a half hours each week;
 - training for teachers in the use of the new computers and software;
 - support for year groups by the subject manager on using relevant software;
 - the creation of a scheme of work that links information and communication technology to other subjects in the school's thematic approach;
 - the production of a curriculum map that ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum and the informal monitoring of teachers' planning;
 - the use of an assessment booklet by both teachers and pupils to chart pupils' progress, that is closely linked to the National Curriculum.
109. In Key Stage 1, pupils gain good experience of the computer and learn to load, print, and save their work as files. All pupils develop a very good understanding of the use of files and folders and they have a dedicated space on the hard drive in which to save their work. They use a word processor well to organise their work and they add pictures and borders effectively. Pupils develop good skills in amending their work, including changing the font style, size and colour. Teachers ensure that pupils learn the skills necessary to make full use of the computer programs available, as well as using these skills in other subjects. For example, as part of the theme of the 'Titanic', pupils used a programmable toy to find a route safely around the 'icebergs' and into the port of New York. Consequently, they make good progress in developing their understanding of a sequence of commands that control the movement of the toy.
110. In Key Stage 2, pupils increase their knowledge of the opportunities provided by word processors as they produce work in other subjects. They develop a very good use of text boxes and use these skills to produce a simulation of a 'web page' on the artist Monet. They import pictures, diagrams and photographs of his paintings that have been recorded with a digital camera. Pupils use the 'hyperlink' function to link the first page with other pages on Monet's life and work. They reflect on their work and share ideas to consider how it can be improved. They make good use of backgrounds and font styles to create the desired 'look' for their pages. Pupils develop their understanding of control technology through the use of a 'screen turtle'. For example, they use a drawing program to design a racetrack that shows a good understanding of the tools for drawing available. The 'screen turtle' is then used to move a racing car around the track. Pupils experiment with each other's tracks and share ideas about the problems they encounter and how these can be improved.

111. Although standards are satisfactory in both key stages, they are improving rapidly and this is due to the good quality of the teaching in the subject in both key stages. Teachers have developed a secure knowledge of the subject and this is supported by their planning of lessons in year groups of three classes. Lessons are very well organised in the computer suite, which is limited in space, and the interest of the pupils ensures that behaviour is good. Clear planning identifies the level of difficulty for different pupils and so all are working with an appropriate level of challenge. There is a brisk pace to the lesson and teachers start with a very clear explanation of what pupils are expected to achieve. Consequently, pupils respond with interest and maintain concentration well throughout the lesson. Teachers monitor pupils' learning very well and this provides them with good information when planning the next lesson.
112. The subject leader has been successful in raising the status and standards of the subject in the short time since the last inspection. The computer suite is open to the corridor and this allows informal monitoring. This is particularly helpful during the well-organised lunchtime computer club. Each class teacher in Key Stage 2 can allocate up to four pupils to use the computer suite. These pupils are unsupervised but extend very well the work they have been doing in lessons. The subject leader has noticed that, although both girls and boys use the computer suite, girls do not use it as much as boys and the school is keen to establish the reasons for this. The school does not have an Internet connection and this is limiting the opportunities for pupils to find information on the World Wide Web and for the school to establish its own 'web page' to share information with parents.

MUSIC

113. Standards meet national expectations at the end of both key stages, with some pupils achieving high standards. No judgement on standards was made in the last inspection report. Pupils enjoy singing and show a good grasp of melody, rhythm and volume. Younger pupils maintain a steady beat, clap different rhythms and, in Year 2, use simple dot notation. By Year 6, pupils compose and perform their own chain poems, using standard notation.
114. Two lessons were seen in each key stage during the inspection and judgements are supported by an analysis of teachers' planning and observation of singing in assemblies. Curriculum plans indicate that a full curriculum is taught to ensure a steady acquisition of skills. This enables staff to clearly identify the attainment of individual pupils. Teaching was never less than satisfactory and, in each key stage, some good teaching was observed. Lessons in Key Stage 1 are sometimes too long and pupils begin to lose their focus. However, all pupils show enthusiasm and enjoyment in music lessons. They co-operate well together and behave well. The curriculum is enriched by the provision of instrumental tuition in the clarinet and violin, and an enthusiastic choir.
115. The subject is effectively managed by the deputy headteacher with the support of a teacher new to the school who will take on the leadership of the subject in the next school year. Both have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The new teacher has good subject knowledge and is developing her understanding of the role of subject leader. The school benefits from the provision of a separate music room and has a good range of resources, including tuned and untuned percussion instruments, electronic keyboards, and tapes and CDs, which include a small selection of music from non-European cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. At the end of both key stages, standards of pupils' work in the aspects of the subject observed during the inspection exceeded national expectations, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The subject benefits from schemes of work in dance, gymnastics, games, athletics and swimming linked to skill progression sheets. It was a feature of all lessons observed that the assessments of the teacher and teaching assistant was ongoing and that pupils' own evaluation of their progress, both as individuals and in groups, was shared confidently with the class.
117. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are confident in their movement as they run, jump and balance. They show good co-ordination and agility as they respond imaginatively to physical and musical challenges. In dance, most seven year olds link movements into simple sequences very successfully and show an increasing awareness of the space around them. Pupils are consistently taught to plan and evaluate for themselves even when working with a partner or group. Teachers regularly give them time to reflect and offer views on their own and others' performance, which contributes to the progress they make. In a particularly good lesson on football skills, there was a clear emphasis on the development of passing in short game tasks, with pupils clearly discerning how to use different parts of their feet to kick the ball. A significantly talented group worked with a parent helper, and showed an emerging ability to control the ball quickly and move off the ball to find space to receive a pass. The lesson had a good pace, pupils being challenged by a number of short tasks, with successes being valued and praised appropriately. Pupils worked well together in pairs and their behaviour was outstandingly good.
118. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils have developed good hand-eye co-ordination as they catch, throw and strike a ball. In a good lesson on tennis skills, pupils demonstrated a developing awareness of serving, ground strokes and working together in paired work and in short doubles games. The lesson developed through individual skills work, with pupils discovering their own style, whilst the teacher and teaching assistant provided direct teaching of technique in paired and group activities where pupils set up their own rules. In dance, in Year 3 and Year 4, the subject shows the benefit of strong cross-curricular links where the performance observed came from work in literacy, design and technology, art and design, and physical education on the theme of 'Grand Prix'. The pupils showed a real sense of performance and their effective sequences show clear introductions, main events and a conclusion. There was a good range of artistic movement, style, interaction and pattern. The teaching was lively and enthusiastic, and showed pride in the pupils' performances. Pupils work safely and co-operate well when needed. They work hard and can sustain energetic activity for long periods of time. The teacher and teaching assistant clearly work in partnership and interact positively with all groups.
119. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their games, gymnastics and dance skills. Records show that they also make good progress in swimming, most pupils attaining the nationally expected 25 metres. Lessons are well prepared and the quality of teaching is consistently good and often very good. Teachers use effective coaching points to enable pupils to develop their skills progressively, and they write perceptive evaluations and ongoing assessments from previous work. All lessons are notable for the pace, fun and enthusiasm of teachers and pupils working together. Teachers manage pupils well so that they make good progress and improve their performance. The school has a good range of quality resources and adequate accommodation to meet the demands of the National Curriculum.

120. The school enriches the curriculum through a number of activities, including residential trips that are activity based, football and netball clubs for pupils in Key Stage 2, 'Kwik' cricket that is run by a governor, and dance activities. The school benefits from the support of talented helpers and good teaching to provide pupils with further learning experiences during these extra-curricular activities. The co-ordinators have worked hard to produce effective schemes of work. They have established a structure to lessons that involves pupils evaluating their own and others' performances. Lesson observations have been carried out by the headteacher and shared with the co-ordinators, who have provided support in planning and professional development for the organisation of lessons, including time for warm-up, skill development and applications, and cooling down. They have ensured that the subject has a curriculum plan, detailed schemes of work and identified progression of skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. Standards meet national expectations in Year 2 and exceed them in Year 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. This improvement has been brought about by:
- a revised scheme of work that supports teachers' planning well;
 - an agreed syllabus that provided clear guidance when the scheme was revised, and
 - strong leadership from the subject leader that has successfully raised the profile of the subject throughout the school.
122. In Year 2, pupils discuss the commandment 'Love thy neighbour' and use words like 'care', 'help', 'kind' and 'giving' during their discussion with the teacher. The pupils know that there are Ten Commandments, and a wall display shows photographs of pupils acting them out. One pupil writes, 'If my teacher asked for my homework and I hadn't done it, I would tell the truth because God said you shouldn't tell lies'. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they study the life of Jesus, one pupil writing, 'He was a respectful man'. They know about the symbols associated with Easter, the Bible, Christian festivals and the story of Radha and Krishna from the Hindu faith.
123. In Years 3 and 4, pupils study the Passover and are able to describe the events that lead to the exodus from Egypt. They talk about the Seder Plate and why certain foods and drink are prepared for the Passover meal, taking part in role play, cleaning the house and preparing the food. They study the Mezuzah, which is the contract between God and the Jewish people, and draw up their own contract between themselves and their teacher, thereby reinforcing their understanding.
124. In Year 6, pupils comment that they like to learn about the different religions in the world and recall the visitor that came to talk to them about the Torah. They discuss the advantages of living in a community and the responsibilities that this brings. They think of the school as a community and write an appropriate prayer. They know why there is a Remembrance Day every year and discuss religious and secular milestones. They study the Christian festivals, and one pupil writes in his Holy Week Diary, 'As Jesus died it rained as though my tears flowed over'.
125. Teaching is good overall and, in Year 6, excellent teaching was observed. This focused the idea that living creatures leave a legacy behind when they die and one pupil noted that, 'When you visit a gravestone it evokes memories of the person that died'. The lesson was well planned with concepts explained clearly, and culminated

in the teacher reading a book she had compiled about her dog that had recently died. Pupils were captivated and later used computers well to write their own books, one pupil writing, 'My rabbit taught me how to look after pets properly'. All teachers display very good subject knowledge and teach this subject with enthusiasm and conviction; this has a very positive effect on the attitudes of the pupils, which are very positive.