

INSPECTION REPORT

COTTAGE GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT

Southsea

LEA area: Portsmouth

Unique reference number: 116203

Headteacher: Mrs P Honeychurch

Lead inspector: Mrs H Bonser

Dates of inspection: 20th - 22nd September 2004

Inspection number: 266621

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	310
School address:	Chivers Close Southsea Hampshire
Postcode:	PO5 1HG
Telephone number:	023 9234 1133
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Dauncey
Date of previous inspection:	18 th – 21 st November 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Although pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, the school draws most of its pupils from an area of central Southsea that is recognised as one of high social deprivation. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. Forty-five per cent of the pupils across the school are identified as having special educational needs, as a result of a variety of learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is well above the national average. At present, less than one per cent have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is below average. Thirty-three per cent of pupils now come from ethnic minority groups, as a result of a recent increase, and this is higher than in most schools. Almost all of these pupils speak English as an additional language and a third of them are at an early stage of acquiring English. The movement of pupils in and out of the school during the school year is high and unpredictable. The recruitment of teachers, especially to posts of responsibility, is often difficult. The school received the Investors in People Award in 2003. It is a member of an Excellence in Clusters group of local schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22870	Hilary Bonser	Lead inspector	English; religious education; history; geography.
9986	William Twiss	Lay inspector	
14997	Valerie Emery	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; science; art and design; physical education; English as an additional language.
30705	Graham Stephens	Team inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; design and technology; music; special educational needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is now good and it gives good value for money. This improving school no longer has serious weaknesses. Pupils now achieve well as a result of good teaching, although it is too soon to see the full impact of this on standards, partly as a result of the high mobility of pupils. Nevertheless, standards have improved to below average overall by the end of Year 6. The headteacher leads the school well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are improving because pupils are now taught well and those that remain in the school get a good start in the nursery and reception classes.
- Achievement is now good overall in English and science and satisfactory overall in mathematics, although there are some variations in how well pupils do in these subjects across the school.
- Good leadership and management and good teamwork among all staff have helped to bring about effective improvements in many aspects of school life in the last two years.
- An excellent range of additional activities and the attention given to adapting the curriculum to meet the particular needs of pupils contribute significantly to their learning and enthusiasm for school.
- Good provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs helps them to do well. Very effective support staff contribute considerably to this.
- Very good care and support for pupils and the good provision for their personal development are reflected in the good relationships throughout the school and the positive attitudes and good overall behaviour of the pupils.
- The unsatisfactory attendance of a minority of pupils affects their learning adversely.

The school has responded well to the serious weaknesses identified in the previous inspection in 2002, resulting, for example, in good improvements in the quality of teaching, the achievement of pupils and in standards, especially in English. The school is fully focused on continuing to raise standards. Much better use is made of assessment to support pupils' learning. An extensive building programme is currently in progress to improve both indoor and outdoor accommodation.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - very low. Due to the high pupil mobility, comparisons with similar schools are made with those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Achievement is now good overall. Children do well in the nursery and reception classes in relation to their well below average attainment on entry. Standards are currently below average in relation to the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. In Year 2, this year, where there is very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, standards are below average in mathematics and science, but well below average in English. This is mainly because nearly half of the year group has joined the school since their reception year and some pupils have had several

different teachers in the last two years. In spite of this, achievement has improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory overall and it is good in mathematics. Standards of the current Year 6, where there is also a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a high turnover of pupils since Year 2, are now below average in English and science but remain well below average in mathematics. Boys and girls are now achieving well overall, although only satisfactorily in mathematics.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and the school helps pupils to show a good level of maturity by the end of Year 6. Attendance is improving but is still below average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching and learning are good overall. They are consistently good in the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 and 2, they are satisfactory overall but with a significant amount that is good. In Years 3 to 6, they are good overall and some is very good. Teachers generally use a good variety of methods and resources to provide interesting lessons that take good account of pupils' differing needs. This encourages pupils to try hard and learn well. In some lessons, higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough. The curriculum is enriched very well, especially through the very good links with the community and other schools and excellent extra-curricular opportunities. This helps to make pupils keen to learn.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The effective leadership of the headteacher is ensuring that the school successfully pursues its well-planned programme for continuing improvement, in spite of the considerable challenges caused, for example, by the high turnover of pupils. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher and other staff. The day-to-day management of the school is good. The work of the governing body is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. Governors are becoming increasingly involved in all aspects of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents: parents are very satisfied. For example, they feel their children enjoy school and are helped to settle in well, that they are taught well and make good progress. They feel the school is welcoming. Some are concerned about their child being bullied. The inspectors found that any such incidents are dealt with effectively.

Pupils: pupils expressed positive views about the school. They know who they can go to if they are worried and feel that teachers listen to them and help them to improve their work. They feel that other children do not always behave well. The inspection team found that behaviour was good overall and that pupils with behavioural problems are supported very well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to raise standards, especially in reading, writing and science by the end of Year 2 and mathematics by the end of Year 6, so that pupils achieve consistently well across the school.
- Continue to improve the rate of attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is now good overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. This year, standards are below average in English and science but remain well below average in mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most boys and girls of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, now do well overall as a result of good teaching.
- Standards in English especially, but also in mathematics and science, are improving although there are variations in the rate of improvement across the school.
- Achievement is satisfactory rather than good in English and science by the end of Year 2 and in mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (14.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.6 (11.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.6 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.0 (22.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.9 (22.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.1 (26.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 and Year 2 were well below the national average overall. However, they were average compared with those of similar schools in mathematics and science in Year 6 and in reading and mathematics in Year 2. They were below those of similar schools in English in Year 6 and writing in Y2. Results showed good improvement from the previous year, especially in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in Year 2 and Level 5 in Year 6. Pupils achieved satisfactorily overall in relation to their prior attainment. There is no comparison yet with national trends in results over the last 5 years, as the school has only had Year 6 pupils since 2000. Unconfirmed results for 2004 at the end of Year 6 were sustained in science and show continuing improvement in English, although mathematics fell back to some extent. At the end of Year 2, results overall fell back in all subjects, although the improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching Level 3 was maintained. However, nearly two thirds of this year group were identified as having special educational needs and a significant minority were at an early stage of acquiring English.

2. In the current reception class, children are likely to reach standards just below the expected goals by the end of the year in all areas of their learning. In Year 2, standards have improved to below average in mathematics. In science, they have fallen back to below average from previous teacher assessments. Standards remain well below average in reading and writing. One reason for this is that pupils come from a much lower base in their language skills than in their numeracy skills. In the current Year 2 group, there is again a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, mainly with language and communication difficulties, and just over half of the pupils have joined the school since their reception year. In addition, the rate of learning of some of those pupils who have been in the school since the nursery has been slowed by a rapid turnover of teachers in one class in the last two years. Standards in the current Year 6 have improved as a result of effective school action and are now below average in English and science, although they remain well below average in mathematics. This is partly because there has been a stronger and successful focus on improving literacy skills in the last two years, but also because recruitment difficulties have led to a lack of continuity in the management of mathematics.
3. Records of children's assessments show that standards on entry to the nursery are well below average. Children currently in their nursery and reception year are achieving well as a result of consistently good teaching. Individual progress is now tracked very thoroughly across the school from baseline assessments, through the national statutory and optional tests and other annual assessments. All pupils are assessed whenever they join the school. This information, together with past work and lesson observations, shows that in Years 1 and 2, achievement is satisfactory in English and science, although it is good now in mathematics. One of the reasons for this is that there is a more consistent level of challenge in the teaching of mathematics. Nevertheless, this is a significant improvement from the last report, when pupils' rate of progress in the core subjects in Years 1 and 2 was judged to be unsatisfactory. It is also a tribute to the hard work of teachers and effective action of the school in the light of the barriers to pupils' learning described above. In Years 3 to 6, where teaching is now good, pupils are achieving well in English and science and satisfactorily in mathematics. This is again a good improvement in the face of recruitment difficulties and of the rapid turnover of pupils in this area of considerable social deprivation.
4. It is too soon to see the full effects on standards of the well-planned school action taken in the last two years and especially the improvements in teaching and learning, although these are reflected in pupils' good overall achievement. The improvements in assessment, analysis of performance and the tracking of pupils' progress have enabled the school to identify and focus support on particular individuals or groups of pupils who do not make the expected progress. Wide-ranging measures have been taken to address identified weaknesses. These include the use of additional teachers to enable literacy and numeracy to be taught to smaller groups of pupils, very good enrichment of the curriculum to increase pupils' motivation to learn and well planned opportunities across the curriculum to improve pupils' writing and presentation skills. The improvement in pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour over the last two years also contributes significantly to their achievement.
5. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well as a result of good provision and support and teaching from class teachers, visiting specialist teachers, bi-lingual support staff and some parents. The good progress of these pupils is reflected, for example, in the good proportion reaching the higher Levels 3 and 5 in English, mathematics and science, as seen in the school's analysis of national test results. There is also good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Their wide-ranging needs are now identified at an early stage and kept under constant review. Carefully planned programmes of work and very effective help from learning mentors, learning, language and behaviour support assistants help them to do well and ensure they are fully included in all activities. Although there has been an improvement since the last inspection in meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils, in some lessons, they are not always fully extended.

- Standards in Information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average and pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Teachers provide good opportunities to consolidate pupils' ICT skills across the curriculum. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Evidence seen in art and design and music, which were sampled, indicate that the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been successfully addressed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. The attendance rate is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils have good opportunities for their personal development and as a result relationships throughout the school are good.
- The school has very strong and consistently applied procedures for promoting good behaviour and attendance.
- Attendance has continued to improve but is still below the national average.

Commentary

- Pupils of all ages and backgrounds are offered good opportunities for their personal development. Nursery and reception children are supported very well in developing their personal, social and emotional skills from a low base and are on course to reach just below the expected goals for that area of their learning by the end of their reception year. As pupils move through the school, staff encourage them to undertake responsible jobs, such as librarians and assembly helpers. Each year group was involved in the recent Portsmouth in Bloom competition, tending their own attractive hanging floral baskets and helping the school to achieve first prize. The newly formed school council offers further opportunities for those elected to it to develop a sense of responsibility and service to their peers. The school uses the visits that pupils make to increase their understanding of the wider community and society at large. As the pupils progress through school, they have opportunities to develop their skills in getting on with each other as they participate in the large number of clubs and sporting activities. Residential visits, which start in Year 3 and continue into Year 6, contribute greatly to developing the pupils' independence. Opportunities such as these, as part of the excellent support for pupils' learning outside the school day and the rich curriculum within it have made a significant contribution to improvement in pupils' personal development and their attitudes to school since the last inspection.
- Throughout the school, pupils relate well to each other, to their teachers and adults. The staff work hard to build pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to recognise and value their own strengths and those of others. In assemblies seen during the inspection, the pupils were helped to understand the value of giving and receiving compliments as a way of engendering positive relationships. The good provision for cultural development helps pupils to appreciate and respect that peers may have views and beliefs that differ from their own. For example, the school holds a bi-annual celebration of the rich diversity of cultures within the school and community. This contributes well to the mutual respect that characterises the relationships within the school and is modelled so well by staff. It means that the large number of pupils from ethnic minorities and also those with special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school.
- All staff work very hard to promote high standards of conduct and set very clear expectations. Consequently, most pupils are well aware of what is acceptable behaviour and respond positively. In lessons, teachers and support staff are alert to any opportunities to reinforce the class rules and are quick to offer praise for good conduct. Any deviations from the high

standards of behaviour expected are dealt with swiftly and, as a result, disruption to lessons is minimised. The behaviour support team and learning mentors make a very strong contribution to the school's promotion of good behaviour. Alongside teachers, they work sensitively with individual pupils with social, emotional or behavioural problems, ensuring that they participate in learning and do not unduly interrupt lessons for their peers. Close supervision of the pupils at breaks and during the lunchtimes is effective in promoting generally positive behaviour and minimising squabbles. Behaviour overall has improved since the last inspection and the school has significantly reduced the number of permanent and fixed exclusions.

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	209	11	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	65	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	8	0	0
Black or Black British – African	5	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	5	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

10. The procedures for promoting attendance are very detailed and are rigorously enforced. The school provides suitable rewards for those who achieve 100 per cent attendance. These are valued by the pupils and encourage them to come to school. Last year, 84 pupils achieved this reward. The school closely monitors attendance using a computerised recording system. This is used to alert the school and its attendance assistant to any adverse trends. The families of reluctant attenders are contacted and support is offered to encourage them to improve. Punctuality is also closely monitored and most pupils come to school on time. Good relationships with the support agencies such as the Education Welfare Service make a positive contribution to the school's efforts to improve attendance. The school's procedures and tireless work have resulted in improvement in the rate of attendance, although it remains below the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/3 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.1	School data:	2.7
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall. It is good in teaching and learning and in the curricular provision. The attention given to the care and welfare of pupils is very good and the partnership with parents is good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. They are good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The assessment of pupils' work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Variations in the quality of teaching in English and science across the school mean that pupils' rate of learning is better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2.
- The commitment, hard work and good teamwork among staff is reflected in the consistent approach to most aspects of teaching and learning, which is helping many pupils to do well.
- Teachers use a very good variety of methods and interesting contexts for learning, which contributes to pupils' positive attitudes.
- There has been a good improvement in the use of assessment information since the last inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (15 %)	27 (57%)	13 (28%)	0	0	0

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

Commentary

11. The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved from satisfactory to good since the last inspection, although there have been some changes in the teaching staff since then. In the lessons seen, there was no unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of teaching that was good or very good has increased considerably. Effective action by the headteacher and senior management team in the last two years, especially through rigorous monitoring and evaluation, has helped to bring this about. Well-planned, ongoing training and support for teachers and support staff and the successful promotion of good teamwork have also made a strong contribution. It is a tribute to the enthusiasm, hard work and co-operation between all staff that, in spite of the barriers to learning, especially in terms of the high mobility of pupils, there is a clear sense of commitment among them and a determination to improve further.
12. Teaching is now consistently good in the Foundation Stage, which gives children a good start in their learning. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is good overall, with a significant amount that is very good, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As a result, many pupils are now making rapid progress in their learning, although it is too soon to see the full impact of this on standards and achievement in mathematics at the end of Year 6. There is more variation in the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2, which is satisfactory overall and satisfactory in English and science, although it is good in mathematics. This is reflected in the improved standards in mathematics this year in Years 1 and 2.
13. There were strong features in many of the lessons seen. The quality of teaching for the considerable numbers both of pupils with special educational needs and of those who speak English as an additional language is good throughout the school. Close liaison between the

manager for these areas, class and visiting teachers and the very effective learning support assistants promotes good, well-planned learning. Detailed assessments and regularly updated records are used to monitor pupils' progress and help them to do well throughout the school. Teachers are particularly skilled at asking questions that include these pupils well, enabling them to take a full and active part in discussions and activities. They also adapt their teaching styles well to take account of pupils' particular needs. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher used visual and action prompts well to reinforce pupils' learning of initial sounds.

14. Teachers use the very good links with the local community and other schools, visits, visitors and links between subjects very well to make learning interesting and relevant to pupils. They also use a good range of resources well for this purpose and make very good use of role play and drama techniques to deepen pupils' understanding of what they are learning. This also contributes well to pupils' positive attitudes to their work. Teachers organise and manage their teaching groups well.
15. The very good relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school also help to motivate pupils well and to meet the high expectations teachers have of their behaviour and concentration. Parents agree with their children that they are expected to work hard. There was also considerable agreement among pupils in the questionnaire and in talking to them that teachers listen to them and value their ideas. This was evident in lessons throughout the school.
16. There are remarkably few inconsistencies in the approach to teaching and learning, but those that remain often make the difference between satisfactory and good lessons across the school and are more marked in Years 1 and 2. This is partly because there have been several changes in the teaching team in the last two years and some whole school improvements are not yet embedded as fully as in Years 3 to 6. Teachers plan work well and, in English, mathematics and science in particular, set tasks that take good account of pupils' differing ages and levels of attainment. In some lessons, however, teachers' questioning did not fully extend pupils of differing abilities and especially the higher attaining pupils. The pace of the lesson was not always well judged and pupils were not always given enough time to respond or expand upon their ideas. Some teachers make very good use of frequent opportunities for pupils to exchange thoughts quickly with a partner to help them articulate and extend their ideas. This also keeps all pupils fully involved and aids their concentration and learning. However, the strategy is not used as effectively in all classes.
17. Teachers make much better use of assessment information to support pupils' learning than at the time of the previous inspection. This has contributed to the improved achievement. Assessment is now integrated well with planning. Key questions help pupils to understand the main purpose of each task and help teachers to be precise in their assessment of what pupils have learnt. Good examples were seen of teachers adjusting what they taught in the light of pupils' responses in the previous lesson. Teachers also use their assessments of pupils' work to set individual targets or group targets in English and mathematics. However, although pupils are familiar with these and there were very good examples in some lessons of teachers focusing pupils' attention on these as they worked, in others, little or no reference was made to them. Work is generally well marked, helping pupils to know how to improve their work. There is some variation in the effectiveness with which teachers review and assess pupils' learning at the end of lessons and the involvement of pupils in this.

The curriculum

The curriculum is broad, well balanced and helps pupils to build on previous learning. The school offers excellent opportunities for enrichment. Overall, resources for learning are good and accommodation is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides excellent opportunities for enrichment and support for learning outside the school day as well as within the curriculum.
- Pupils' needs are fully met and all have equality of access and opportunity.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good.
- The match of support staff to the curriculum is very good.
- The accommodation is now being improved.

Commentary

18. There has been a very good improvement in the quality and richness of the curriculum since the last inspection, both in the Foundation Stage and across the school. Statutory requirements and those of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education met. The national strategies for numeracy and literacy and useful schemes of work are used effectively to support teachers' planning. The school employs additional teachers to enable English and mathematics to be taught in smaller classes and careful thought is given to the way pupils are grouped for this. This helps teachers to match work well to pupils' needs and contributes to their good learning. Overall curriculum planning and tracking of progress helps to prepare pupils well for each stage of their education.
19. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Learning support assistants, learning mentors and behaviour support staff work very hard and offer very good support for pupils. They work in close co-operation with teachers, continually explaining, reassuring and encouraging pupils to apply themselves to their work. The support and the care with which staff match work to pupils' needs helps ensure that they all have good access to the curriculum. Good support is also available for all pupils who speak English as an additional language. It includes visiting teachers, bilingual teaching assistants and parents who come into class to give additional help. Teaching methods are adapted well to ensure that even those pupils at an early stage of acquiring English also have full access to the curriculum. The school monitors the achievement of these pupils closely to ensure that they are achieving as well as others. The school has very effective links and help from Ethnic Minority Achievement Support teachers who give generously of their own time to run extra curricular clubs for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
20. Additional learning opportunities are offered for all pupils through a very wide range of extra curricular activities from French to girls' football and dance to cookery. This excellent provision is further supplemented by a range of residential opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and very active involvement in the local community with the school. The pupils value these opportunities to explore different subjects and activities and this is reflected by the very good attendance at such activities and the enthusiasm with which they describe them – 'They're great, they let us do extra things.' The thought and effort that the school puts into this provision has had a significant impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and their overall achievement.
21. There is a good balance of staffing in terms of experience and expertise and the headteacher reviews deployment annually. This is necessary because the high levels of mobility mean that the needs of different groups vary from year to year and the good number of teachers helps these needs to be met well. The high level of support staff, who have a wide range of expertise, are also deployed and managed well and they make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning.
22. The unsatisfactory accommodation was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. The school has worked closely with the local education authority to bring about the current substantial building programme. Some improvements are already evident. Infant classes now have a quieter learning environment, which helps pupils to concentrate, and whilst some

classes are still used as corridors and play space is severely restricted at present, facilities will be significantly improved over the next few months.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for ensuring the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils are very good. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are also very good. The school has satisfactory procedures for involving the pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective induction procedures help pupils to settle happily into school.
- The school uses assessment information well to respond to individual needs.
- Very good attention is given to promoting all aspects of health and safety.

Commentary

23. The school welcomes all children and their parents. The headteacher and staff invite the parents of the children who start in the nursery into the school to discuss routines and expectations and staff go to see them at home. Because the children see familiar faces and surroundings as they take the first steps into formal education, they settle in quickly. Similarly strong induction procedures apply as the children move up into reception and as a result they know what to expect. Staff make a further home visit to ensure that they have an understanding of each child's needs. Parents value these procedures. A significant number of pupils join the school other than through the nursery or reception. The headteacher insists upon an individual introduction to the school for all such pupils and their parents.
24. Teachers and support staff know the pupils and their families well. They are keenly aware of the diverse needs of the pupils and work in harmony to meet these well. They succeed in encouraging all groups of pupils to take full part in lessons and maximise their achievements. The personal and academic progress of all pupils is monitored well and the information used effectively to guide and support them. Pupils with special educational needs are given time to discuss concerns and to celebrate successes with interested adults who understand their needs and consequently pupils feel more secure. Learning mentors carefully and skilfully support pupils with behavioural problems. The school has good relationships with the professional agencies. Teachers support the pupils' achievements in and out of school, placing a strong emphasis on raising self-esteem. Regular rewards recognise and celebrate good work and behaviour.
25. The governors and all staff in the school take very good account of the welfare and safety of pupils. The site manager makes regular assessments of risks throughout the premises. He is making a significant contribution to ensuring that the school functions as a safe and orderly community throughout the current building work. Class teachers pay careful attention to potential hazards in lessons. Qualified first aid staff are on hand to offer comforting support to the pupils who have mishaps. The school nurse provides routine health screening. Staff work hard to promote healthy eating. At lunch time, for example, one of the supervisory staff gave sensible advice to a group of pupils on healthy foods. The school has robust arrangements for child protection, which are well communicated and understood. Staff are aware of the procedures that they must follow if they have any concerns.
26. The previous inspection highlighted very good care, support and guidance for the pupils. The same very positive picture was seen during the inspection. The high standards of care and guidance contribute well to the pupils' achievements and make the school a welcoming and secure haven in which to learn.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are good. Its links with the local community and other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range and quality of information given to the parents is good.
- Parents are very satisfied with the school, although some provide little support for their children's education.
- Links with other schools and the community are used well to enrich the pupils' learning.

Commentary

27. The school provides an informative range of interesting information for the parents. Regular consultation meetings with the teachers give parents the opportunity to discuss their children's progress, although not all parents attend these. Annual reports set out what the pupils have learned and offer guidance on how they can achieve even more. A fortnightly newsletter keeps parents and carers well informed of school events. Parents confirm that they like being able to talk to staff, informally before and after school. Equally, the parents value the information that the school provides on what it is teaching and feel that the home-school reading diary provides another useful means of communication between school and the home.
28. Parents like the school and have a high regard for what it does for their children. They feel that the staff work hard to support and care for the pupils. Parents and carers are, for example, constantly encouraged to help in school, for example, with reading. They enjoy being able to come into the nursery regularly to see what their children are learning. Parents are happy to support the school's performances and most of them come to the annual sports day. The school works very hard to involve parents more fully in their children's education, but as yet meets with limited success. Few parents, for example, respond to the opportunity to discuss their child's targets on individual education plans. If necessary, behaviour support staff will make a home visit to discuss with parents how best to help their child. The parents seen during the inspection and the views of those who responded to the pre-inspection meeting or questionnaire were pleased with the way the school is improving.
29. The school works hard and successfully to contribute to the local community and to harness its resources for the benefit of the pupils. The partnerships, both with the community and other schools, have improved further since the last inspection and provide very good, additional support for pupils' learning. The school has been successful in drawing in help from a variety of sources, including local places of worship and the local football club, which provides clubs for the pupils, stimulating curricular activities and sports coaching. A local college provides interesting courses for parents from time to time. Local groups use the school for clubs and meetings. There are very good relationships with other schools. One is used to provide a residential visit each year. The school is an active member of the Excellence in Clusters group of local schools who work together to share training, ideas and resources. It is also a member of the Portsmouth Arts Learning Community. There are very effective links with the secondary school to which most of the pupils transfer. This results, for example, in good arrangements to ensure that the transition is a smooth one.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is good. The management of the school is also good. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision that she shares well with all staff.
- The management of the school is now firmly focused on raising standards and pupils' achievement.
- All staff, very well led by the headteacher, work hard to ensure all pupils have access to the many opportunities on offer throughout and beyond the school day.
- The governing body has begun to take a much more active part in the life of the school.

Commentary

30. There has been a good improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The good leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, has been instrumental in establishing a strong ethos of teamwork and mutual support that contributes very well to the shared sense of purpose in the school. This, together with the setting up of secure behaviour management systems, the strong focus on raising standards, at first in literacy and now in mathematics, and the enrichment of the curriculum, has already had a positive impact on teaching, learning and achievement throughout the school. It has also helped to minimise the impact of the high mobility of the pupils and recruitment difficulties.
31. As part of her vision for the school, the headteacher is determined to further strengthen the good teamwork by enabling all staff to assume greater responsibility and accountability and to be more actively involved in the future development of the school. A new management structure has recently been put in place to facilitate this, although it is too soon to judge its impact. The headteacher is establishing high expectations with regard to the roles and responsibilities of her subject managers, although this has been hindered, especially in mathematics, by recruitment difficulties. She gives them time to work alongside staff, talk to pupils and to monitor planning and the outcomes of their work. They ensure that key school priorities are reflected in their annual action plans.
32. The headteacher also has very high expectations regarding equality and issues of inclusion, which are shared by staff and governors alike. Consequently, all staff, through both their planning and the way in which the progress of individuals is tracked, including that of pupils with special educational needs, the gifted and talented and those who speak English as an additional language, ensure their needs are met. The success of this is seen, for example, in the good achievement of pupils from ethnic minorities. Particular areas of concern, such as the progress of boys from white British backgrounds, are being addressed through wide ranging measures. These include the use of learning mentors, volunteers from the community to hear reading, especially of pupils who receive little support at home, family literacy programmes and a rich curriculum to motivate pupils to learn.
33. The headteacher has ensured that the accurate identification of key areas for school improvement is firmly rooted in rigorous self-evaluation in which all staff are now involved. A good range of performance and assessment data is now used effectively in the core subjects to analyse weaknesses in the curriculum, to track the progress of individual pupils and different groups of pupils and to identify any who are not making the expected progress. Well-focused action ensures that they receive additional support, either as members of a target group within each class or individually, for example, through a learning mentor where a pupil's progress is hindered by behavioural or emotional difficulties. All of this information also informs the considerable thought given each year to the deployment of staff and the way in which pupils are grouped for the teaching of English and mathematics. The systematic use of the performance management process has been developed well to provide focused support for key priorities on the school development plan and is carefully linked to well-planned staff training. The headteacher, together with the senior managers and external advisors, carries out rigorous monitoring and evaluation of classroom practice. All of these factors are contributing increasingly to the improvements in teaching and learning and pupils' good achievement.

34. Governors are very supportive of the school and carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily. In the last few months, the membership of the governing body has changed considerably. After helpful training from the local education authority in self-review, for example, and with the recruitment of several members with particular expertise, in areas such as finance and personnel, the governing body is becoming less reliant on the headteacher for its information and decision making. It is now more able to question and discuss issues with senior managers and is more actively involved in shaping the direction and vision of the school. They are developing a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Improved communication with staff, well-planned classroom visits and training, for example, in the interpretation of performance data, all contribute to this.
35. The school is very clear about obtaining value for money. The headteacher has been adept at seeking and obtaining additional funding from a variety of sources. Under her guidance, the school works well to ensure that any available funding is used well in support of school priorities and pupils' learning. The higher than average spending on learning support staff, who make a substantial contribution to pupils' good achievement, is a good example of this. As a result, financial planning and management are good. Efficient administrative staff also contribute well to this.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,099,734
Total expenditure	1,064,707
Expenditure per pupil	3,122

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	108,538
Balance carried forward to the next	143,565

The high carry forward is earmarked mainly for the current building programme, but partly to protect the good staffing levels from fluctuations in the number on roll resulting from the very high mobility of the area.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36. The good provision in the nursery has been maintained well since the last inspection and now extends to good provision in the reception classes. It is a strength of the school, brought about by the perceptive recruitment of staff.
37. Because of the well above average numbers of children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, the attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. There are particular weaknesses in speaking and listening and in social skills, which have been identified by the school. The children achieve well in both the nursery and reception classes. Last year, the children suffered from a high teacher turnover in one reception class. There is now a stable picture of consistently good teaching in the nursery and both reception classes and children are in line to reach a little below the goals they are expected to meet in all areas of learning. This is a broadly similar picture to the last report.
38. Children enter the nursery and reception classes after good induction procedures, which include home visits for children entering both the nursery and reception classes. Almost all children entering the reception classes have attended the nursery.
39. The good provision is well managed by a knowledgeable teacher who has a good overview and works very well with both colleagues in the school and with outside agencies. There are particularly high numbers of children who speak English as an additional language and the manager provides well for these children with extra teachers, teaching assistants and parents to help them in their home language and the acquisition of English. The curriculum is practical and creative and areas of learning are carefully inter-linked and adapted well to meet the particular needs of its children. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good teaching in the nursery.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strength and weaknesses

- Regular well-planned activities promote children's independence well.
- Good creative interactive play activities give good support to children's social skills.
- All staff present good role models to children.

Commentary

40. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are on course to be a little below the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. This is because the teachers have high expectations of what the children can achieve and they provide good opportunities to develop independence. Right from the start of their time in nursery, children plan some of their activities for parts of the day. Although the inspection took place very early in the school year, expectations of independence in dressing and undressing themselves even in the nursery were being firmly established. School conventions were carefully explained and reinforced firmly but kindly in all classes. Children were being shown all the resources and their uses in designated areas and shown how to use them safely and with regard to other children. For example, how to use the climbing frames or how to use the creative play areas.
41. Already, almost all children in the nursery and reception classes are happy to leave their main carer at the start of the sessions. On one occasion, a child who was still unhappy at the start of

the day was helped to cheer up by one teacher, promising her to help her to phone her mummy at lunchtime if she stopped being unhappy. The whole class was asked to contribute to making her happy again. Teachers and other adults show politeness to all adults and children and care and concern at all times. Children are starting to share resources well, take turns and sit still when they are told stories. At present, they manage only a limited time, which all teachers gauge well, knowing when to change activities. Children are starting to use creative role-play areas and are learning to share the resources and play interactively together. Children in the nursery make good progress in this area and this is built on well in the reception classes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good focus on speaking and listening helps this area develop well.
- There are good opportunities for regular writing in the mark making area.
- Children regularly share books at school and take home books to share with their parents and carers.

Commentary

42. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are on course to be a little below the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. This is because all the teachers and other adults pay good attention to interacting well with children in their work and play through questioning and commenting on their activities, thus encouraging their development of language. Very good, regular provision of a wide range of action songs also helps children to understand language and to speak clearly. Regular access to the mark making area in the reception classes and to writing materials in the nursery, provide children with good opportunities to write for a variety of purposes in their play. Children were 'writing' stamped addressed envelopes in the reception classes, for example. Sharing books has a high priority in all classes. The children in the nursery enjoy stories, sometimes with the highly skilled teacher dramatising these very well and using attractive illustrations to demonstrate, for example, the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. Children regularly take home books and these are carefully and regularly changed at school.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular counting activities are inter-linked well with classroom routines.
- Number songs and action rhymes reinforce basic numbers well.
- Children have regular access to mathematics teaching both in indoor and outdoor learning.

Commentary

43. Teaching is good and children achieve well. The majority are on course to be a little below the goals they are expected to meet by the start of Year 1. There is a good focus on the acquisition of number skills and right from the start of their time in the nursery children are involved in number songs and clapping activities to reinforce counting. Expectations are high. For example, children were asked to count the number of children in the session, which was 13. A good number of children joined in this activity and the teacher then wrote the number 13 on the white board. Similar activities in the reception classes reinforce higher numbers and there are expectations of 'less than / subtraction', when children are absent, to find the total number present in the class. All classes have very regular singing of number songs and action rhymes

based on numbers and all teachers have a very good repertoire of these. This is particularly good support for children who speak English as an additional language and helps to include them in all activities ensuring that they learn well. Although it was very close to the start of the school year and children in the reception classes were only just full time, regular mathematical teaching sessions had commenced for learning both indoors and out. Outside, children were finding matching number tiles when the teacher called a number. Inside the classroom, activities such as matching coin values on a 'number man' and buying currant buns from the teacher were underway.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The local environment is used very well to extend children's learning.
- Good links are made with the wide variety of children's cultural backgrounds.

Commentary

44. It was too early in the term for observation of much formal evidence of this area of learning. However all classes have regular access to construction equipment and computers. In the reception classes for example, children were using a paint programme to make their own pictures. Walking in the school grounds and observing nature is also a regular activity and children were commenting on the worm they had observed. The nursery provides regular access to water and a good-sized sand pit for children to explore and play in. Particular strengths in the provision are the use of a mini-bus and good links with the local community to enable children to explore their own local area at very little cost. Children are offered free rail and boat rides to places that excite and interest them. Topics linked, for example, to 'Food' or 'Celebrations' are carefully planned to include the wide variety of children's own origins. In their outside learning, the children in the reception classes were starting to prepare a garden in their newly acquired outside area, by adding peat to the existing soil to prepare for planting. The teaching in all classes is good and children achieve well and are likely to be a little below levels they are expected to reach.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children have regular access to outdoor physical play.
- A wide variety of wheeled toys is used regularly by children.
- Action songs and games are a regular part of daily life.

Commentary

45. Teaching is good. Children achieve well and are likely to reach a little below the expected goals. All teachers make good use of the school's outdoor facilities. Children in the nursery have their own good-sized safe area to use and have regular outside activities. These include wheeled vehicles and access to climbing and swinging apparatus. The reception classes have a dedicated outdoor learning area, but the new building project has not yet supplied the secure outdoor playing space needed. This has been carefully planned, after outside consultation and is due to be constructed shortly. At present, the good numbers of wheeled toys available are used frequently under supervision in the school's playground. They are much enjoyed by the children. In the nursery, the children are taught to play safely on the climbing apparatus and to

help one another to use the swing. All classes are taught to use equipment safely and use a variety of construction equipment. Scissors, pencils, paint brushes and even a miniature paper shredder in the writing area, are part of this provision. Because of the high numbers of children who speak English as an additional language, action rhymes and songs are used very effectively, not only for physical development but also for language acquisition.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision for creative play is evident in all classes.
- Singing has a high priority in the curriculum for all classes.

Commentary

46. Teaching is good and children achieve well. They are on course to be a little below the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children have good access to a number of creative play areas, both for domestic or other topic related themes. At the time of the inspection, children were just being introduced to art equipment and being allowed to play freely in role-play areas with the intention of developing independent good use of these areas. Three-year-old children in the nursery were being encouraged to equip themselves for painting independently and to clear up. In the reception classes there was an example of a child using a 'microphone' and dressing up clothes to sing to the music being played. She was delighted to be able to look in the mirror whilst doing so. The careful interaction of adults in these activities promotes independent use, but also supports the extension of play through observation, suggestions and questions.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 6 and achievement across the school have improved since the last inspection, especially in writing, as a result of effective school action.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 as a result of consistently good and at times very good teaching.
- Standards are well below average at the end of Year 2, partly because there are variations in pupils' rate of learning across Years 1 and 2, where teaching and achievement are satisfactory overall.

Commentary

47. There has been a good improvement in standards from well below average to below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are achieving well in all aspects of the subject compared to their prior attainment at whatever point they have entered the school. The improvement is particularly marked in writing, which has been a key priority for school development in the last two years. This is reflected in a considerable increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 in writing and some increase in those pupils reaching the higher Level 5, in spite of a high turnover of pupils. There has also been a good increase in the number of pupils reaching Level 5 in reading.

48. The good and frequently very good teaching now evident both in lessons and from scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 has resulted in most boys and girls making good progress in both their reading and writing skills. This was illustrated in a well-taught lesson in Years 5 and 6 about the features of autobiography. The teacher captured pupils' interest through the choice of a text that related to pupils' current work in history on ancient Egypt. She modelled the annotation of the script well as she questioned pupils skilfully, helping them to identify and exemplify key features, taking good account of their different ages and abilities. As a result of their increased confidence, pupils concentrated well on the subsequent group tasks, helped also by the effective use of time targets. The teacher's good management and relationships with the pupils also helped them to meet the high expectations she had of the quality and amount of work completed in the lesson.
49. Standards in Year 2 have improved to some extent since the last inspection, especially in writing, although they remain well below average and performance in the national tests this year fell back from 2003. There are several reasons for this. Last year and this year, over 60 per cent of pupils in Year 2 have been identified as having special educational needs, largely in the area of language and communication. Although good provision is helping these pupils to do well, it accounts, for example, for the fall in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2. Teaching overall in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, although with a significant amount that is good. Reasons for this include some variations in teachers' expectations and in the level of challenge, especially in questioning. Another factor that hinders improvement in standards is that this year, for example, over half of the pupils have joined the school since their reception year and have not benefited from the good start that children receive with their language skills in this school in the Foundation Stage. A rapid turnover of teachers in one class also disrupted the learning of some pupils last year and in their reception year. Nevertheless, the impact of school action is already seen in the improvement in achievement in Years 1 and 2 from unsatisfactory to satisfactory in the last two years.
50. A number of factors have contributed to this good improvement in pupils' achievement across the school. The most significant is the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, which was satisfactory overall at the time of the last inspection. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning has contributed to the improvement, together with well-focused staff training and regular opportunities to moderate pupils' writing across the school. The provision for both pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs has improved, resulting in pupils from these groups doing well. The thorough tracking of pupils' progress through the National Curriculum levels and individual targets set in relation to these has helped to raise teachers' expectations for pupils of all abilities. The school has allocated additional time for English for every class beyond the literacy hour to reinforce and practise both reading and writing skills. Teachers also use some of this time well to enable pupils to work on their particular group or individual targets and to ensure they have time to reflect on and learn from previous work that has been marked. All of this helps pupils to be clear about how to improve their work.
51. The subject manager leads and manages the subject well. Particular areas of concern in reading and writing are being addressed successfully. Measures include the use of initiatives such as the early literacy strategy for younger pupils and the additional and further literacy strategies for older pupils. The introduction of a 'Reading Challenge' to encourage pupils to read at home and a twice yearly Book Club has contributed well to the positive attitudes of many boys and girls towards reading. The reading scheme has also been reorganised to promote a more appropriate level of challenge for pupils. The school's analysis of data indicates that boys do less well than girls in reading and writing. In response to this, care has been taken to provide books of interest to boys. As a result of the improvements, by Year 6, many average and higher attaining pupils now read fluently from a wide range of texts. They have preferred authors such as Michael Morpurgo and Jacqueline Wilson, whose books they discuss with enthusiasm. Appropriate attention and opportunities are also given to developing pupils' reference skills. Most know how to locate and select information from books and the Internet.

52. Key features contributing to the improvement in writing include the increasing impact of the effective and regular use of drama and role-play across the school to stimulate pupils' ideas in preparation for writing activities. There are other carefully planned opportunities for a variety of speaking and listening activities in many lessons. This helps pupils to order, express and extend their ideas. This is one example of how well the school considers the particular needs of its pupils, such as the poor level of language skills many have on entry to the school, and adapts the curriculum to address these needs. Good use is made of opportunities across the curriculum for extended writing and for pupils to practise different forms of writing to underpin work undertaken in literacy lessons. The neatness and presentations of pupils' work has improved from that described at the time of the last inspection. Teachers take care to choose interesting and relevant contexts for pupils' writing that motivate them well. Good links with the local football club, for example, are used well to set contexts for writing that will appeal to many of the boys.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Teachers make good, well-planned use of opportunities in history, geography religious education and science for example, to create interesting and relevant contexts for pupils to develop and apply their literacy skills, which help to motivate pupils well. Examples include thank you letters to the Good Samaritan, redrafting a description of a Viking longship and discussing the benefits and disadvantages of tourism in St Lucia. Teachers also extend pupils' vocabulary well across the curriculum by ensuring that they understand and use subject terminology correctly.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are now good across the school and support staff contribute very well to pupils' learning.
- Although standards have improved to below average in Years 1 and 2 and achievement is now good, by the end of Year 6, standards remain well below average and achievement is satisfactory overall.
- Leadership in the subject in recent years has been inconsistent.
- The careful placing of pupils in smaller groups for lessons takes good account of pupils' differing ages and abilities and is successful in meeting pupils' needs.
- Pupils do not always know what they need to do in order to improve.

Commentary

54. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved to good as a result of well-planned training and the effective monitoring of classroom practice by the headteacher and deputy. This, together with the analysis of test results and the good tracking of the progress of individual pupils already having a positive impact on standards and achievement in Years 1 and 2, despite the high mobility of pupils and the large percentage with special educational needs. It is too soon the full impact of these factors in Years 3 to 6, where the mobility of pupils is also high and many pupils have less confident attitudes to the subject. The lack of strong leadership in the subject means that improvements introduced have not always been followed through consistently. The setting and use of individual targets, for example, varies in effectiveness and marking of work does not often help pupils to know what they need to do in order to improve.
55. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to very good but is good overall. Teachers now plan well and generally match work well to the needs and abilities of the pupils, helping them to learn more effectively. Teachers praise and encourage even slight progress that pupils make

and this is helping them to develop more positive attitudes to the subject. Good examples of this were seen in Year 2 and in Years 3 and 4, where pupils responded very well to the enthusiastic, knowledgeable and well-paced approach of the teachers. Teaching is less successful where, in a few lessons, the pace is slower and where teachers are over reliant on pupils using mental strategies to solve problems without providing the apparatus to support their thinking and consolidate their understanding. In well-taught lessons, teachers questioned pupils in a way that required pupils to reflect, explain and justify their thinking. In less effective lessons, questions demanded only factual answers and so opportunities for pupils to clarify understanding, to share ideas and to extend higher attaining pupils were lost.

56. The temporary leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Despite the school's best efforts, it remains difficult to recruit a permanent teacher to this post. Consequently, five teachers have assumed the responsibility over the past five years and whilst each has worked hard, the lack of continuity has impacted negatively on the drive to raise standards. Over the last two years, there has been a greater emphasis on raising standards in English. The headteacher and the temporary subject manager, supported very well by the local advisor, have now established a clear vision for the future development of the subject with the further raising of standards throughout the school, and especially in Years 3 to 6, as the priority. Additional staffing, for example, has enabled small target groups of pupils identified as not making enough progress to be established in Years 3, 4 and 5 and other pupils are grouped for teaching according to their level of attainment. These arrangements, together with the very effective support from learning assistants, learning mentors and behaviour support assistants ensures that all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, have good access to the curriculum and are included well in all lessons. Consequently, their rate of learning is good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. At present, teachers make satisfactory use of opportunities in other subjects to reinforce pupils' mathematics skills. Pupils were observed measuring snails in science and they frequently draw graphs when presenting the results of experiments. Teachers are currently focusing on increasing the opportunities to apply mathematical understanding. For example, in music, the manager has linked the teaching of rhythm to the pupils' understanding of fractions.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of pupils by the end of Year 6 is good.
- Teaching is good overall with some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- In spite of improvements, even more pupils are capable of achieving the higher Level 3 and Level 5.
- Investigative skills have been developed well by the end of Year 6, but pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have sufficient opportunities to express their own ideas.
- A two-year cycle of planning has been successfully implemented.

Commentary

58. Current standards are below average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. These judgements show an improvement in standards at the end of Year 6 from national test results at the time of the last inspection, but are lower at the end of Year 2 from previous teacher assessments. This is partly due to a rapid turnover of teachers in Year 1 in the last two years and high pupil mobility. In addition, science has not been an area of focus for the school recently and skills in investigative science have not been developed fully by the end of Year 2, where pupils achieve

satisfactorily. The present Year 6 has also suffered from high mobility of pupils. However, the new subject manager teaches here and has firmly established the development of investigative skills, as well as knowledge and understanding in the upper part of the school. Science is showing good improvements particularly in Years 5 and 6 where pupils are enthusiastic and well motivated. Because of the high numbers of special educational needs pupils, standards overall are below average. Although the number of pupils reaching Level 3 at the end of Year 2 and Level 5 at the end of Year 6 has improved significantly, there is still room for improvement, especially in raising of teachers' expectations of what pupils can do, in order to increase these numbers. Nevertheless, teaching has improved since the last inspection. This, together with good improvement to planning and the presentation of pupils' work, means that improvement in science has been good and pupils achieve well, in spite of increased pupil mobility.

59. Teaching and learning overall are now good in science. They are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In the very good teaching seen, there was a calm working atmosphere established. Pupils were working on an investigation independently with an 'investigation plan' to help them to present their work correctly. There was an effective learning support assistant to help pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. All pupils were using appropriate scientific language, using a Force meter to measure weight in Newtons and becoming acquainted with 'upward thrust'. Pupils were using good enquiry skills, supported very well by the teacher who asked open questions such as 'What if...?', 'What would happen if...?' Good discussion was promoted in pairs and groups and pupils came to their own conclusions such as, 'This is lighter when it is in water'. They prepared their own individual results tables and most were able to transfer these independently to a graph, some using the interactive whiteboard in a small group. They had good awareness of fair testing and of the need to draw conclusions from collected data. Most understood the need to repeat observations and measurements when necessary. In the satisfactory teaching seen, the teacher often directed the activities closely and there was little use of scientific language. There was also limited new scientific learning and pupils did not know how to record their work without direction and adult support. This meant that pupils were less able to find things out for themselves. Overall, marking is thorough and helpful. The best examples question and extend learning and support the development of scientific language. Pupils' work is very well presented in Years 3 to 6. It follows a school format very well and is much improved since the last inspection. Work is always presented with a question first which states clearly what pupils want to find out, thus helping to focus their thoughts.
60. The manager provides satisfactory leadership as she is new to the post and has not had time to develop an overview across the whole school. However, she is highly skilled as a teacher and has good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for science. Assessments in science are detailed and useful and provide good knowledge for how to plan work for different groups of pupils. Especially in light of the high mobility of pupils, this provides good support for pupils to quickly integrate into lessons and achieve well. Good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs means that these pupils also achieve well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and pupils achieve well.
- The school is well resourced and computers are used support learning well across the curriculum.
- Good technical support helps ensure continuity of provision
- Higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged to extend and apply the skills that they have.

- There are few opportunities for pupils to work together to offer mutual support and advice.

Commentary

61. Although, no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that standards are broadly average, as they are at the end of Year 6. Standards have been sustained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good and this contributes strongly to the good achievement across the school. One aspect of the curriculum, control technology, is at a relatively early stage of development in Years 4 to 6. In lessons observed, pupils were confident in using computers to support learning in a number of areas and they are beginning to use the interactive whiteboards confidently to locate information or to demonstrate their understanding to the rest of the class.
62. An adapted national scheme supports teachers' planning well and ensures that skills are taught, progressively throughout the school. Routines in the computer suites are well established so that lessons proceed at a good pace, although pupils work independently and consequently there are few opportunities that encourage pupils to share ideas and experiences. The deployment and expertise of many of the learning support assistants also ensures that all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, are fully included and use computers well to support their learning. Discussions with pupils confirmed that a minority are working well within their capabilities and are rarely challenged by tasks presented. This is an area for development. Pupils also described with enthusiasm opportunities offered through both clubs and visits, such as that to the Study Centre at Fratton Park, home of Portsmouth Football Club, where the digital camera and a publishing program were used to good effect.
63. The recent deployment of a learning support assistant to prepare the two computer suites prior to lessons and the more regular employment of an ICT technician improves access to the curriculum for all pupils. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The new subject manager has just taken up post but, with a very clear vision, has begun to establish priorities such as arranging further staff training to maximise the use of the new interactive whiteboards to support teaching and learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. Teachers plan well to use ICT to support learning in subjects across the curriculum. Lessons observed in the computer suites related to history, mathematics and art and design. Teachers are also beginning to use the interactive whiteboards well to motivate pupils in all subjects and to model methods and demonstrate procedures, such as how to change improper fractions into mixed numbers in a mathematics lesson observed.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. History was sampled. Geography was not inspected.

65. In a well-taught **history** lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher used well chosen artefacts to help pupils extend and apply their previous learning about how they could use inventories from the Tudor period to find about some peoples' lives at that time. She questioned pupils well to prompt initial discussion between pairs of children and to sharpen their observational skills. This helped pupils to clarify their ideas before sharing these with the rest of the class. This was also a well-planned opportunity for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills. The teacher also encouraged pupils to begin to justify their views. For example, one pupil suggested that a goblet made of patterned metal probably belonged to a rich person as a poor person would more likely have one made of wood. Two learning support assistants helped small groups of pupils with special educational needs, skilfully enabling them to participate fully in the lesson.

66. The curriculum is enriched very well with a good variety of visits and visitors, the use of drama and a good range of learning resources, which support a good balance between the development of historical knowledge and skills. There are well-planned links for pupils to practise their literacy skills in their history topics and increasingly their skills in numeracy, ICT, art and design and design and technology. The subject manager is enthusiastic and has a clear view of how to develop the subject further.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning promotes a good balance between the world religions studied across the school.
- Good use is made of opportunities in the subject to extend pupils' literacy skills.
- A good range of visits and visitors contribute well to pupils' learning and their positive attitudes.
- Teachers' knowledge of world faiths is not always secure enough to fully extend pupils' learning.

Commentary

67. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and boys and girls, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily overall. The good balance in planning across the school between the studies of Christianity, Islam and Judaism helps pupils to build steadily on previous learning. This balance is reflected, for example, in visits made to local places of worship of all three faiths. Teachers take good account of the considerable diversity of traditions and beliefs of pupils and their families in the respect they model for these and the way that they sensitively draw on pupils' own experiences in lessons so that all feel fully included. The good relationships between pupils, teachers and learning support assistants and between the pupils themselves mean that boys and girls of all levels of attainment are confident in sharing their ideas, secure in the knowledge that both teachers and their peers value and respect what they have to say. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
68. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Good examples were seen, both in lessons and from scrutiny of work, of teachers using interesting activities to motivate pupils and help them to learn in different ways. A good range of learning resources supports this well. In a satisfactory lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils, the teacher made good use of photographs taken during an earlier visit to a local church to reinforce pupils' learning about particular features, such as the altar and the pulpit. However, in this and other teaching seen, several opportunities to use pupils' responses to extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of different faiths were missed. Previous work showed that the same task is often given to all pupils, limiting the learning of the older, higher attaining pupils, especially in some instances where all were given the same worksheet.
69. All teachers make well-planned use of opportunities in lessons for pupils to practise and apply their literacy skills. Previous work shows that pupils record their work in a good variety of ways. These include persuasive letters, accounts of the parts of the Christmas story from different points of view and comparing creation stories from different religions. In a well-taught lesson about life-changing experiences in Years 5 and 6, pupils worked in groups to identify the main structural elements of the story of Muhammad that they were reading. The teacher used good questioning to help pupils to develop these skills and then led the subsequent class discussion well in a way that reinforced these but also increased their understanding of the impact of the experience described in the story.

70. The subject is not currently a key priority for school improvement. However, the manager provides satisfactory leadership and has ensured that standards and achievement have been maintained since the last inspection. She also monitors planning to make sure that school action, for example, on improving assessment procedures and extending opportunities for speaking and listening and literacy across the curriculum are fully reflected in the subject. The visits of local clergy and representatives of other faiths to assemblies and lessons contribute well to pupils' learning and their interest in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, music and physical education were sampled. Design and technology was not inspected.

71. **Art and design** has shown good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average. A secure structure for teaching skills and techniques is now in place and the curriculum overview shows a good range of activities to be covered by each year group. In the two lessons sampled, the teaching was good and skills were taught well at the start of the lesson and reinforced as the lessons proceeded. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson, the proportion of pupils' own faces was carefully studied before constructing an Egyptian mask. In the Years 1 and 2 lesson, the skills of observation were being taught systematically. A good use of a range of work of different artists was used well to teach colour blending. The school has good links with the Portsmouth Arts Learning Community which help to enrich the curriculum and pupils' interest very well.
72. In **music** only one lesson was observed. However, pupils sang well in assemblies. For example, a harvest song was sung in two parts, with appropriate rhythm and pitch, indicating an improvement in singing since the last inspection. Assessment procedures have been implemented successfully and confirm a secure progression with regard to the teaching of skills. The number of pupils receiving tuition in guitar, keyboard, flute, clarinet and double bass from visiting specialist teachers has increased considerably over the past year, illustrating the extended, additional opportunities now provided for pupils through this subject. In the very good lesson observed, pupils from Years 5 and 6 played in three parts using steel pans and had their self-esteem boosted as they were praised for their substantial progress during the lesson. The part-time music specialist and subject manager has provided useful schemes of work and a high level of support to class teachers, who are responsible for the majority of the music teaching, has been maintained. There is a good level of resources and this continues to improve with the acquisition of keyboards. Pupils are taught to care for the instruments well.
73. Examination of planning for **physical education** and discussion with staff indicate that a wide range of experiences is offered and there is a particularly good number of school sporting clubs available. Good links with the secondary school provide extra support for teachers, as the secondary teacher teaches regularly in the school. In the lessons sampled, the focus was on the development of games' skills. The teaching seen was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 5 and 6. Both lessons featured a good emphasis on the teaching and development of skills. In the good teaching, there was a particularly good focus on pupils' own self-evaluation. Standards reached in both lessons were average.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

74. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about how to live responsibly with others in their community. As the pupils move up through the school, the teachers plan sex and drugs education into their science lessons. Visitors to the school make a useful contribution, with the local police, for example, talking to the pupils about the dangers of drugs. The school's carefully designed programme of personal, social and health education helps the older pupils to understand their roles as responsible citizens.

75. Teachers make good use of opportunities in many lessons, in addition to those time-tabled for this area of the curriculum, to help pupils learn about their relationships with others and explore their feelings. They make sure that the pupils understand how rules and good behaviour help to develop positive personal qualities. In Years 1 and 2, pupils carefully considered how they could recognise good things about themselves and their peers. They discussed sensibly a range of feelings that help them to feel valued and to become more confident and positive about their work. Older pupils, for example, in Year 5 and 6 explored how conflicts arise and can be resolved. In one lesson seen, they started to make contrasts between dictatorships and democracies. The provision has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development and their good attitudes and behaviour.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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