

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST GEORGE'S BENEFICIAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Portsea, Portsmouth

LEA area: Portsmouth

Unique reference number: 116346

Headteacher: Jane Love

Reporting inspector: Grahame Sherfield
4758

Dates of inspection: 23 – 27 June 2003

Inspection number: 247645

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hanover Street Portsea Portsmouth
Postcode:	PO1 3BN
Telephone number:	023 9282 2886
Fax number:	023 9282 0179
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judith Dawtrey
Date of previous inspection:	2 – 5 February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4758	Grahame Sherfield	Registered inspector	Geography, history, information and communication technology	The school's results and achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	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?
22729	Robert Arnold	Team inspector	Learning Support Unit	
28014	Peter Buckley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, design and technology, music, religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17766	Eira Gill	Team inspector	English, mathematics, special educational needs, art and design, physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is broadly average in size. There are 10 boys and 17 girls in the nursery, who all attend part time, with 94 boys and 90 girls in seven classes from reception to Year 6. There is one reception class, which, together with the nursery, is known as the Foundation Stage, and there are two classes of pupils in Years 1 and 2. There are four further classes – two of Years 3 and 4 pupils and two of pupils in Years 5 and 6. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below expected levels. About 45 per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. Most pupils come from the significantly disadvantaged area of mainly social housing in which the school is located. Just over 50 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Many of these have moderate learning difficulties while some have emotional and behavioural problems. No pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs at present. Eight pupils are from ethnic minorities. There are eight pupils with English as an additional language. Significant numbers of pupils join and leave the school at other than the usual points during their primary school years. The school is involved in the *Excellence Cluster* initiative and provides a Learning Support Unit.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with significant strengths. The headteacher and her staff have worked successfully to provide a rich and caring environment where pupils, some of whom face challenges in their lives outside school, feel secure and make good progress in their learning and wider development. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and gets pupils off to a good start; in Years 1 to 6 it is good and all pupils continue to achieve well. Income and spending per pupil are very high but standards are improving and the school is doing well in a significantly disadvantaged area. It provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The teaching and curriculum in the Foundation Stage are very good and children achieve well
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including the very effective Learning Support Unit, is very good
- The learning opportunities provided are very good, cover a very wide range and are enhanced by the school's excellent links with the community
- Provision for moral and social education is very good and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development
- The school benefits from the very good leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key staff, which make a very positive contribution to pupils' achievements

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Whilst pupils' achievement in English is good overall, standards in writing are below average at best throughout the school, and writing is not developed enough across the curriculum
- Similarly, pupils' skills in speaking and listening throughout the school are below average and this, too, holds back their achievement

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in February 1998 has been good. Key issues identified in the last report have mostly been tackled. Where this is not fully the case, it is because the school has responded appropriately to national initiatives in literacy and numeracy. Standards have been raised in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 and improvement in this school over the last five years has been at a faster rate than that achieved nationally. The quality of teaching has improved in the Foundation Stage and is now consistently very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved, as have the quality and range of learning opportunities provided. The school has worked with some success to improve attendance, although it remains below average.

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			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E*	E*	E	B
mathematics	E	E	D	B
science	E	D	C	A

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
lowest 5% nationally	E*

In the current Year 6, standards largely reflect the 2002 test results in the table above, but they have improved in English and are now below average. This is because good, and sometimes very good, teaching of the oldest pupils has helped them make good progress with their writing. The school comfortably exceeded its targets for 2002 and is making good progress towards those set for 2003, which are suitably challenging yet realistic. Early indications are that the 2003 Year 6 tests results will show that the school has again exceeded its targets.

In national assessment tasks at the end of Year 2 in 2002, attainment in reading and writing was well below average compared with that of similar schools and below average in mathematics. In comparison with national figures, attainment in all three was well below average. Inspection evidence shows that standards by the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science are currently below average. Pupils' writing skills are well below average because a large group of lower attainers find concentration difficult, have a limited vocabulary and need further help in planning and structuring their writing.

Children enter the nursery with attainment well below what is expected. By the end of reception, they have achieved well and reached five of the six Early Learning Goals set nationally for children before beginning the National Curriculum, but their speaking and writing skills do not reach these expectations. About one third of pupils in the current Year 2 joined the school during Years 1 or 2 and a similar proportion of pupils in Year 6 have joined the school since Year 3. This means that teachers and other staff have to work hard to counter the resulting disruption in the progress of a significant proportion of the pupils, and their efforts ensure that all pupils achieve well throughout the school.

In information and communication technology (ICT), pupils achieve well by the end of Year 2 and reach expected levels but attainment is below these by the end of Year 6, where there has not yet been time for new hardware to support improvements in standards. In history by the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well and attainment is in line with expected standards. In religious education (RE) and design and technology, attainment is below expected levels by the end of Year 6 but achievement is satisfactory. In history by the end of Year 6, in RE and design and technology by the end of Year 2 and in all other subjects by the end of both Years 2 and 6, there was not enough evidence available during the inspection to reach a judgement of standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are good and they respond well to the opportunities provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of	Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is generally good.

classrooms	
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good and relationships between pupils, and between pupils and teachers and other adults, are good.
Attendance	Below average. The school is working very hard to improve this.

Teachers, learning mentors, learning support assistants and other staff work successfully to foster positive attitudes and good behaviour in a happy learning environment, with a positive impact on achievement.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very 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.

In reception and the nursery, the quality of teaching is very good. Teachers provide a rich environment for learning in their classrooms and plan their lessons very well. As a result, children learn well, despite the disadvantages they have when starting at the school. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 – 2 and Years 3 – 6, including that of English and mathematics. Activities are chosen carefully to engage pupils' interest and to help them to make good progress. Opportunities are sometimes missed, however, to encourage pupils to make more extended spoken contributions and to provide enough scope for pupils' writing in subjects other than English. Support staff work very well with teachers throughout the school and this makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning, helping to overcome some pupils' problems with concentration. In a small number of lessons where teaching was very good in Years 3 – 6, imaginative resources were used and it was very clear what learning was expected of the pupils. Teaching in the Learning Support Unit is very good. In the small number of lessons where teaching observed in Year 1 – 6 was satisfactory, relative weaknesses included giving activities more time than they needed.

The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well overall in Years 1 - 2 and in Years 3 – 6. The weaknesses in the teaching of literacy are few but are restricting the progress of some pupils. The school meets the needs of its pupils well, including those with special education needs, those from ethnic minorities, pupils identified as gifted or talented and those with English as an additional language.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage. It is carefully tailored to the needs of pupils and links with the community are excellent. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good overall, including the very good Learning Support Unit. Pupils make good progress as they are well supported in their work by teachers and learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school works well in partnership with the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service of the local education authority.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual,	Very good overall. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development, particularly in knowing right from wrong and

moral, social and cultural development	respecting others. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school works very hard to ensure pupils' welfare. Their academic performance and personal development are monitored well. Arrangements for child protection are very good.

The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education and there are effective links. The great majority of parents have very positive views of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key staff. This makes a very positive contribution to pupils' achievements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a good understanding of their responsibilities and are effective in fulfilling them. They have good strategies for monitoring the work of the school and meet all statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors its performance well in order to maintain strengths and take action to make improvements where needed.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of resources available to the school and space within and around the buildings is used well.

Staffing and accommodation are good. Learning resources are satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem • Children are making good progress • The school expects children to work hard • The good teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework received • The range of activities provided outside lessons • Behaviour in the school • Information about how their children are getting on

The inspection team endorses the parents' positive views but does not confirm the concerns raised. The school's policy on homework is carefully considered and reflects national guidance. Behaviour is good and the range of activities outside lessons is very good. The school provides good information for parents on how their children are getting on.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, attainment in English and mathematics was above the average in similar schools. In science, it was well above this. In comparison with all primary schools nationally, attainment was average in science, below average in mathematics and well below average in English.
2. Inspection evidence shows that standards are below average in the current Year 6 in English and mathematics and average in science. This is similar to attainment reported in the last inspection for English, but is an improvement on the school's results in the national tests in English in 2002, as good, and often very good, teaching has had a positive impact. Attainment in mathematics and science has improved since the last inspection. Attainment by the end of Year 6 has improved over the last five years at a rate above that achieved nationally. This is because staff have striven to make the most of the opportunities of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and worked effectively in partnership with local education authority advisory staff. Consistently good teaching has had an impact in science. When taking into account the well below average attainment of pupils when they enter the nursery, pupils are achieving well, including those with special educational needs, with English as an additional language, those from ethnic minorities and those who are gifted or talented. In addition, about a third of the pupils currently in Year 6 were not in the school at the end of Year 2 but joined during Years 3 – 6. The education of most of these has been adversely affected and teachers have worked hard to try to compensate for this. Pupils enjoy reading together in literacy lessons, which helps to address the lack of opportunities for many for reading at home. They understand that there are different types of writing and some high attainers can successfully undertake these. But most pupils' language skills are under-developed and they speak in only simple sentences. This is sometimes not given enough attention by teachers and this limits the quality of pupils' writing. Pupils can use a range of mental strategies in mathematics but lack confidence when applying these to real problems.
3. In national assessment tasks at the end of Year 2 in 2002, attainment in mathematics was below average compared with that of similar schools and well below this in reading and writing. In comparison with national figures, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well below average. In the current Year 2, evidence gathered during the inspection shows attainment in English, mathematics and science to be below average, which is broadly similar to that reported in the last inspection. Pupils, including those from ethnic minorities, those with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and those who are gifted or talented, achieve well, however, as they join the school with well below average attainment. In addition, only about half of the pupils in the current Year 2 have been in the school since the nursery. Several pupils have joined the school, left and then returned after an interval. This adversely affects their progress. Pupils' speaking skills are below average and attainment in writing is well below average. Very few pupils can write at an appropriate length and standard for their age and require considerable support. They enjoy reading in class, though only higher attainers read simple texts accurately. In mathematics, while most pupils are confident with addition and subtraction or simple tables, some are not.
4. From 2000 to 2002, boys did consistently better than girls in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2, though boys did worse in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. No significant differences in attainment between boys and girls were noted during the inspection.
5. When current reception children entered the school in the nursery, their attainment was well below average. By the end of reception, they have achieved well and reach most of the Early Learning Goals set nationally for children before beginning the National Curriculum, with the exception of some aspects of communication, language and literacy. Children play and work happily together and enjoy books but their speaking skills are under-developed and many find difficulties in starting to write sentences. They enjoy mathematics and many can work confidently with numbers.

6. By the end of Year 6, attainment is below expected levels in religious education (RE) and design and technology. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils reach expected standards by the end of Year 2 in history and in information and communication technology (ICT) and achieve well. But they do not yet reach expected levels in ICT by the end of Year 6 and should do better. New equipment has been purchased and training for staff held but there has not yet been enough time for this to have full impact on attainment. In RE and design and technology by the end of Year 2, in history by the end of Year 6 and in all other subjects by the end of Years 2 and 6, there was not enough evidence available during the inspection to judge standards attained.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils throughout the school, regardless of background or attainment, are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
8. Pupils are generally enthusiastic and parents and carers feel their children are happy and like school. Pupils of all ages come in to school willingly and settle quickly. Pupils' personal development is good overall. They enjoy being involved in the day-to-day running of the school, from returning the registers to the office to helping with the organisation of the equipment for assemblies. The school council is an effective forum for gaining the views of the pupils and involving them in discussions about policies such as behaviour and bullying, as well as community-based concerns such as the erection of a mobile telephone mast. The council helps to broaden the pupils' appreciation of their place in a wider society. Many pupils enjoy the support of the school's learning mentors who help them particularly to develop their self-esteem, aspirations and abilities to cope with various situations. Pupils enjoy taking part in the trips and events arranged to support their learning and wider development, and many join the clubs offered outside lesson time. The school's very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has positive effects in building pupils' self-esteem and self-respect and counteracting the negative influences that affect some outside school.
9. Attitudes in lessons are good. In the nursery and reception classes and in classes in the rest of the school where the teachers are more experienced, they are often very good. For example, in a mathematics lesson in the reception class, all the pupils paid very good attention to what their teacher was saying and were very eager to answer the questions. Because they were interested in what they were to do, they gained a lot from their work on estimating and experimenting with volume. Similarly, in a Year 6 science lesson, the pupils were very focused, listening carefully and taking part enthusiastically in the discussion about how to muffle sound, so they were able to engage fully in group activities that very effectively supported their learning.
10. Although a few parents expressed concerns, behaviour is good in the classrooms and around the school. The pupils know the high expectations set by the adults in school. Some younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 with special educational needs find it difficult to concentrate during lessons and their teachers sometimes have to work very hard to motivate them and keep them on task. Pupils generally respond well to any correction of minor misbehaviour in lessons and at play they bask in the praise that they receive when they have made the right behaviour choice. The sensible arrangements made by the school to stagger playtimes have a positive effect on behaviour as there are fewer pupils using the playing areas. Occasionally, one or two pupils may flare up over minor quarrels with other pupils. Many of the pupils are vulnerable, can be under stress and they sometimes react inappropriately. During the inspection, no incidents of bullying or other forms of harassment were seen. In discussion, pupils were very clear about the actions they should take. They know that measures will be put in place if they tell the school and the matter will be resolved. The school works very hard to keep pupils in school and there were no exclusions last year.
11. Relationships across the whole school community are good. The pupils are supportive of each other. During the inspection, the pupils applauded the successes of others during an assembly in which they shared what they had been doing with the rest of the school. Although there are few opportunities for all pupils to be together during the school day, there are regular 'Challenge Days'. On these occasions the pupils work in groups drawn from all ages to devise and complete a challenge, such as designing and producing a bridge from junk material that will take a child's weight.

12. Attendance has improved since the last inspection. It remains well below average at 92.5 per cent for 2001-02, but the school's efforts have been rewarded by a big improvement on the figure of less than 90 per cent reported at the time of the last inspection in 1998. The level of unauthorised absence is considerably reduced, with the figures for this year down again. The school takes a particularly strong line on holidays which either exceed ten days, or for which permission has not been sought before they are taken. Punctuality by most pupils is good; there are a few who are persistently late and with whom the school works very hard. A learning mentor has visited the homes of pupils who are having problems attending school and liaises with parents and carers who are having difficulty getting their children to school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and is now consistently very good. The strengths are similar in both classes and the teachers work closely together so that children make smooth progress in their learning when they move from the nursery to reception.
14. The classrooms are very well organised and this supports children's progress in each of the different areas of learning very well. The outdoor area, for example, is used very well to promote children's personal and social development as well as other aspects, such as their knowledge and understanding of the world in the growing area. Very good classroom routines are well established and well known to the children. These help greatly in the efficient use of time so that pupils learn more. In the nursery class, for example, children know exactly where to put equipment away, aided by the outline provided of the shapes of different items. Very good use of homework also makes an important contribution to learning. Children move efficiently from a whole-class session into groups and back again. Teachers and assistants ask very good questions to encourage children to think. These are often very effective, both in whole-class sessions and in group work. Questions are matched well to the needs of children and the ideas of individuals are used well in discussion to extend learning, as when children in the reception class were talking about why plasticine models might have sunk. In the nursery, children were given very good support and encouragement when talking about objects they had brought in to school. Special needs assistants and the nursery nurse make a very positive contribution to the quality of teaching and learning and work closely with the teachers. In the reception class, for example, a learning support assistant had been primed to make a deliberately wild guess when children were estimating how many multi-link blocks would fill a mug.
15. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 – 6, which is similar to the last inspection. In English, mathematics and science, teaching is good overall in Years 1- 6. Homework is used well and approaches in lessons are often well chosen to promote good learning, as for example when pupils in Year 2 gave directions to a learning support assistant to deepen understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Activities often engage pupils' interest. In a Years 1 and 2 science lesson, pupils enjoyed exploring human variations, making observations and comparisons of members of the group using the class photo. Good questions are used to check and develop pupils' understanding. Pupils' knowledge of how well they are doing and their ability to concentrate are sound. Practical activities are often highly effective in supporting learning. In a mathematics lesson in a Years 3 and 4 class, pupils moved round to find a partner whose number on a card matched their part of the three times table. In a Years 1 and 2 literacy lesson, good use was made of yes and no cards when pupils had to decide whether sentences made sense or not. High expectations help to raise self-esteem. Pupils were most encouraged when they were told that an aspect being explored was more suitable for older pupils but the teacher was convinced they could do it. Good questioning in the closing part of lessons frequently consolidates and reinforces pupils' learning, though opportunities are often missed to support pupils in making more developed, spoken contributions. Pupils are provided with some scope to develop their writing in subjects other than English, but at present this is limited and is in need of further development. Learning support assistants make a very positive contribution to the quality of teaching.
16. In a small number of lessons, teaching was very good in Years 3 - 6. Behaviour was often very well managed and support staff were very well deployed. Planning was very good and teachers' own

knowledge and understanding helped in the imaginative use of resources, such as when pupils in a Years 5 and 6 class were matching old English words from a poem by Blake to the modern equivalent. Positive responses from pupils were praised and the work of different groups very well monitored. In a Years 5 and 6 science lesson, the learning expected in the session was shared very well with the pupils and a brisk pace was maintained. The teacher's assessment and questioning of pupils was very good. In the Learning Support Unit, opportunities are very well taken to boost pupils' self-esteem and to provide one-to-one support for them as they work. The teachers and support staff in the Unit work together as a very effective team which supports pupils' learning very well.

17. In the small number of lessons where teaching observed in Year 1 – 6 was satisfactory, relative weaknesses included missed opportunities to extend pupils' thinking and a slow pace where activities were given more time than they required. Sometimes there was a misjudgement of what the pupils could do which required some adjustment in what the teacher planned to do. These features often slowed pupils' learning.
18. Teachers are beginning to make increasing use of ICT to assist in the preparation of resources. They are also starting to use the Internet in their teaching to find information and to take advantage of good quality learning activities for pupils. Satisfactory opportunities are taken to use ICT to support learning in the different subjects of the curriculum, though there is scope for more. The recently established ICT suite is beginning to be used effectively, for example in the Years 3 and 4 classes to support work on reflective symmetry in mathematics and on placing art work on digital photographs of the school grounds.
19. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs, with English as an additional language, those from ethnic minorities and those identified as gifted and talented is similar to that for their classmates. Support given by the assistants and learning mentors to pupils with special educational needs is very effective due to their skills, their sensitivity and the very good ratio of adults to pupils. Teaching of geography is satisfactory but too little teaching was seen in the individual subjects of the rest of the curriculum to make judgements of its quality. Some examples of good teaching were seen in history and art, where using active and involving approaches to engage pupils' interest was a key feature.

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

20. The quality and range of learning opportunities throughout the school are very good for all pupils. The Foundation Stage curriculum is based on the national Early Learning Goals, with appropriate checks on progress within these. The curricular planning throughout the school has a positive impact on learning by pupils across the range of subject areas and on the standards achieved. The curriculum is broad and relevant to the pupils. All pupils in Years 3 and 4 swim daily in a three-week block each year, a carefully considered preparation for later, water-based activities.
21. Good emphasis is placed on the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and both are having a positive impact on standards. This helps teachers to match work more closely to pupils' differing needs and contributes well to their achievement in these subjects. Policies are in place for all subjects and a two-year cycle of study caters appropriately for the mixed-age classes. The scheme for religious education is in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and recent guidance has been well used to support planning. The use of ICT to support learning in other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school has plans to provide a curriculum with more emphasis on creativity.
22. The school makes very good use of its proximity to the rich, historic and cultural centre of Portsmouth and visits are arranged to support each topic. HMS Victory and the Mary Rose, for example, are close to the school. Visits further afield, for example to Marwell Zoo by Years 1 and 2 pupils, contribute to broadening pupils' experience. The contribution of the community to the school is excellent, an improvement since the last inspection. Through its involvement with the local community, the school accesses the support of the local sports co-ordinator who involves pupils in a wide range of activities throughout the year. Police, youth and church groups are

regular visitors and the naval community ensures that pupils have access to major events. The local church supports the school very well and pupils celebrate a weekly assembly in the church. Theatre groups, musicians and an artist-in-residence further enrich the curriculum.

23. The provision for equality of access and opportunity is very good. All staff are very aware of the issues and many good examples were seen in lessons of ways in which teachers vary their methods of teaching to meet pupils' differing needs more effectively and all pupils are fully included. Pupils from the Learning Support Unit are very well integrated into the school. Provision is very good for pupils with special educational needs. Those from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with English as an additional language are well supported. The school identifies pupils deemed to be gifted or talented and they receive very good support from a learning mentor, funded through *Excellence Cluster*. There is also the Xtra Club, which arranges opportunities for enriching the curriculum where these pupils can meet with others from different schools in Portsmouth, exploring different languages in a recent session, for example. Both staff and pupils are valued by all and visitors are made to feel very welcome. The quality and care put into the school environment reflects the pride in the school felt by all the staff and its pupils.
24. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. Its strength is in the range of sporting activities, available to both boys and girls, and the access to outside specialist coaching. For example, every lunchtime a professional coach from Portsmouth Football Club runs a football club. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in coaching sessions as well as competitive matches. Good sporting links with the local secondary school also provide access to their facilities. Local outdoor activity centres are well used on a daily basis for activities off and on the water in Years 3 and 4 and for sailing for Year 6 pupils.
25. The provision for pupils' personal, social, and health education (PSHE) is very good and is central to the ethos of the school. The policy, which clearly addresses the issues of sex and relationship education and drug misuse, is well promoted by all adults. 'Circle time', where pupils have the opportunity to discuss issues relevant to their own experiences, and assemblies are also very effective provision, which supports the good relationships and personal development seen throughout the school. Many opportunities are taken to use visitors to the school to help promote PSHE. During the inspection, a local church group presented one of six sessions on resolving conflict, actively involving Year 5 and 6 pupils.
26. Links with partner institutions are very good. The school's nursery works very closely with the Portsea Day Nursery adjacent to it and a new neighbourhood nursery will be established in the near future. Pupils transfer to more than one secondary school, but all have well-planned induction procedures. Relationships with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer are strengthened through sporting links and more regular contact.
27. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall, an improvement since the last inspection. The school's ethos strongly promotes tolerance and respect for self and others and this is evident in rules found in every classroom. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school, situated in the heart of Portsea, provides quiet areas where pupils can reflect. Collective acts of worship contribute to pupils' spirituality, and the weekly assembly in the church provides for reflection in a religious environment. Stories, art and music provide opportunities in the classroom for thinking about the world, and Year 6 pupils, during their sailing week, begin to appreciate the power of the wind and sea.
28. Very good provision is made for moral development. The school places great emphasis on the promotion of a very clear behaviour code, which reinforces consistent messages and helps pupils to distinguish right from wrong. The good role modelling by all adults makes an important contribution to moral development. All adults demonstrate support for each other, and the ways in which pupils are listened to and valued encourages them to take responsibility for their own activities and think through the consequences of their own and others' actions. Teachers provide an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practise moral decision-making, as well as recognise and respect the codes and values of the different cultures in the wider community.

29. Provision for social development is also very good. There is a strong sense of community, which is fostered by the promotion of common and inclusive values by all who work in the school. Challenge Days are well used to bring the school community together. Teachers encourage pupils to work co-operatively through paired and group activities. In addition to sailing, pupils in Years 6 are offered a residential trip. Pupils are very involved in charity fundraising and this gives them an insight into social and racial differences and the chance to use their own initiative. The school promotes opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility through volunteering for a range of tasks round the school and involvement in the school council.
30. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school promotes the awareness of cultural diversity and prepares pupils for life in multi-cultural Britain through the curriculum and visits as well as visitors to the school. There is a clear anti-racism policy. In religious education, pupils study Christianity and another world religion, comparing how people worship, for example. Cultural diversity is also fostered through visits to the local art gallery and participation in arts, book and poetry weeks enriches pupils' understanding of their own and others' cultures. Pupils' understanding of their local cultural heritage is well supported by their involvement in community events and the school's location in historic Portsmouth.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school's provision for the health, safety and welfare of all its pupils is very good. All staff demonstrate high levels of commitment to doing the best possible for the pupils. The school has recognised the particular need of those pupils who have low self-esteem and has a learning mentor on the staff to support their development. Support is also arranged from outside agencies and organisations to promote such aspects as anger and conflict management. This, together with the support provided routinely by all adults in school and rigorous checking of attendance, has a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Teachers know well both the pupils' academic and personal strengths and areas that need further support and development.
32. Procedures for child protection are very good. Staff are very vigilant in this area and concerns are discussed regularly. The health and safety of the pupils are covered by a number of relevant policies, including risk assessments, for all activities undertaken. The pupils are very well supervised throughout the school day. The school has good policies and procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour that take into account the pupils' views gained through the school council. The high expectations of behaviour are consistent across the school. Should problems arise, parents are involved at an early stage. They are generally very supportive of the school, wanting to ensure that their children behave appropriately. Any concerns about behaviour are recorded as required, as are the few incidents of bullying reported to the school. Improvements in behaviour are recognised through praise. Staff always look for ways of reinforcing good behaviour, whilst reminding pupils of the rules when necessary. Bullying is taken very seriously; the school constantly reminds the pupils and parents that it thrives on secrecy and needs to be disclosed so that the necessary actions may be taken.
33. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good overall. Good records are kept of the progress of pupils with special educational needs. In the Foundation Stage, assessment is very good and it is well managed. Detailed observations are made of individual children and these help to identify and provide for the next step for each child in the six areas of learning. They also allow the school to measure progress.
34. In Years 1 – 6, assessment is good in English, mathematics and science and information is used well to guide curricular planning in these subjects. The school analyses a range of tests to help judge the pupils' standards and achievement, including optional tests from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The results are used well to identify which pupils would benefit from being given additional support through various booster groups. The school has developed an effective system for monitoring the progress of individual pupils, based on predictions made from previous tests and assessments. Individual targets are set for pupils in English, but there are often too many to guide pupils well in their learning. In mathematics and science, targets are generally based more on groups or classes. Marking is of good quality in English, mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6. Elsewhere and in other subjects, it is variable. Assessment procedures in

subjects other than English, mathematics and science are in place but they are less well developed overall and can therefore provide only limited information to pass on to the new teacher when pupils change classes. They are based on key objectives set out in planning or on level descriptions from the National Curriculum for that subject.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. The school works hard to involve parents and carers in its work and has established good links with them, including the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Sometimes this has proved difficult. Parents who expressed their views during the inspection process showed high levels of satisfaction with most aspects of the school. The school receives very few complaints from parents and enjoys the confidence of the communities it serves.
36. Information provided for parents is good. Newsletters are effective and keep the parents informed about events, activities and future dates. Other letters about events, such as trips and activities, are sent out to the parents of the pupils to whom they apply. Annual reports provide parents with the information required, including details of National Curriculum levels in English, mathematics and science. The personal comments made by the class teacher and the headteacher show how well the pupils are known by them. The school holds termly meetings at which discussions take place between teachers and parents about their children's work and progress. Attendance at these meetings is generally good and the school makes strenuous efforts to get as many parents as possible to come. Good records are kept of these meetings, both of parents' involvement and of progress made by the pupils. Whilst these meetings attract many parents, others, such as those held annually about national tests, are very poorly attended. The school takes parents' views into account, for example about the extension to the school day, through questionnaires and invitations to meetings. To ensure that all parents and carers are fully involved, the school is able to arrange the services of an interpreter when this is necessary.
37. The school works hard to establish and maintain a good partnership with its parents. All parents of children with special educational needs are invited to attend termly review meetings, when they discuss the targets on their child's individual education plans with the teacher and the co-ordinator. All parents of new pupils meet the headteacher, so that an agreement can be established between home and school. These links are very well promoted in the nursery and this continues in the reception class. The teachers from both these classes make visits to the pupils' homes before they start. The nursery runs a number of activities to involve and motivate parents, such as the making of story-book sacks and courses about the use of the Internet in education. Both of these were well received by parents. In the reception class, parents make a positive contribution to particular activities such as art. Support in school dwindles after these early years, although the school is able to get help with trips and events through direct requests to parents. The school tries hard to increase parents' involvement in the older classes.
38. The school endeavours to promote education with parents. It runs a number of other activities in the Lodge (the converted caretaker's house) that help parents to see the opportunities that are open to themselves as well as their children. It has recently completed 'Hi-Scope' with a number of parents. The Lodge is also used well to provide a range of services for parents and their children, from before-school and after-school clubs to drop-in sessions and community-based activities. The school has a Friends' Association which organises regular discos for the pupils. The money raised is used well to help fund projects such as the pergola in the grounds.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. Leadership and management in the school are very good, which is similar to the judgement made in the last inspection. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a clear view of the future development of the school, based on a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the challenges and opportunities arising from the disadvantaged area it serves. The school has clear aims, including the creation of a secure, acceptable, collaborative and stimulating community in which everyone is valued. This aim is reflected very well in the day-to-day activities of the school, where the school's great determination to support and include individual pupils, so that they are able to learn as well as they can, is evident. The deputy

headteacher has played a very important role in leading the drive to improve teaching and standards by the end of Year 6.

40. The school has commissioned software from an outside expert to assist in analysing results from national tests as well as information from optional tests from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. When used alongside close monitoring of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, a clear picture of strengths and areas for improvement is provided for the headteacher and key staff. The school is working with the local education authority in starting to use spreadsheet software to monitor and analyse assessment information in mathematics effectively and it is likely that this will be extended to English in the near future.
41. Monitoring by the headteacher of the quality of teaching and of planning is detailed, thorough and results in a clear evaluation for teachers of strengths and areas for development. Most subject managers have carried out classroom observations of their subjects; for English and mathematics, this has been undertaken in a productive partnership with local education authority advisory staff. 'Sample weeks', when pupils do their work for a particular week in one book, help subject managers, especially for English, mathematics and science, to check standards of pupils' work. As a result of these approaches, subject managers produce a useful annual review of their subject, which is shared with the headteacher, and contains a clear view of appropriate priorities. Good use is made of specialist advisory staff to support the managers, who carry out their role well. Currently, due to recent staff changes, there are no managers for art and music.
42. Performance management of teaching and non-teaching staff is very well established and the energy devoted to developing the skills and knowledge of staff was reflected in the award of *Investors in People* status in October 2002. The deputy headteacher co-ordinates staff training well and newly qualified teachers have been very well supported in starting their careers. Performance management makes a useful contribution to the clear and appropriate priorities for the school's future development set out in its strategic plan. This is a detailed and comprehensive document that has clear sections – key issues and the improvement plan for the current year, a maintenance plan and a management plan. The plan is an important document which is carefully monitored and guides the headteacher and her staff in developing the school.
43. The governors are fulfilling their role well, with active sub-committees. Some governors visit the school frequently and join the headteacher as she carries out observations of teaching and learning in classrooms. Some governors are linked with particular subject managers, some of whom have given presentations to governors, or produced written reports on their work. Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher with a focus on the progress of the strategic plan. As a result of these activities, the governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. A good race equality policy has been agreed by governors and is carefully put into practice.
44. The special educational needs co-ordinator is efficient and knowledgeable and management of this aspect is good. She meets fairly regularly with the large group of assistants and mentors as well as liaising effectively with representatives of outside agencies. The arrangements for training the assistants are satisfactory and just over half of them have had training opportunities, either within the school or on specialised courses.
45. The strategic use of resources is good. Additional funds or support in kind are sought from wherever they may be found in order to help pupils' learning and development. The school is part of the Portsmouth School-Centred Initial Teacher Training consortium and so plays an important part in training new teachers. This brings further adults who work with the pupils and training contributes to the focus on teaching and learning in the school to the benefit of staff and pupils. Available funds for ICT and special educational needs have been used well. *Excellence Cluster* funding supports the very good Learning Support Unit and the valuable work of the learning mentors, who work with pupils in the Unit and gifted or talented pupils, helps in raising standards generally and contributes positively to the partnership with parents. The school has had fewer pupils since 2001, resulting in a drop in income. There were fewer than planned in 2002-03 and, as a result, the school received less funding for 2003-04. With a fall in other funding, the school has

agreed a deficit budget with the local education authority for 2003-04 with a planned return to a balanced budget in the following year. These problems have been well managed.

46. The principles of best value are applied well by the school. Close comparisons are made with pupils' attainment at an earlier point to check that there has been enough progress made. Comparisons are made with approaches used in other local schools and the school is careful to ensure that suppliers give the best value possible. The school challenges itself on whether it could do better and whether actions taken were the best ones, and consultation with pupils and parents is good.
47. Staffing in the school is good with a range of expertise and levels of experience. Learning mentors, learning support assistants and other non-teaching staff make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and the smooth running of the school. Accommodation is good and there are two halls. The grounds include an all-weather area. Educational resources are satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to raise further the standards attained in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) Raise standards in writing throughout the school by:
- widening the range of approaches used by teachers to support pupils in structuring and developing their writing
 - making more use of opportunities for writing in subjects other than English, while ensuring that the work also promotes knowledge and understanding in those subjects
- (See paragraphs 2, 3, 59, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75)
- (2) Raise standards in speaking and listening by:
- identifying more planned opportunities for speaking and listening across the curriculum and providing more guidance on teaching these skills
 - ensuring that all teachers and learning support staff expect pupils to develop their ideas and explain their views more fully, in response to questions and in other opportunities to speak in lessons
- (See paragraphs 2, 3, 15, 59, 65, 66, 67, 75, 76, 88, 99)

THE SCHOOL HAS ALREADY IDENTIFIED ISSUE 1 FOR ATTENTION IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN.

THE LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT

49. Pupils who attend the Learning Support Unit achieve well in literacy and numeracy, when judged against very specific targets established in their individual education plans. The stated aims of the Unit are met very well. Since being established in September 2001, the Unit has helped most of its pupils to make good, and in some cases very good, progress especially in improving anti-social behaviour, re-integrating pupils and preventing exclusions.
50. Teaching is very good. All staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They form a caring team which provides behaviour management of a consistent and high quality. All staff in the Unit expect normal behaviour from pupils. This high expectation of normality makes the process of re-integration more effective. Pupils are encouraged to show respect for others and to reflect on how their behaviour affects their own and other pupils' learning. The teacher in charge is a skilled practitioner and is ensuring that all pupils receive a quality curriculum tailored to their needs. In response, pupils attend well and are developing their self-esteem and confidence. They take pride in, and are willing to share, their new learning. Success is celebrated well and is having a positive effect on raising self-esteem. The current curriculum effectively supports the pupils and contributes well when re-integration occurs. This re-integration is a major aim and is proving very successful. The whole school is committed to the re-integration of pupils from the Unit and the deployment of a learning mentor is effectively supporting this initiative. There are times when other pupils share the learning opportunities offered in the Unit, further enhancing the re-integration concept. Pupils are not made to feel different or special and the school's policy of giving the Unit a normal class status is contributing well to building pupils' self-esteem.
51. The emphasis is on pupils achieving a level of behaviour that makes attending normal lessons possible. The success rate for this is good. This is achieved by creating and agreeing appropriate and specific targets for improving behaviour. Pupils are very involved in this process and staff regularly, but appropriately, remind them about current targets. Parents are encouraged to become part of this process. They attend review meetings, receive copies of any changes to targets and attend social outings to be with their children. The level of support by parents at a recent open afternoon was very impressive.
52. Leadership and management are very good. There are clear criteria for admission. Monitoring of pupil progress is well managed and pupils' records are very good, accessible and understood by all members of the teaching team. There is a shared ethos, which is having a positive effect on the success of the Unit. The aims, plans and development of the Unit are fully supported by senior managers.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	17	17	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	38	38	24	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 two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	14	184
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	88

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	100

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	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	41

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.5
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
	2002	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	14
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	20	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (58)	63 (68)	83 (84)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	15	11
	Girls	10	10	7
	Total	18	25	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (48)	83 (74)	60 (74)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
	2002	15	18	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	8	13
	Girls	15	14	17
	Total	21	22	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (49)	67 (46)	91 (86)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	1	5	5
	Girls	9	9	12
	Total	10	14	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	30 (46)	42 (57)	52 (71)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	188	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	312

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	14

Financial information

Financial year	2002-03
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	£
Total income	815,987
Total expenditure	829,167
Expenditure per pupil	3,652
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,886
Balance carried forward to next year	10,706

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

198

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.	71	27	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	38	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	42	12	2	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	53	16	0	2
The teaching is good.	54	40	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	38	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	32	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	34	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	50	44	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	48	44	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	46	6	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	18	14	0	27

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

53. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The nursery and reception class are taught in well-equipped classrooms, imaginatively arranged to reflect the areas of learning for Foundation Stage children. Both have attractive and secure outdoor areas that are fully integrated into the daily planning to enhance physical development and other areas of the curriculum. The two teachers plan and work very closely together and this ensures children make good progress.
54. Children attend the nursery in the morning or the afternoon. The teacher and the nursery nurse make good use of home visits, which are also undertaken when children enter the reception class. These help forge close links to promote children's learning in the Foundation Stage. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average, with particular weaknesses in speaking and listening. The weakness in children's ability to express themselves continues into the reception class and the two teachers plan stimulating activities using a programme that requires children to talk about the activity they plan to do and review what they have done afterwards.
55. There have been important improvements in provision since the last inspection. The curriculum is now based on nationally agreed Early Learning Goals, focused sharply on the progress children make within these. Planning promotes the development of the children's increasing independence and moves towards one-hour sessions of literacy and numeracy in the summer term in reception in preparation for Year 1. There is very good individual assessment in the nursery and the Foundation Stage profile has been successfully introduced at the end of the reception year. The secure outdoor areas have been further developed to enhance the overall provision. Teaching has improved and is now consistently very good, with very good teamwork in both nursery and reception classes.
56. All children, regardless of background or attainment, are eager to come to school, behave very well and work hard, in response to very good teaching and high quality support from the learning support assistants and nursery nurse in all areas of learning. Planning is very thorough and teachers are very skilled at challenging the children to extend their knowledge and vocabulary and seize every opportunity to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers use their assistants effectively to support the learning of groups and individual children. They are always well briefed and know how to guide and encourage the children. At times they observe and record, for example, the contribution individual children make to group discussion, as part of the assessment procedure. The quiet but firm management of pupils and the consistently high expectation of good behaviour have achieved a calm, purposeful working atmosphere where relationships between children, and between children and adults, are very good.
57. The local education authority baseline assessment indicates that children's attainment on entry to the reception class is below average, with particular weaknesses in communication, language and literacy. Children achieve well in the nursery and in the reception class, regardless of background or attainment, with a particular strength in personal and social development. There is early identification of pupils with special educational needs, and, through planned programmes, their achievement is similar to other children. The needs of any unusually highly attaining children are met through joining Year 1 pupils for literacy and numeracy. Overall, through high quality teaching and provision most children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning except writing, and speaking and listening, by the end of their reception year and be confident and ready to start in Year 1. This represents a good level of achievement.

Personal, social and emotional development.

58. Children in the classes are happy and have settled very quickly into the class routines. They have learned the rules and conventions associated with the classroom and school life. This area of development is very well taught and teachers and assistants have high expectations of what pupils should do for themselves. A great deal of time has been spent on organising the environment and activities are provided to enable children to make choices and decisions. Teachers encourage a

degree of independence in children's learning. Children are beginning to work together collaboratively, as for example when two children in the nursery swept the leaves into a barrow and, in the reception class, the children worked with plasticine to make a shape that would float. The use of circle time, when children discussed the differences in people, contributes to their development by providing structured opportunities to share views and experiences, with speaking only at the appropriate time. They play and work happily together and know the rules associated with taking turns, tidying up and listening to others. The older children undress and dress themselves for physical education.

Communication, language and literacy

59. Teachers provide many purposeful activities that make a valuable contribution to this area. For example, children recount their news and learn to sing a large repertoire of rhymes, which helps them to practise putting words into sequence as well as their pronunciation and listening skills. Children's speaking skills are not well developed and teachers structure situations to encourage them to discuss, for example, journeys in the Travel Shop or food in the Chinese Restaurant in the nursery. Teachers and assistants are very good at helping children to speak in sentences, but there is a need for more focus in this area, as this weakness also contributes to many pupils' inability to write a sentence by the time they leave the reception class. Children enjoy books and delight in taking them home to read. Comments in some children's home/school reading journals indicate a high level of support and encouragement of reading, although there are parents who rarely hear their children read, despite the best effort of the teachers. Boys and girls handle the books carefully and by the reception class understand that print is read from left to right and talk enthusiastically about the pictures. They are beginning to recognise many clearly displayed captions and notices in the classroom. They follow text, making plausible guesses at covered words and letters. Most children know all initial sounds and letter names and can identify words around the classroom. They follow, predict and retell the sequence of a story when reading 'Walking through the Jungle'. While most pupils recognise their name, none have a sight vocabulary on entry to school and they achieve very well to come close to, and in some cases exceed, the Early Learning Goals. In reception, children are starting to copy words and some can write a simple sentence with a full stop. They know where to find words around the classroom to help them with their writing and they have regular handwriting practice. They use their whiteboards confidently to spell words, but find thinking of a sentence and writing it difficult. Teachers take every opportunity to reinforce communication skills and reading and writing play a big part in lessons. A consistent approach and emphasis on learning new vocabulary is successfully improving pupils' communication, language and literacy skills, but they begin at a low starting point.

Mathematical development

60. Day-to-day use of number by the teachers is effective in encouraging children's development of mathematics. In the nursery, children start the day by counting the number of children in the class, taking it in turns to walk round the circle of children touching each one to reinforce their understanding. They know the days of the week and the date. Children in reception enjoy their work with numbers, responding quickly and with a good degree of accuracy in their mental maths work. They can count on, given a random number, and know numbers less than and more than a given number. Most children can count as a large group in multiples of 10 to 100. Some higher attaining pupils use tally charts of lines or dots to record their work. In the water tray, they work on simple capacity, with the teacher emphasising the word 'empty'. These activities give children a range of experiences to consolidate their understanding. Number songs and daily routines are used to reinforce counting activities and, as a result, the children learn quickly and achieve well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Children are gaining good understanding of the world in which they live through their topic about journeys. This is an example of the good planning in the nursery and reception where they take a similar theme and ensure that experiences are not repeated. Examples of children's early writing skills are seen in the luggage labels on the bags the nursery children made for their journey. The reception class use the Travel Shop and explore the characteristics of the animals they may meet

in the jungle. Children enjoy investigations and worked hard at moulding plasticine into a shape that would float, after first predicting which items would sink or float. In religious education, children learn about the differences between a church and other buildings and visit the local church. They use the school and its surroundings to gain an awareness of places in relation to each other. Boys and girls have good opportunities to use a variety of construction kits to make their own models. In the nursery and reception children use the computer and by the end of the reception year they show good mouse control and can manage paint programs and some word processing, for example. Good teaching enables children to have a good balance of formal investigation and guided play. This helps them to discover new knowledge and make good progress.

Physical development

62. Physical development is well taught and children achieve well. Children have many opportunities to develop fine motor skills as they handle small tools, such as pencils, crayons, paintbrushes, glue sticks and scissors. In the nursery, children carefully selected coloured paper, pasta and other items to paste on to a plate to represent a meal. They frequently put together and take apart construction materials and work with jigsaws and other tabletop equipment. These activities are making a significant contribution to their physical development. Regular planned times in the hall provide a structured time for physical activity, as, for example, when the reception children interpreted the movement of animals in the jungle, moving through the apparatus. They use small apparatus for throwing and catching, and opportunities are provided for using the wheeled vehicles and other items in the outdoor areas.

Creative development

63. Teachers organise the curriculum well and provide the children with regular planned opportunities for music, play-dough, paint and a range of materials. Children paint using different media and, one afternoon a week, parents join in with creative activities. Boys and girls explore colour mixing using marbling and develop their three-dimensional skills when they make collages. The nursery children listened to Chinese music before composing their own for their Chinese restaurant, while the reception children chose instruments to represent the animals of the jungle. Children respond to songs with actions and use instruments. They know a variety of rhymes and jingles and are beginning to develop a sense of time and rhythm through clapping.

ENGLISH

64. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and are similar to those reported at the last inspection. However, the results in Year 6 in 2002 showed a considerable improvement from the previous year. A comparison between inspection findings and the national test results last year shows an improvement in standards as a result of good and very good teaching but it is evident from lesson observations and the work scrutiny that few pupils will attain the higher levels of attainment in reading and writing overall. Pupils' achievement, regardless of background or attainment, is good considering their well below average starting point when they enter the school. No significant differences were found between the standards of boys and girls.
65. Speaking and listening skills are below average in Years 1 to 6. Many pupils enter the school with low levels of spoken language and have not experienced a rich variety of language experiences, such as nursery rhymes and story telling. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain close to average skills in listening, but their speaking skills are weak. Most listen attentively to their teachers at the beginning of lessons and are keen to answer questions about the big book on animals they are reading together. However, there is a high proportion of pupils in both year groups who have special educational needs and several are easily distracted. They call out inappropriately and fidget, though the teachers make consistent efforts to get pupils to understand how they should behave in lessons. Even in a small reading group with support, a few pupils lose interest and begin to talk to each other. More than half of the pupils have a restricted vocabulary and this limits their learning in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils have difficulty expressing their ideas.

66. In Years 3 to 6, many pupils have a limited vocabulary and speak in simple sentences. The higher attaining pupils seldom use a complex sentence structure when speaking or in their writing. Many pupils are diffident when expressing their ideas and need to be encouraged by their teachers to give their answers or opinions. It was clear that the pupils were not listening well to the teacher at the beginning of an English lesson in Years 3 and 4. They seem to lose concentration if they do not immediately understand what the teacher is saying and teachers need very good questioning skills to keep pupils on track. They have difficulty phrasing their responses to questions and this was observed during an assembly, when one of the pupils helped a friend to show her work and suggested, "She probably done this cos...". Not many pupils respond to questions with grammatically correct sentences and a Year 6 higher attaining pupil gave the meaning of loneliness as, "You don't know no-one."
67. Drama is highlighted in the school improvement plan as an area for development, but it is not sufficiently identified in planning to have much impact on improving speaking and listening skills. There is some good practice, for example in Years 1 and 2 when pupils shared their own writing books they had made in separate classes. Most pupils quickly found a partner and enjoyed talking about their books. This was a good example of how the pupils' vocabulary can be extended. In a Year 5 group, pupils were able to discuss a weather report in groups in a geography lesson but, generally, few opportunities are given to the pupils in Years 3 to 6 to increase their fluency in vocabulary across the whole curriculum. Planning includes few opportunities for role-play or drama or to address a range of audiences. Neither are pupils encouraged to talk to a partner about how to find the answers to questions from the teachers. When there is an opportunity for role-play, it is rarely extended or developed sufficiently. There is no recording of pupils' attainment in this aspect of literacy.
68. Pupils' reading skills are below average by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. However, there are indications that more pupils attained average levels in the national tests in 2003 compared with the previous year, due to a sharp focus on teaching reading. This is good achievement when two-thirds of the pupils have been identified as having learning problems. At all ages, the pupils enjoy reading the shared text in the literacy hour, as this gives them access to some aspects of reading with which many would have difficulty on their own. The few higher attaining pupils in Year 2 read simple texts accurately and with good expression and understanding, but are only at an average level of reading for their age. Not all can persevere with building up words using their phonic knowledge. A few of the average attaining pupils are still finger pointing when they read. Very few pupils can make imaginative predictions about what might happen later in the story.
69. Pupils continue to enjoy books in Years 3 to 6. In Year 6, the higher attaining pupils read with fluency, accuracy and good expression. They can give a summary of events and can answer questions about what has happened in the story. Several pupils can discuss the characters in stories and show empathy when the characters have problems or have to make difficult decisions. When given a choice, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 could say immediately which of the characters they would rather be with in a story they were reading. However, pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not have good reading habits and find it difficult to persevere with their reading unless an adult is with them. The older, higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 can use dictionaries and thesauri to help with the challenging texts they are given to make progress with their comprehension skills. However, when the teacher was reading part of a story to improve the pupils' comprehension skills, the pupils had difficulty remembering the story line and needed much prompting to answer questions. The pupils' lack of experience of a wide range of reading at home and at school often inhibits their comprehension. This was evident when the teacher asked when William Blake had written the poem (written in old English) they were studying. The pupils were clearly confused and several thought it might have been written last year.
70. Standards in writing are well below average at the end of Year 2. Although the pupils show their understanding of a story structure, very few write at an appropriate length for their age, except for the higher attaining pupils. This group and the average attaining pupils have made good progress from their attainment at the beginning of the year. Their stories are often lively and engage the reader but the pupils sometimes forget full stops and capital letters. Their progress in spelling is evident from the test results and from their extended writing. A few pupils can write in different styles, giving instructions or writing in a persuasive way, and have been taught how to write a story

with a beginning, middle and ending. However, they are still using the word 'then' too often to begin their sentences. The large group of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs find writing difficult because of their restricted vocabulary and under-developed language skills. These pupils need substantial support to enable them to concentrate for even five minutes. In one lesson, five of this group could only write the initial letter in a spelling test.

71. A large proportion of pupils in Years 3 and 4 lack the skills and confidence to write extended stories; their handwriting is poor and attainment in writing is well below average. Their understanding of how to link sentences together in an interesting way is very limited as well as their grasp of English grammar, such as contractions. This is because of the pupils' under-developed spoken language and thinking skills as well as a lack of experience of a wide range of literature. It was evident in lessons that few pupils understood connective or contracted words and needed very focused support from the teacher.
72. Progress is better in writing in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' writing shows that they understand how to write in different styles, such as writing letters and diary entries. A few pupils are still beginning sentences in lower case and omitting capitals. Higher attaining pupils can write successfully in a range of genres. They can identify personification in poetry, write playscripts and improve direct speech in stories. Sometimes, inappropriate adjectives show that, although the pupils are working hard to reach the learning objective in a lesson, their under-developed language skills are limiting their achievement. Handwriting skills are much improved in Years 5 and 6.
73. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 to 6. Basic skills are taught well, such as very thorough teaching in Years 1 and 2 of the sounds the letters make. Throughout the school, the teachers' use of the learning support assistants is very good. In most lessons observed, one or two assistants were present who gave good support and this resulted in pupils being taught in very small groups. The result is that pupils of all abilities invariably made good progress in most lessons in their reading and writing skills. Marking is consistently good and teachers give the pupils clear indications of how they have responded to the learning objectives in lessons. However, this could be developed even further by teachers returning to the marking points at the beginning of lessons and giving pupils reminders of what they need to do to improve. All teachers throughout the school keep very thorough reading records and this is clearly helping the pupils to improve their reading skills. Good links with science and art were evident in Years 1 and 2. Teachers' imaginative methods ensured that pupils created a habitat for their mini-beast that resulted in improved writing skills. This was because the pupils were given sufficient time to become involved with the task and felt empathy for their creature. However, this is an aspect of teaching that needs to be further developed throughout the school.
74. In an example of very good teaching of guided reading to a small group in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, the teacher persisted with inarticulate pupils in order to help them answer her questions about the differences in character between the main personalities in the book. At the same time, she expected the pupils to write on their small boards the characteristics that are admired by others. The teacher needed her very good management and control strategies to persuade a reluctant pupil to co-operate. Her very good use of language, "You're looking for Mum's vision of Tim", resulted in pupils describing the differences between the characters and saying who they would rather be with. Very good learning took place for this group of pupils. In an example of very effective teaching in a Years 5 and 6 class, the teacher's high expectations ensured that the groups she was working with made very good progress with their own vocabulary development and understanding of some difficult issues, such as whether it is more advantageous to be educated at home or at school. Pupils responded very well, tried hard to concentrate when listening to extracts from the story and a few gave some convincing arguments. The teacher's very good pace in the lesson, continually giving the pupils time slots in which to work and finish specific tasks, ensured that all worked hard and moved forward in their learning.
75. The weaknesses in teaching of English are few but, nevertheless, are holding some pupils back in their learning. In addition to the lack of focused planning for speaking and listening opportunities, in a very few classes there is a lack of the resources used in most literacy lessons to enliven lessons and make the opening sessions interesting and motivating for the pupils. A very few teachers do not model writing well and this is very confusing for the pupils whose writing is well

below average. Teachers paste too many individual targets on the inside of pupils' books. However, there is a model of good practice in Years 3 and 4, where the teachers have pinned pockets containing individual targets on a display, although these were not seen being used. Apart from the good links with science identified in the Years 1 and 2 classes, there are some links developing between other subjects and English. Pupils write a sentence or two in religious education and write lists and label diagrams in science. In history, pupils have written diary entries and short biographies and they are going to write a story from a Victorian child's viewpoint. In the samples of work available, however, there was only limited evidence of links. The use of ICT is appropriate and pupils in Year 2 used *Talking First Word* to create a title page for a story. The *Success Maker* program is also now in use.

76. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented effectively. The assistants are well trained and give good support. They keep good records of the progress the pupils make in lessons and liaise with the teachers appropriately. Assessment procedures are good and used to track pupils' progress. Although there is a policy for speaking and listening and the aims are appropriate, there is no guidance for teachers to put it into practice. Monitoring of lessons has taken place by the manager in conjunction with a very helpful consultant from the local education authority. The feedback from these visits has been used effectively to improve practice. Regular visits from the consultants are helping the school to move forward in planning more effectively, for example. The school library has an adequate range of books and is used appropriately by the pupils. Each class visits the local library every two weeks and the pupils look forward to their visits. An author has visited the school during the last term and his talks and discussions with pupils motivated them to improve their writing. The pupils' work is celebrated appropriately and displayed in folders that all the pupils enjoy reading.

MATHEMATICS

77. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average, which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The achievement of all pupils, regardless of background or attainment, is good when their well below average attainment on entry is considered. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average and this is a significant improvement from the previous inspection when standards were judged to be low. The results of the national tests in 2002 also showed a marked improvement from the previous year and this is likely to be maintained in 2003. During the inspection, no significant differences were observed in the achievement of boys and girls.
78. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 is good and this is an improvement from the last inspection, when some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The basic skills are taught effectively, such as learning tables and measuring accurately. The teachers' use of assistants is very good and, in most lessons, planning ensures that pupils are working in very small groups with effective support and making good progress. However, there was little evidence in lessons, in the opening or closing sessions, of teachers questioning pupils about their thinking processes and asking how they had worked out problems. Opportunities were missed to extend pupils' thinking skills as well as their mathematical vocabulary. An example was when pupils were asked to write down their answers on small whiteboards in a whole-class session. This would have been a good time for pupils to share their thoughts with a partner as they were struggling with the answers.
79. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have covered a good range of mathematics. Several pupils are not confident with addition and subtraction facts to 20 or with the two times table. The higher attaining pupils can count on and back in twos. Many pupils can name common two and three-dimensional shapes and at least half of the pupils can measure fairly accurately. From the work scrutiny, there was good evidence that the pupils had enjoyed measuring worms and this shows how imaginative teaching helps the pupils to make good progress. The pupils had constructed graphs to show how vehicles parked at different times of the day. The higher attaining pupils were able to interpret the data and say which time of day was busiest. A few pupils can tell the time including 'five past' and 'twenty to' the hours.
80. In a lesson when they were learning how to describe positions and move along a route, most pupils had difficulty with mathematical vocabulary. The teacher needed to rephrase her question two or three times before one pupil could tell her that all the pupils were sitting *behind* the special

needs assistant. Good methods of teaching ensured that the pupils moved forward in their understanding of giving directions, such as 'six paces' and 'a quarter turn to the right'. Although the pupils made good progress in the lesson, it was slow to begin with and the teacher needed to prompt the pupils continually to give specific directions. In a lesson using a programmable floor robot, about a third of the pupils could contribute their knowledge of a right angle being 90 degrees and a few could identify right angles in a rectangle. One pupil was able to remember that 90 degrees was a quarter turn but very few pupils could estimate correctly. They had no understanding of how to check their estimates. Very good support in this lesson from an assistant and a student teacher ensured that most pupils made appropriate progress. However, the pupils without assistance struggled to work constructively.

81. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 ensure that the curriculum is covered well. From the work scrutiny, it is clear that by the end of Year 6 the pupils can use formal methods to calculate long multiplication as well as using informal methods of partitioning. Good opening sessions in Years 3 to 6 are helping the pupils to move forward in their skills of mental calculation. Good mental strategies have been taught and learned in their written number work. Pupils are able to calculate a missing angle using their knowledge of degrees in a circle and have completed a substantial amount of work on fractions and decimals. Their knowledge of the vocabulary of probability has developed well and the higher attaining pupils show good understanding.
82. In an example of very good teaching in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, effective planning showed how the teacher had revised her plans after assessment. This was a lesson in a unit of work on translating shapes and learning how to describe the position of a point on a grid of squares where the lines are numbered. Several of the pupils found it difficult to recall what they had learned from the previous day but the teacher persevered, using the overhead projector to help with understanding. This proved to be a very helpful resource and the older, higher attaining pupils were confident enough to come out to the board and move and draw the triangles in different positions. With support from the teacher, they were able to describe the coordinates. Pupils were learning to use the words horizontal and vertical, although many struggled. It was evident that the pupils benefited from this interactive teaching style and enjoyed coming out to the board. Good attention was given in the lesson to pupils having the opportunity to explain their thinking and to the teacher probing further and helping their reasoning processes. In the main part of the lesson, the teacher concentrated on teaching the pupils with special educational needs. This is good practice and rarely observed when there is more than one assistant available.
83. Good management and control ensure that most pupils work at a good rate and this was evident in a Years 5 and 6 class when the quality of teaching and learning was good. A well-paced opening session, halving decimals, showed that pupils' skills are below average. Very few pupils knew that half of nine is four point five. The main part of the lesson was organised well and was a continuation of previous lessons on reflection. High expectations were evident and good attention given to timing, so that pupils were given specific amounts of time to complete certain tasks, such as drawing a pattern on a tile and reflecting it in all four quadrants. The closing session was interesting and challenging for the pupils as the teacher used playing cards to teach rotational symmetry. The three of hearts proved particularly tricky as, when the card is turned upside down, the middle heart is pointing the opposite way. Only a few pupils noticed this and most pupils found the final task of calculating how many orders of rotational symmetry too difficult. Not enough time was given in this lesson, during the opening or closing sessions, for pupils to explain how they had calculated their answers.
84. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been effective. Good resources are used in most lessons, such as the small whiteboards that enable the teachers to assess the pupils' answers quickly. Improvement is evident by the end of Year 6 and a good range of the curriculum is covered throughout the school. Opportunities are missed in some lessons to extend pupils' thinking by skilful questioning. The use of numeracy skills in other subjects is appropriate. Evidence was seen in science when pupils were taking temperatures and creating graphs to record the results of their experiments. In geography, pupils were investigating climate graphs of St Lucia as part of their weather forecasting research. In Years 1 and 2, also in geography, the pupils made tally charts and organised a survey to find out how they all travelled to school. The use of ICT needs developing more but a successful lesson was observed in the ICT suite on

symmetry for the Years 3 and 4 pupils. The pupils have recently begun to use the self-assessment program *Success Maker*.

85. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject manager is a very experienced teacher and is not attached to a class. She releases two senior teachers each week and is able to monitor planning and pupils' progress in those classes regularly. In addition, she monitors the planning and pupils' books termly throughout the school. The manager is very knowledgeable about the children and their specific needs and is aware that problem solving is an element of mathematics that the pupils find difficult. There has been very good support from the local education authority and the consultant's visits to address problems with planning and other issues have been particularly helpful in moving the school forward. Joint observations have been carried out by the consultant and the manager and feedback given. Assessment is good in mathematics and the optional tests are used to identify weaknesses in pupils' progress.

SCIENCE

86. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average but by the end of Year 6 they are average. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when standards in Year 6 were well below average. Learning in lessons observed was good and pupils are achieving well over time. Pupils with special educational needs supported by experienced learning support assistants are fully included and achieve well. The achievement of pupils with English as an additional language, those from ethnic minorities and those identified as gifted or talented is similar. No significant differences were observed in standards attained by boys and girls.
87. From the lessons observed, samples of work provided by the school, discussions with the subject manager and pupils, all aspects of science, life and physical processes, and materials and their properties are well covered. There is a strong emphasis on teaching scientific enquiry and investigative skills, although it is only in Years 5 and 6 where the level of recorded work meets expected levels. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' recorded work is below expectations. Notes indicated that they are going through the process, but predictions, fair testing and conclusions are not coherently presented. In contrast, Years 5 and 6 pupils record their work well, by writing and drawing, and they use their numeracy skills to communicate information through tables and block graphs. However, throughout the school, there is limited evidence of the use of ICT.
88. The teaching of science is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are well supported by the subject manager in their planning and assessment. Teachers recognise and use scientific vocabulary, but do not always insist on its use by pupils. The introduction of key vocabulary in planning would add further emphasis to this. Teachers manage their pupils well, make science interesting and maintain a good pace. This has a clear impact on pupils' learning and their good progress in lessons. Class organisation allows opportunities for pupils to work together collaboratively to plan and discuss their work, and this contributes to their social development. Teachers question pupils to assess their understanding and use their special needs assistant very well for this purpose too. Good teaching focuses on encouraging pupils to ask clear questions. Year 3 and 4 pupils were challenged to investigate materials that would keep water hot and cold. Good teaching was evident in the way the experiments were resourced and organised and the very good use of assistants for both gifted or talented and special educational needs pupils. Pupils worked very sensibly in pairs, testing bubble wrap, tin foil, kitchen roll and fabric and recording, with a good degree of accuracy, the changes in temperature every three minutes. Due emphasis was placed on fair testing. The closing session was generally effective, but too many variables left some pupils confused and there was too little insistence on the use of scientific vocabulary. The data collected is to be entered onto a data-handling program. In a very good Years 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher shared the learning objective (how well different materials muffle sound) with the class before a challenging question and answer introduction. Pupils then settled quickly into groups to record their predictions. Very good adult support contributed to the pace of the activity and pupils from the Learning Support Unit and other pupils with special educational needs were fully included. Recorded work by the end of the lesson showed pupils were meeting average expectations.
89. The teaching of science is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are well supported by the subject manager in their planning and assessment. Teachers recognise and use scientific

vocabulary, but do not always insist on its use by pupils. The introduction of `key vocabulary` in planning would add further emphasis to this. Teachers manage their pupils well, make science interesting and maintain a good pace. This has a clear impact on pupils' learning and their good progress in lessons. Class organisation allows opportunities for pupils to work together collaboratively, to plan and discuss their work and this contributes to their social development. Teachers question pupils to assess their understanding and use their special needs assistant very well for this purpose too.

90. The subject is well led and managed and standards by the end of Year 6 are improving. To raise standards further, the school should continue to develop the checking of pupils' progress and regularly monitor pupils' written work. Teachers' ability to assess work using National Curriculum levels and to set appropriate, individual short-term achievable targets needs further development.

ART AND DESIGN

91. It was only possible to observe one lesson in art and design during the inspection because of time-tabling arrangements. The subject is organised into units with design and technology and is taught every other half term. Evidence was drawn from a scrutiny of displays of the work of some pupils, from a portfolio that contained work mainly from the previous school year and from planning documents. It is not possible to make judgements of standards, the quality of teaching and learning or improvement since the last inspection, as there was not enough evidence.
92. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 had created habitats for a pretend mini-beast out of card and paper. This work was linked well with science and writing. After a visit to a local aquarium, pupils had looked at paintings in the style of Monet and had experimented with mixing different shades of blue to create the background. Their efforts to produce three-dimensional fishes and mermaids showed that their skills of mixing paints, cutting and fixing are developing appropriately. The artwork available from pupils in Years 3 and 4 showed a wide range of media. Earlier in the school year, pupils explored their views about family relationships in chalk on black paper and used their ideas to make a double portrait. Pupils in the same year groups had produced effective drawings using a variety of media of moving feet, mainly in trainers. Most pupils had managed to capture the dynamic movement and had paid attention to the detailed patterns on the shoes. However, their drawings using the technique of pointillism were immature and showed a lack of ability to evaluate their own work and improve. Their skills in their aboriginal paintings had not progressed from the previous year, when colour mixing for background effects is given a focus in the planning documents. The art and design work on display produced by the pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed the work of a few pupils only. The still life paintings from an observation of a fruit bowl were displayed well to value the pupils' work and showed average attainment. Bold use of paint and effective brushwork brought the fruit to life and the use of yellow, in particular, lightened the paintings. Pupils are beginning to explore how different brush marks create a variety of textures. Their work, called *Rainy Days*, of the school playground surrounded by the variety of buildings, both old and new, was effective. In one Years 5 and 6 class, in particular, the pupils had captured well the movement of the children in the playground, playing ball or skipping.
93. The quality of teaching and learning in the lesson observed in a Years 3 and 4 class was good. The unit of work has been planned well and includes use of the digital camera to take photographs of suitable places around the school buildings and grounds to place statues. Very good support from three assistants, including one who was working with the gifted and talented pupils, ensured that this busy lesson was organised well and the pupils made good progress. The teacher's good methods ensured that that pupils' efforts in making their models of a sculpture were encouraged, refined and improved. A variety of materials was used and resources were very good for the pupils, who were totally involved for the whole lesson. Although pupils' skills were below average in creating their models, they were not discouraged and persevered when their ideas did not work out as they had thought. The drawings they had made in their sketchbooks at the beginning of the work were immature and well below average.
94. There is currently no subject manager for art and design, as the teacher has been on long-term leave, although this teacher visited the school during the inspection week to discuss the development of the subject with the inspection team. She is clearly experienced, enthusiastic and

knowledgeable about art and design. When she was the manager, her priorities had been to raise the confidence of the teachers and to create a portfolio of work. She had also shown progression of skills through a collection of all the pupils' efforts in drawing a teddy bear. This proved to be a valuable exercise, as it was clear that a few teachers lacked knowledge and understanding of how to teach art and design. As there is no manager at present, few of the objectives of the school improvement plan have been addressed - for example, the portfolio of pupils' work is not being regularly updated and used to inform standards. Although assessment procedures are in place, they are not used consistently. The subject makes an appropriate contribution to the social and cultural development of the pupils when they work together in groups and paint or draw in the style of famous artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. No lessons were observed during the inspection. However, from the work available and discussion with the subject manager, standards are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. What pupils make is broadly average, but they spend little time in recording their designs, modifications and evaluations. Overall, from a low base on entry to the school, pupil achievement is satisfactory.
96. Vehicles and mini-beasts made by Years 1 and 2 pupils show that they can cut out and shape materials, join and combine materials and components and use simple finishing techniques to improve the appearance. In Years 3 - 6, there is some evidence of pupils drawing their design, but these are sketches on paper and show no evaluation or modification. Years 3 and 4 pupils have designed hats linked to the Victorian topic. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 made shelters for their bears, which they tested by leaving them outside for two weeks. Linked with their topic, they have made Egyptian collars, selecting their fabric, threads and sequins. However, there is little evidence to show the processes used or of whether pupils' literacy skills are used and consolidated usefully in the range of writing undertaken, such as labelling, note making and the writing of short evaluative accounts. Neither is there much evidence of mathematical skills in measuring and in drawing plans being used effectively at various times.
97. The planned two-year programme ensures good coverage, including food technology. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the subject did not meet statutory requirements in full. The subject is well led and managed. There are plans to monitor teaching and basic assessment procedures at the end of each unit are being developed. Challenge days, that involve the whole school, often have a design and technology focus, which contributes positively to the development of the subject. Consumable resources are satisfactory and there is a good food technology room, but the use of ICT, including control programs, is limited.

GEOGRAPHY

98. Although there was one opportunity to observe a geography lesson in Years 1 and 2 and two in Years 5 and 6, these covered a similar aspect of the subject which was also the only one represented in the samples of pupils' work available. As a result, there was not enough evidence to judge pupils' attainment and achievement across the full range of knowledge, skills and understanding in this subject. There is too little evidence to judge improvement since the last inspection. Observation and available work indicate that by the end of Year 2, pupils have only a very simple grasp of what places are like and can make only basic comparisons with the local area. By the end of Year 6, in this aspect of geography, achievement is sound and pupils can readily identify some key features of St Lucia but they have little grasp of how these influence the lives and activities of those living on the island.
99. Evidence from lesson observations indicates that pupils respond well to opportunities to engage with geography, such as watching the video of St Lucia. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features. There is a strong commitment to engaging pupils' interest, such as through the 'travels' of Barnaby Bear in Years 1 – 2. The device of Barnaby going home with a pupil, taking a journey and writing a postcard to the class was clearly working well during the days of the inspection. Pupils in Years 5 – 6 enjoyed their 'flight' to St Lucia when they pretended to fly to the island and took part in a role-play of a telephone call with a friend or relative at home, telling them

what the island was like. This was a good approach, though many pupils struggled to produce a flowing conversation and would have benefited from more support. Year 5 pupils relished the opportunity to prepare a weather report, which was recorded using a video camera, based on a hurricane hitting St Lucia in 1994.

100. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject manager only took on the role at the beginning of this school year. She has received good support from a specialist subject adviser and good planning for geography has been produced. The next step has rightly been identified as producing packs of materials to guide teachers in using the new planning. The manager has had opportunities to observe lessons and has made appropriate plans for developing the subject further. Resources are unsatisfactory at present, though some new material has recently been purchased on a locality in Mexico. There is some evidence of ICT supporting learning in geography, such as climate graphs for St Lucia, but there is scope for further development.

HISTORY

101. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with expected standards. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils, regardless of background or attainment, achieve well overall by the end of Year 2. There was no opportunity to observe history lessons in Years 1 and 2 classes and judgements here are based on examining samples of pupils' work and on a scrutiny of planning. There was only one history lesson in Years 3 and 4 that could be observed during this inspection and none in Years 5 and 6. Little work was available for scrutiny. It is therefore not possible to make a judgement of standards by the end of Year 6.
102. By the end of Year 2, most pupils show some knowledge of items from Victorian schools and can look at photographs from the past to identify some simple differences between schools today and those at the end of the 19th century. For some, these differences are at a very simple level. Pupils mostly have a sound knowledge of the story of Grace Darling's rescue of stricken seafarers and can identify differences between lifeboats today and those of the 1830s. Historical source material showing different stages in the rescue can be sequenced by most, though one struggled to go beyond saying that Grace "saved the people". Most pupils know the outline story of the Great Fire of London and one higher attaining pupil was able to provide a good explanation of why the fire started, how it spread and what changed as a result of this event. While pupils could generally sequence events in a narrative, there was little evidence available of a wider sense of chronology.
103. The limited work available from Year 6 showed pupils' basic knowledge of features of day-to-day life in different periods of the past, such as food and drink and the mummification process in ancient Egypt. There was no evidence available of pupils' understanding of chronology, of why events and developments take place in the past and how such events can be represented and interpreted differently.
104. From discussion, examining planning and the single lesson that could be observed, it is clear that teachers have a strong commitment to approaching the past in ways that will engage pupils' interest. This involves arranging relevant visits, such as to the reconstruction of Tutankhamun's tomb at Dorchester, and borrowing artefact-handling collections from the Hampshire History Centre. In the lesson observed, pupils' interest was captured by reconstructing something of the curriculum and atmosphere of a late Victorian classroom, using artefacts on loan as well as some material downloaded from the Internet. Pupils responded well to the good, well-planned teaching which proceeded at a good pace. There is too little evidence to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching in this subject.
105. Good use has been made recently of support from a specialist history adviser. There is a clear two-year cycle of different units of work, with good planning focusing sharply on historical knowledge, skills and understanding. Evidence suggests that this planning has had the greatest impact so far in Years 1 and 2 and this explains why achievement is good in these years. Appropriate opportunities for assessment are set out in the planning. Currently teachers assess using an agreed format but the subject manager has already correctly identified that this needs to be linked more closely to what is being taught.
106. There is some evidence of the use of ICT in history, mostly utilising word processing and digital images. There is scope for greater use. Resources are being built up for each unit in the cycle and good use is being made of highly focused materials to support staff in their teaching. There is a useful collection of video material and books for some topics and a limited range of software.
107. Leadership and management of this subject are satisfactory. There are planned observations of teaching and learning to check that pupils have made suitable progress and the subject manager has a firm grasp of strengths and weaknesses in attainment. She has a clear view of what needs to be done to secure further improvement

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with expected standards and pupils, regardless of background or attainment, achieve well. This is an improvement since the last

inspection. By the end of Year 6, attainment is below expected levels overall as, in some aspects of the subject, pupils are not doing as well as they should. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. New equipment has not yet had its full impact on standards of work attained by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils are currently reaching expected standards in some aspects of ICT, such as using word processing, but not in others, such as the use of control and sensing software and spreadsheets.

109. There were few opportunities to observe ICT lessons during this inspection and judgements made draw extensively on examining samples of pupils' work on paper and a scrutiny of planning. Year 2 pupils present and organise information and share ideas in various forms using ICT, including text, tables and graphics. They use the keyboard and mouse effectively, entering, saving and retrieving their work. Pupils can create a picture using graphics software and insert it into text they have composed on a word processor, such as the story of the Three Little Pigs. Most can use a sequence of instructions to control a floor robot. They can create a graph showing data collected in a traffic survey in geography.
110. Most Year 6 pupils use word-processing software effectively. They create newspaper stories in English, using headlines and columns, of their version of nursery rhymes and fairy stories, such as 'Clock who attacked mice' (Hickory Dickory Dock). They use the digital camera and photo editor to create a variety of effects, including adding text. They can construct graphs showing temperature at different locations in the world in geography and produce a pie chart to show pupils' favourite chocolates. Year 5 pupils enjoyed the opportunity to present a weather report on St Lucia using the video camera. Most pupils can use spreadsheets in a simple way but have had limited opportunities to explore such software. Some have made presentations using specialised software to include photographs and on a recent residential trip some created web pages. Most pupils have had not had enough experience yet of the use of control and sensing software as equipment is currently limited and new.
111. Evidence from lesson observations indicates that pupils generally respond well to opportunities to use ICT to support their learning, such as in mathematics to explore directions. They show interest and a desire to complete tasks set. There is too little evidence to judge the quality of teaching. In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory or good. The teacher's knowledge of the software was sound and the correct terminology was used with understanding and communicated clearly.
112. There is good planning for ICT, using a Portsmouth scheme for Year 1- 2 and the school's own document for Years 3 –6. ICT skills are mainly taught through learning in the other subjects of the curriculum, particularly English. Opportunities for the use of ICT are identified in other subjects, though not all have been fully exploited as yet. A new package has been used since January this year to support pupils' learning in English and mathematics. Teachers are assessing and recording pupils' skills in using ICT in an agreed format.
113. The pupil to computer ratio is satisfactory. There is a new suite of computers which had been in use for only about a month at the time of the inspection. As a result, not all the software desired had been installed yet and some staff and pupils were not yet fully familiar with the network. There are further machines in classrooms. These are currently linked with the network integrated learning package. but not to the new suite of computers, this is planned for next year. There is a sound range of software though, as is recognised, there is scope for more in some subjects, such as science, history and geography. Leadership and management of ICT are good. The subject manager has worked hard to develop ICT and has a clear view of standards and the areas in need of development. She has worked with some effect to compensate for weaknesses in the school's provision in Years 3 – 6, taking advantage of support from outside the school, such as the Mary Rose Trust and the Children's Fund, to provide in-depth opportunities for pupils to use ICT equipment, for example for data logging.

MUSIC

114. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in the singing element of music are at expected levels and achievement is sound. During the inspection, only one lesson in Years 1 and 2 was seen, and

there is insufficient evidence in the other elements of composing, listening and appraising to make a judgement of standards, achievement or improvement since the last inspection.

115. In the one lesson seen, the teaching was good. Pupils warmed up clapping different rhythms. The teacher introduced the notion of pitch well, explaining it clearly as high and low notes. A xylophone was used effectively to pitch notes and pupils listened carefully and distinguished between two different notes. No other instruments were used and only a few pupils had the opportunity to pitch notes.
116. Until April 2003, a specialist music teacher taught music throughout the school, and led and managed the subject. Due to financial constraints, she is no longer employed. However, all class teachers were involved in the music lessons and there is a well-developed scheme of work that guides the planning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about music and particularly the compositions associated with their topics. The school, until this year, has always participated in the Portsmouth music festival, which makes a valuable contribution and is an event that pupils enjoy and remember. This, and visiting groups such as a steel band, the Royal Marines Band and church groups who play in assemblies, makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development. Resources are good and include electronic keyboards, but the use of ICT is under-developed. There is currently no monitoring of teaching or assessment of pupils' musical development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. There was not enough evidence to judge pupils' standards of attainment and achievement in physical education, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school or improvement since the last inspection. This was because of time-tabling arrangements and also due to the older pupils visiting other schools and sporting events during the inspection.
118. One lesson was observed in a Years 1 and 2 class that was a rehearsal for the obstacle race in the forthcoming sports day. Pupils were well organised by the teacher and there was good support from the student teacher who was a good role model and joined a team. The pupils learned how to run faster and to observe the rules, such as only picking up one beanbag to put into the hoop rather than a handful. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language were supported well and made appropriate progress in the lesson. Although pupils showed average skills in running and bouncing a ball, it was noticeable that none of the boys could skip.
119. The subject manager is very experienced and knowledgeable about the subject. She manages the subject well and ensures that the pupils have every opportunity to take part in a variety of sporting activities, both during and at the end of the school day. The Years 3 and 4 pupils have swimming lessons every day for three weeks and most of them can swim at the end of this period. It is important that they learn to swim because each year the school organises visits for groups of pupils to attend an outdoor centre where the pupils learn to sail small boats and also how to abseil. During the week of the inspection, all the Year 4 pupils attended a local swimming gala. All the pupils in Years 5 and 6 travelled to Southampton where the school team was taking part in a cricket competition at the Hampshire cricket ground.
120. The appropriate priorities of the subject manager are to develop a scheme of work over a two-year cycle and ensure that an assessment system is put into place. She has joined the Portsmouth Schools Sports Co-ordinator Programme and is very active within that organisation. The school enters every tournament possible and has won the Portsmouth area football league for two years running. In two weeks, the Year 5 pupils will be attending a local hockey festival. The annual school sports day is very well organised with competitive activities and also a carousel of activities for all pupils, including the children from the nursery. The subject makes a good contribution to the moral and social development of the pupils when they learn the rules of different sports and to play in a team together.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. From the two lessons seen in Years 3 - 6, discussions with the subject manager and pupils, standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Year 6. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. From a low starting point on entering the school, pupils' achievement is sound over time. There was insufficient evidence, as there is little recorded work, to make a judgement of standards and achievement at the end of Year 2. The main weakness in the learning of the older pupils is the lack of recorded work and of the opportunity to use and develop literacy skills.
122. The work provided is based on the scheme of work devised by the local education authority to support the teaching of the local agreed syllabus and focuses on learning about and from religious and human experiences. The principal focus is the teaching of Christianity, but differences in other religions are explored through Hinduism in Years 1 and 2, Judaism in Years 3 and 4 and Islam in Years 5 and 6. This provides strong support for teachers in their planning, and identifies appropriate resources and religious artefacts to enhance the quality of pupils learning. Religious education has an established place in the school's curriculum and makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
123. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to retell some of the stories Jesus told and to appreciate special books such as the Bible and Christian festivals, as well as Hindu festivals such as Divali. By Year 6, pupils have some understanding of Christianity, Judaism and Islam and they are beginning to recognise that they are changing and growing in their beliefs and ideas, as they get older.
124. Teaching in the two lessons seen was sound. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, pupils were asked to think about religious and non-religious symbols but there was not enough stimulus in the introduction and the only non-religious symbol pupils could think of was the school badge. Most pupils could give some explanation of the Christian symbols of the cross, candle and water, but found greater difficulty with the fish and crook. Most found writing a sentence about one of the symbols very difficult, reflecting poor literacy skills. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils considered the difference in worship between Christians and Muslims. In groups, they shared ideas on the meaning of worship with one of the group recording their ideas, before a class discussion. The discussion was too wide ranging and would have benefited from key questions to answer, set as learning objectives at the beginning of the lesson.
125. Very good links have been established with the local church and pupils visit Portsmouth Cathedral. The subject manager is conscientious in maintaining resources for the subject and ensuring that the planned curriculum is delivered, although there is no monitoring of the subject or assessment of pupils' understanding against the level descriptions in the agreed syllabus. No evidence of the use of ICT in this subject was seen. The overall quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection, and, although standards at the end of Year 6 are below expected levels, they have improved.