

INSPECTION REPORT

Rumboldswyke C of E Infants' School

Chichester

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 125975

Headteacher: Mrs Marion Osborne

Lead inspector: Mr John Francis

Dates of inspection: 9 to 12 May 2005

Inspection number: 267605

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 – 7
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 120

School address: Rumbolds Close
Chichester
West Sussex
Postcode: PO19 7UA

Telephone number: 01243 782368
Fax number: 01243 530682

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr Richard Tildesley
governors:

Date of previous 19 October 1998
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small Church of England Voluntary Controlled infant school in Chichester has 120 pupils on roll (63 girls and 57 boys) in five classes, including 37 children in the reception class. The home background of pupils is better than that found nationally. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is well below average. Attainment on entry is wide but generally in line with that expected for pupils of this age. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups, mainly mixed heritage and Asian British. A small number of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties, is well below average. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs, which is also below average.

The school is regularly over subscribed. The number of pupils entering or leaving the school at other than the normal starting and finishing times is generally low.

The school appeared in the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in 1999 as a particularly successful school. The school also has a Gold Arts Mark award and has been involved in the Beacon Schools Initiative (2000) for four years.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17976	John Francis	Lead inspector	English Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Personal, social and health education
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector	
22434	Sandra Bradshaw	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education Geography History Music Foundation Stage Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school with some outstanding features that gives **very good** value for money. Pupils make very good progress and achieve far above the expected standards. The curriculum is excellent. The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and educational direction to the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher brings great vision and a relentless focus on high achievement.
- Standards are very high in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is very good, although some marking could be sharper.
- Very good assessment linked to excellent curriculum and planning enhances learning across all subjects.
- Pupils' personal development is very good and they are very effectively involved in the life of the school.
- There are excellent links with the wider community.
- The school has very good links with parents and provides very good information for them about the school, but reports need clearer judgements on pupils' achievement.
- The governing body provides very good support and direction to the work of the school.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1998. Standards have been maintained and the quality of teaching has improved overall. The role of deputy headteacher and subject leaders have been enhanced. The issue of links with the community has been exceptionally well addressed. Other weaknesses have been satisfactorily addressed. Following the last inspection the school achieved Beacon Status and has worked extensively with other schools to share their expertise.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall achievement is **very good**. Current standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are very high. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography and history are above average. Those pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well and often attain average standards.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	A*	A	A	A
Writing	A*	A*	A*	A*
mathematics	A*	A*	A	A

Key: A very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

The school has a good record of attaining well above average results in national tests. For example, between 2002 and 2004, results in writing were consistently in the top 5% of schools and were well above average in reading and mathematics, with mathematics frequently in the top 5% of schools. The school is particularly effective in enabling pupils to attain above average levels. Standards seen in the inspection reflect these good results.

Children in the reception classes make good progress and most will exceed the expected levels by the time they go into Year 1.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are very good. Attendance is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **very good** education. Teaching and learning are **very good**. Pupils achieve highly because of the quality of teaching. Very good planning meets the individual needs of pupils well. A wide range of activities, visits and visitors enriches an excellent curriculum. Systems to track pupils' progress through the school are very good and have had a positive impact on maintaining standards. However, not all marking is effective in targeting individual weaknesses.

There are very good links with parents, who receive very good information about the school and their children, although reports do not give a sufficiently clear picture of how highly they achieve. There are very good arrangements for children starting school. Links with the wider community are excellent and there are very good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is **very good** and management is **excellent**. There is very good teamwork and a strong commitment to continued improvement. The very good subject leadership has been instrumental in the improvements made to the curriculum and assessment. Governance is very good and governors have a clear understanding of the work of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

These are very positive. Parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school and find it very approachable. They feel that their children are well taught, make good progress and have a good range of learning opportunities. Pupils like school, find it interesting and feel they learn a lot.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the quality of marking to give pupils more guidance;
- make pupils' achievements clearer in annual reports to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils achieve very well and reach very high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent cross-curricular planning, using pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, is a key factor in pupils' achievement and the very high standards seen.
- A good proportion of pupils achieve the higher levels in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils identified with special educational needs do well; most achieve average results.

Commentary

1. The school has been very successful in helping pupils to attain high standards. The results in national tests over the past three years are impressive, particularly in writing which has consistently been in the top 5% of schools nationally, far above the expected standard. Results in reading and mathematics have also been consistently well above the national average, with mathematics in the top 5% of schools in 2002 and 2003. The proportion of pupils achieving above the average level in tests well exceed the standards in most schools. Pupils achieve very highly overall and are well ahead of similar pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The trend for improvement in test results has been at a similar rate to other schools but at a much higher level.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.3 (18.1)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	18.2 (18.2)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	18.6 (18.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The most recent results (2004) indicate that the high standards have been maintained, with around 50% of pupils gaining above average levels in both reading and mathematics and 45% in writing. Teachers' assessments of standards in science are also very high and again in the top 5% of schools.
3. In English, mathematics and science pupils achieve very well and standards of work seen in pupils' books and in lessons are all very high and reflect those seen in the tests over time. The school has worked well to maintain this very high standard since the last inspection.

4. Children in the reception year make good progress and achieve well. All are in line to attain the expected levels in all the areas of learning¹ by the time they move into Year 1 and most will exceed these, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Many children are already working on the Year 1 curriculum.
5. Scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils show standards in ICT and religious education are above average at Year 2 as is attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography and history, and pupils achieve well in these subjects.
6. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well and make very good progress against the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils identified as being more able are very well supported and extended across a range of subjects and interests.
7. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are very well provided for. The school has very effective systems to ensure these pupils receive appropriate support enabling them to make very good progress and achieve very well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. Attendance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very positive about school and enjoy learning.
- The behaviour of most pupils in and around the school is very good.
- Pupils work very well together and take responsibility very well.

Commentary

8. Pupils enjoy school, take pride in what they accomplish in lessons and join in all the school's activities with enthusiasm. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to others, work very well in pairs or small groups and share resources sensibly. Very good relationships exist between pupils and with all adults involved in teaching. Teachers and classroom assistants have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and most pupils respond well to this. Pupils behave very well in and around the school. They value their surroundings and develop very good personal qualities. Occasionally, a few pupils are restless or inclined to be silly in class. These are dealt with firmly and fairly by staff and pupils are quickly settled back to work. The school's aims and values systems ensure that pupils who have special educational needs are included and supported by the whole community and as a result they feel secure in their development. No pupils have been excluded from school.
9. Children in the reception year make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Significant attention is given to establishing routines so that they understand what is expected of them. They work very well together, learning to take turns, listen to each other and concentrate on their work.

¹ These are in the areas of learning in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical, physical, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world that children are expected to achieve by the time they go into Year 1.

10. Good opportunities to support pupils' spiritual development are provided, particularly in collective worship, religious education and during 'circle time'². Pupils are regularly given time to think and reflect on particular themes and are confident when expressing feelings and thoughts. Pupils know right from wrong and they respond very positively to the high expectations staff have of them. The very good standard of pupils' social development can be seen in all lessons, as pupils work very well together, sharing ideas and supporting each other. Pupils are given tasks both in class and around the school that develop their sense of responsibility well. The recently formed school council is effective in promoting pupils' involvement in the school's development and already its members display mature, responsible attitudes to this role. Visits to museums and to other local places of interest support pupils' understanding of their own culture very well. They develop a greater understanding of people from other cultures through religious education and from visitors to the school such as African drummers and Indian dancers.
11. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen not to miss anything. The school emphasises strongly to parents the importance of bringing their children to school regularly and on time, to which they respond very well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.1	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.1	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 very good. Teaching overall is very good. An excellent curriculum provides a very wide range of experiences and opportunities that enrich pupils' learning. The care and guidance of pupils are very good. Links with parents and other schools are very good and are excellent with the wider community.

Teaching and learning

Very good teaching and learning, underpinned by **very good** assessment procedures are key factors in the school's success.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent planning across year groups links all subjects of the curriculum.
- Classroom management is very good and teachers have very high expectations of work, attitudes and behaviour.
- Teachers' very good subject knowledge and very good questioning skills involve all pupils at an appropriate level.
- Lessons have a very good pace.
- Assessment of children's progress is very good, but day-to-day marking is less helpful.

² This is where pupils sit in a circle, listen to others' comments and take turns at giving their view on the subject under discussion.

Commentary

12. The exceptionally detailed planning across all subjects enables teachers to make learning interesting. As a result, pupils show great interest in all aspects of their learning, respond very well to teachers' high expectations and apply themselves very well to all tasks. Teaching in the reception classes is good and enables these children to achieve well and make good progress. Very good, well-focused teaching is seen consistently in the Year 1/2 classes, which is supported by very high quality work seen in pupils' books. In the few examples where teaching and learning were satisfactory, this was due more to the subject content of the lesson, management was good and pupils applied themselves well to the tasks. The work in the 'core groups' (ability sets) for English, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2 has had a significant impact on pupils' achievement and on maintaining the very high standards. Work for higher attaining and talented pupils is demanding and ensures they achieve all that they should. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is also very effective and enables most of these pupils to make very good progress and attain average standards.
13. Teaching assistants are involved very well and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. In all lessons, there are very good relationships and a productive working atmosphere, giving ideal conditions for both teaching and learning. Lessons move along at a brisk pace and are very productive.
14. Teachers' own subject knowledge, supported by the excellent joint planning, means they are confident in how they approach different subjects. Planning makes very good links between subjects. This helps to reinforce the skills being taught, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and help pupils see their relevance. The use of drama in all subjects is a particularly powerful tool to enhance learning. For instance, in a science lesson, the teacher demonstrated how an electric circuit works by having pupils in a circle squeezing hands to pass the current along the 'wires'. Good use is made of ICT by all teachers to make lessons interesting and informative and extend pupils' subject knowledge. Teachers and pupils make good use of the interactive whiteboards. Teachers' introductions and instructions are very clear and their very good questioning checks on pupils' understanding of new ideas.
15. There are very good assessment systems. Pupils are regularly assessed to ensure that teachers know how well they are doing. The information from these assessments is very well used to plan the next stages in learning. However, the quality of teachers' marking is more variable. While it is regular and supportive, it is not always as helpful as it might be in telling pupils on a day-to-day basis what they need to do to further improve.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7	7	2	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.

The curriculum

The school provides an **excellent** curriculum, enriched by visits and visitors. Accommodation and resources are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An excellent thematic approach provides richness to pupils' learning.
- A very good range of additional activities enriches the curriculum.
- There is excellent equality of access and opportunity (inclusion) and very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs.
- There is excellent preparation for later stages of education.

Commentary

16. The challenging and interesting curriculum is a key factor in pupils achieving very well and the high standards they attain. Whole school projects are carefully planned to encourage interest in learning. Staff work together very effectively as a team to plan excellent links between subjects, which adds considerably to the quality of pupils' learning. The headteacher has been the driving force in maintaining and developing this successful and exciting feature. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used very effectively in a range of subjects, as are their ICT skills.
17. Provision for the enrichment of the curriculum is very good. Many visits are arranged, linked to different subjects, which excite and enthuse pupils and promote very good achievement. A variety of visitors comes to school to talk to pupils. There is a very good range of extra-curricular clubs for pupils to attend at lunchtime. Several pupils are taking the opportunity to learn to play the violin.
18. The school has been particularly successful in matching the appropriate level of work to pupils of different abilities. For part of the year pupils are arranged in smaller groups by prior learning for literacy, mathematics and science so that individual needs may be met more readily. This has proved to be effective and rewarding and is greatly appreciated by parents. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good and individual educational plans are regularly reviewed, having specifically targeted activities that will help pupils to achieve. All pupils are provided with a broad curriculum and teachers' planning ensures that pupils are able to work at their own level in most lessons. Preparation for the next stage of education as they move through the school and when they transfer to the junior school is excellent. Very good links have been established and there are regular exchanges between the two schools.
19. The accommodation overall is very good. Classrooms are of a good size and the school hall can accommodate the whole school comfortably. Very good resources for all subjects are well used in lessons. The outside play area is very well used and the planning and use of this area for the children in the reception classes are excellent.

Care, guidance and support

The attention given to pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on monitoring, are very good. Pupils are very well involved in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Systems for pastoral monitoring and guidance are very well thought out.
- Day-to-day routines and care are very well organised and run smoothly.
- The school council gives pupils very good opportunities to have their say.

Commentary

20. The quality of care and support the school offers its pupils is underpinned by its thorough systems for monitoring their academic and personal progress. Every pupil's academic achievement is linked in their teacher's records to their attitudes to, and styles of, learning. This enables staff to track how each one develops and offer them the support they need as individuals. This thoroughness characterises the school's approach to looking after its pupils. The school has established very good relationships with outside agencies that provide support for pupils who have special educational needs.
21. Procedures for child protection are very good and fully up to date, with an emphasis on staff training and awareness. Induction for children in the reception class is very carefully planned and ensures that the children are able to settle quickly into their new surroundings. The induction workshops for their parents are a particular strength because they enable the parents to give their children the right kind of support in their early days at school.
22. The school has put a great deal of thought into making sure that the pupils' experiences during the day are exciting and enjoyable outside as well as inside the classroom. The playground has been very well equipped with a great range of both lively and quiet activities to suit every taste, so that all pupils can find something they want to do and no-one is left out. At lunchtime, midday supervisors have been trained as play leaders and they skilfully organise games, helping pupils learn to share and take turns. Throughout the day, the school's ethos, reflected through its framework for personal, social and health education, means that staff all respond to pupils consistently and pupils feel secure.
23. The school council has been a very ambitious recent initiative, which is working extremely well at a sophisticated level. Class council meetings run by school council members, with gentle encouragement and support from their teachers, show that pupils are as capable of taking responsibility as children twice their age would be. The council has already made a difference to school life, with improvements to the playground and the role of pupil play helpers some of their successes.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents and other schools is very good. Links with other schools are very good and links with the community are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Community links have a real impact on pupils' progress and development.
- Innovative work with other schools benefits pupils in many ways.
- Parents are very well informed about and involved with the school.
- Reports to parents on their children's progress are not helpful enough.

Commentary

24. The school has been very successful in forging excellent links with the community since the time of the last inspection. Work with the city's theatre, for example, has flourished into a genuine enthusiasm for drama, which builds pupils' self-confidence and speaking skills and helps them achieve so well in their writing. The school's close partnership with the church, meanwhile, ensures that pupils grow up with an understanding of the traditions and values of Christianity and know how it feels to be part of a particular faith community.
25. The school has pioneered imaginative initiatives which give pupils the chance to work alongside those from other schools on a number of exciting projects. Music workshops give schools within the parish the opportunity to share their talents and resources and get to know one another. The arts day at the local junior school enables Year 2 pupils to pool their creative skills and ideas and at the same time paves the way for an easy transfer to their new school.
26. The school welcomes parents and encourages them to work in partnership to support their children's education, and parents appreciate this. It does all it can to help them understand what the school does and how it operates. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in the review of individual education plans. Written documentation for parents is very comprehensive and the information folder for parents, in particular, is excellent, containing all the details parents new to the school could wish for. Workshops for parents, too, are outstanding. Parents are full of praise for these sessions and say how much they find about their children's learning through the practical range of activities they get to try out.
27. Systems for communicating face-to-face with parents about their children's progress are very strong. The headteacher and staff are readily accessible every day and there are regular occasions when parents can come into school and talk to staff, at consultation evenings, workshops and open (walkabout) afternoons. However, detailed, written reports to parents on their children's progress do not make it obvious how well children are doing for their age. They sometimes contain too much jargon to be useful for parents who want to know how to help their children improve.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the school is very well led and management is excellent. Governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership and direction to the work of the school, bringing clarity of vision and high expectations.
- Very good subject leadership has been a key factor in the improvements made to the curriculum and assessment.
- There is a very good programme of review and development and effective long-term strategic planning.
- The governing body has a very good involvement in monitoring, evaluating the work of the school and setting the direction for the school.

Commentary

28. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and communicates this very well to the governors, staff and parents. All staff have subject leadership roles and carry these out diligently. There are now very good systems for managing subjects and aspects across the school, a significant improvement since the last inspection. There is very good commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. Very good management of special educational needs means that provision is effectively targeted and the achievement of pupils is very good.
29. Using data and other information, the school rigorously evaluates strengths and areas for development. There are very good systems in place for recording, tracking and monitoring pupils' progress. From all of this information the school is able to set accurate priorities for further development and link these clearly to the performance management of all staff. The monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and rigorous. These have all been key factors in maintaining very high standards of attainment over such a long time.
30. The governing body is well led. Governors are very knowledgeable and very effective in helping to shape the vision and the direction of the school. Governors are directly involved in the creation and monitoring of policies. Through very good quality information, very good links with co-ordinators, attendance at curricular meetings and regular visits, governors have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and of the standards achieved. They challenge and support the school very well in their role as a critical friend. The governing body applies best value principles very well, always considering the school's best interests. Finances are very well managed. A recent audit praised the school's systems and made no recommendations for improvement.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	425,773	Balance from previous year	25,897
Total expenditure	389,519	Balance carried forward to the next	36,254
Expenditure per pupil	3,091		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

31. Provision is very good in the reception classes and has improved since the previous inspection. All children begin with part-time attendance and throughout the year this is increased to full-time according to their age, with the very youngest children coming into full-time education at the beginning of the summer term. The very good induction procedures include meetings for parents and school visits and, together with the very high quality of relationships, mean that the children soon feel secure. This enables most of them to settle quickly into their class routines.
32. Teaching overall is good with some very good teaching. A strong unified team of adults who have high expectations for the children provide an excellent and imaginative curriculum that meets children's needs very well. Staffing levels are very good and all children are supported well. Children's learning is good. All children make good progress and most will exceed the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1. Many of the older children are already working in National Curriculum levels. Very good leadership and management have kept the department on the upward track, managing improvements through very good planning, monitoring and assessment procedures. Very good assessment systems are used directly to plan work at the correct level for all children. The accommodation is very good and very good quality resources provide children with an exciting place in which to learn.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring atmosphere enables children to establish very good relationships.
- Well-established routines help children to learn acceptable behaviour.

Commentary

33. Teaching and learning in this important area of the curriculum are very good. The teachers and classroom assistants, who are kind, caring and infinitely patient, work well together to promote children's personal and social development very well. Children have very good attitudes towards their work and behave very well. Children know the routines very well, settle down to the activities and behave sensibly. The majority of children are eager to attempt all the activities provided and show great interest in what they are doing. They are learning to concentrate on an activity to finish it. Children are expected to clear up after themselves and many do this without much prompting. Children achieve highly and will exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the year.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good opportunities for children to talk to each other and to adults.
- Children are developing their understanding of letter sounds and names very well.

Commentary

34. The children are taught to listen to one another as soon as they start school and this is reinforced in many activities. Listening skills are developing very well and most children talk confidently to visitors. Children regularly practise the names and sounds of all the letters and many are able to say the sound made when two letters are placed together. Many children are already working on National Curriculum programmes of study. Children's reading skills are well supported by the successful home reading arrangements for sharing books. The learning is fun and effective. Children are given a wealth of opportunities to form letters and to explore words and sentences. Many children can write simple sentences. Overall teaching is good in this area. When teaching is very good children benefit even more from the teacher's enthusiasm, lively pace and high expectations. Children make good progress and achieve well. By the end of the reception year most children will achieve the expected standards and many will exceed them.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching places a high emphasis on learning through practical experiences.
- Mathematical skills are put to very good use across the curriculum.

Commentary

35. Teaching and learning are good in this area and the high quality of practical activities helps children to make good progress and achieve well. Most will attain the early learning goals and many will exceed them by the time they start in Year 1. Children benefit from the good support they receive from both teachers and classroom assistants who patiently help them to understand new mathematical ideas and practise the things they know. Teachers give a very good focus to helping children to use mathematical language more confidently through play. Most children confidently count forwards and backwards and record simple addition and subtraction sums to ten. Excellent opportunities are provided in the outside play area where children enjoy working out parking time and costs and buying seeds and plants from the garden centre. In these practical activities the very good resources and opportunities impact very positively on children's learning in the reception classes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching provides children with countless opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- Children have good opportunities to explore the properties of different materials.

Commentary

36. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Teachers use a good variety of well-matched activities and questioning to stimulate children's curiosity and fire their imagination. They have been particularly interested in growing sunflower seeds and transplanting them in the garden. Children are provided with a wide range of materials to work with and develop their skills of independence as they select appropriate tools and equipment for their work. They handle clay, rolling pins and cutting tools to make a T-shirt tile, selecting other instruments and objects to design and decorate it well. Challenges and investigations are presented to children regularly. They used recycled materials to construct a pet carrier and used appropriate construction equipment to make an effective lifting mechanism. Children have a sound understanding of Bible stories and role-play and drama are used to act out some of the significant events. They listen attentively to a variety of religious stories during collective worship. Children work co-operatively in pairs as they work on the computer in the classroom using programs to reinforce their understanding of letters and numbers. Visits and visitors along with very good resources strongly support this area of learning and help most children reach the early learning goals, with many exceeding them by the end of the year.

Physical and creative development

Provision for physical and creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's physical control is developing well.
- Effective teaching of direct skills is combined with very good opportunities for children to learn through play.

Commentary

37. The co-ordinator and other staff provide a particularly rich curriculum which inspires children to participate in all activities and develop skills in all areas of the curriculum. Teaching and learning are very good. Excellent use is made of the outside area throughout the year as activities are changed according to the seasons and topics of study. Children use a variety of tools and equipment confidently and with good dexterity. Most children have good skills of cutting, glueing, drawing and applying paint. They are given many opportunities to practise when they choose activities in play situations. The children regularly take part in planned music making sessions with adults and are building up a good repertoire of favourite songs and rhymes. They are given a wide experience of musical instruments and find great pleasure when they play together. Children benefit from opportunities to dress up and loved putting crowns and veils on as they created stories about princesses and bridesmaids. Most children achieve well in both physical and creative development and many will exceed the early learning goals by the time they move to Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' communication skills are very good.
- Standards in writing are particularly strong.
- Drama is used very well to enhance pupils' speaking and listening and writing skills.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are confident in extending pupils' skills and understanding.
- Assessment is very good but the marking of pupils' work is more variable.

Commentary

38. Pupils achieve very well and standards in reading and writing are very high. The school has worked hard and successfully to maintain these standards since the last inspection. In Year 2, over half of the pupils are attaining well above the expected standards. Cross-curricular planning and working and the frequent use of drama to enhance learning are significant elements in the success achieved by the school. Support for pupils identified as having special educational needs ensures that they have basic reading and writing skills and they are able to integrate fully in the work of the class and achieve equally well.
39. Pupils listening skills are very good. They listen carefully to each other and their teachers and speak very well. Boys and girls participate in lessons equally effectively. Teachers plan specific speaking and listening activities and pupils regularly discuss their work in small groups or pairs. For example, following up a visit to the theatre, pupils rehearsed what they were going to say before presenting it to the rest of the class. The use of drama is particularly effective in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers make this a feature of many lessons, building confidence and developing vocabulary. Through the regular use of this, pupils are confident performers and pupils in all year groups speak clearly to a range of audiences, including their classmates and during assembly.
40. Reading lessons are well planned to ensure that key skills, including comprehension, are developed effectively. Older pupils enjoy reading and regularly read for pleasure. In Year 2, pupils understand and enjoy books by authors such as Roald Dahl, discuss the plots of their books and complete good book reviews. Their reference skills are very good and the higher attainers order words alphabetically to the second and sometimes third letter. The teachers' tracking system shows very good progress for most pupils.
41. There is a very good range of written work. The strength in writing comes from the links made with speaking and listening and its use across all subjects. Teachers use a wide vocabulary and encourage pupils to select descriptive words with care. The quality of writing is particularly good where the teacher has established a clear purpose or audience, as in recording visits out of school or preparing and writing up an investigation in science. Grammar and spelling are very well taught and pupils are motivated to improve their spelling. Standards of presentation are very good. The skills of handwriting are very well taught and pupils in Year 2 consistently use a fluent, neat handwriting style.
42. Teaching is very good. Careful assessments of the pupils' achievements in writing are used well to identify next steps in learning. Marking is more variable. While teachers

make positive comments, not enough marking tells pupils how they can further improve their work.

43. The subject management is very good. As a result of excellent planning and rigorous monitoring, there is effective dissemination of ideas leading to a high level of consistency in approach across the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. This is a very strong aspect of the curriculum as teachers clearly identify the opportunities to extend literacy skills in and through other subjects. There are many good examples, including the work in science and design and technology where pupils write up experiments or evaluate their work. Good use is made of the humanities to extend writing opportunities and there are plenty of opportunities for discussions across all subjects. Literacy skills are also developed well through the use of ICT.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and as a result achievement is very good – standards are very high by the end of Year 2.
- The subject is very well led and pupils' progress is carefully monitored.
- Numeracy skills are developed well in other subjects.

Commentary

45. There are several reasons why standards are so high and have been maintained over several years. The co-ordinator gives very good leadership and has monitored standards closely. Any areas of potential weakness have been swiftly addressed. For example, the school has looked at teaching methods to develop pupils' understanding of mathematics. As a result, they have included more practical experiences to enhance understanding and then planned other activities to build on pupils' knowledge. The teaching staff work effectively as a team and know their pupils well. This means that all pupils are offered tasks that are well matched to their level of attainment, enabling pupils who have special educational needs to achieve very well.

46. All pupils make very good progress. The very good quality of teaching and learning is another positive feature and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. A strong feature of the lessons seen was the way that pupils were encouraged to explain their strategies. For example, when using the interactive whiteboard the teacher involved all the pupils in identifying odd and even numbers. She frequently asked individuals to explain how they reached the answer. Consequently other pupils learned new strategies. Pupils are given appropriate time to think about the challenge set before explaining the strategies used. A very successful initiative where the pupils have a *maths buddy* means that each pupil can discuss problems and challenges and explain their own findings. These experiences reinforce learning very well.

47. Teachers use assessment very well to check pupils' understanding. Regular assessments are carried out and staff meet weekly to assess the success of teaching and learning and to make any necessary adjustments to their planning. Teachers are constantly assessing pupils' understanding during the lesson and are very skilful at posing challenging questions for the different levels of ability and recognising when further challenges are needed and when more time is required to practise an identified skill.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48. Numeracy has been well developed in other subjects. For example, pupils measure accurately and produce graphs when designing an aeroplane in design and technology. They use their number skills to find specific seats when they visit the theatre. Data handling skills are developing in ICT and pupils construct graphs and tables to present information. The whole curriculum is structured meticulously to ensure that there are very good links between all subjects and pupils are very aware that their mathematics skills can be applied in all subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain very high standards.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge.
- Very good planning presents pupils with many opportunities to undertake scientific investigations.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and response support their very good achievement.

Commentary

49. The above average attainment noted in the last report has been improved on. By Year 2, standards are far above the expected level for pupils of this age, with over half of the pupils working at the higher levels. Pupils make very rapid progress because of the very good teaching and their very good attitudes and interest. The pupils who have special educational needs benefit from the extra support that they are given and the well-planned curriculum and achieve very well.
50. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall: a good improvement since the last inspection. The excellent curriculum provides well for pupils, enabling them to attain the high standards they reach. Teachers use their subject knowledge well and correct scientific vocabulary is used consistently. Lessons are very well planned to provide opportunities for pupils to design their own tests, investigations and experiments. A wide range of effective teaching strategies and resources gains the pupils' interest and stimulates discussion. Teachers encourage pupils to investigate for themselves wherever possible and deal well with any further questions arising from this. Their very good questioning skills draw out pupils' knowledge and understanding and move learning forward rapidly. The high standards of behaviour result in well-organised classrooms with pupils able to work independently or collaboratively as necessary. Pupils record their predictions and the results of their investigations in a neat, well-presented manner using a variety of well-drawn tables, charts and graphs.

51. The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator monitors planning, the quality of teaching, scrutinises samples of pupils' work and has analysed test and assessment data. Her leadership has contributed well to the good improvements since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

The provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- A well-structured scheme of work is taught well and enables pupils to make good progress.
- Very good subject leadership has improved teaching and learning.
- Teaching is confident and shows good skills.
- The school makes very effective use of its resources.

Commentary

52. The above average standards seen at the last inspection have been maintained. All pupils make good progress and achieve well because of a very well structured curriculum. Much of the work in ICT is done through other subjects and teachers plan into these the skills they want pupils to develop. Younger pupils, for example, are beginning to use software effectively to develop skills in controlling events. Older pupils are producing multi-media slides combining digital photographs and text to show work from their visits, for example to Selsey. The Internet is used to support personal research work in history and geography. Across the school pupils use word processing and images from digital photography to produce attractive high quality work in all areas of the curriculum but especially for the topic they are following.
53. Teaching and learning are good and staff skills and confidence have continued to grow since the last inspection. The way all staff help each other, share ideas and work very closely as a team has also ensured that the level of expertise across the school has risen. The use of the recently installed interactive whiteboards in classrooms has brought a new dimension to the work of teachers and to pupils' learning through the use of the Internet and the ability to illustrate difficult ideas. Rapid progress has been made in exploiting their capabilities across all subjects.
54. The subject co-ordinators provide very good leadership and many opportunities for staff training. The detailed record keeping systems enable the progress of the pupils to be very effectively monitored. The subject has made good improvement since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their work in other subjects, for example tables and charts in mathematics and word processing in English and humanities. Digital photography is used frequently to record work and visits and photographs taken during physical education lessons enable pupils to study their techniques and suggest ways of improving these before they go into their next lesson. All of these contribute in demonstrating to pupils the relevance of computers and their capacity as tools for learning.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- The study of different religions contributes well to pupils' learning.
- There is good promotion of self-esteem and care for others.

Commentary

56. Little direct teaching was observed during the inspection. However, detailed examination of pupils' work and discussion with them show standards to be above average. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Leadership and management are very good. Good planning ensures pupils have very good opportunities to study Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism as part of a rolling programme. Pupils in Year 2 showed a good understanding of religious symbols from the Jewish faith. They can describe the important celebrations of Judaism and Hinduism and had remembered the story of Rama and Sita very well. The largely oral nature of the work, enhanced by the use of drama, results in good levels of understanding. This approach to religious education develops empathy and promotes pupils' self-esteem. As part of the rich curriculum, religious education is very closely linked to other subjects and pupils' cultural development also benefits from this.
57. Spiritual awareness in assemblies is enhanced very well by the regular visits of the parish priest, who takes an active role in the school. Pupils benefit greatly from visits to the local church where they have learned about the priest's vestments and the colours worn for special occasions.

Geography and history

58. It was not possible to see sufficient teaching in geography and history to make an overall judgement on provision. Work seen in **geography** indicates that standards are above average for pupils of this age group. Achievement is good and pupils enjoy geography. Interesting work is displayed around the school. In discussion with pupils they clearly had good knowledge of the local area and were particularly keen to describe and talk about their visit to Selsey. They understand the effects of erosion and the importance of fishing to the resort. The curriculum is excellent and provides rich experiences for pupils as they develop their geography skills in a wide variety of ways. Under the very good leadership and management of the co-ordinator pupils benefit from many visits to local places of interest.
59. Only one lesson in **history** was observed but evidence from pupils' work and discussion with them indicate that standards are above average, pupils make good progress and achieve well. The curriculum overall is excellent. Teachers plan the various topics together and are skilled at recognising opportunities to draw material from many different subject areas into the same lesson. Subject leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator ensures that the curriculum is enhanced

by the many visits to local places of interest such as the open-air museum and Chichester.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

60. No lessons in art and design, design and technology or music were observed during the inspection and only one lesson in physical education. Therefore no overall judgements were made on provision. However, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work in art and design and design and technology, including displays, indicate that the school provides a very good range of learning experiences in these subjects and pupils achieve above average standards.
61. In **art and design**, pupils produce good quality work in a range of media including three-dimensional work in card and clay. The work of artists is used effectively as a stimulus for pupils' own artwork, for example when producing delicate work in the style of the 'Impressionists' and pictures in the style of Kandinsky, which also included using ICT. In Year 2, good examples were seen of carefully observed drawings in pencil and pastels of Chichester Cathedral and self-portraits. Arts weeks are popular and provide additional interest and stimulus for pupils. The school achieved an Arts Mark Gold award in 2002 for the quality of its work and curriculum.
62. In **design and technology** there were few samples of finished work, but photographs of past work, pupils' planning, records and discussions indicate that standards are above average. Good links are made with other subjects such as history and geography through the topic approach. Planning and design play an important role in the subject's success and clearly link to pupils' literacy skills as they evaluate their finished projects.
63. The subject leaders for both art and design and design and technology have good subject knowledge. Subject management is very good. Time is given to monitoring the standards throughout the school and the very good curriculum and excellent planning have ensured improvements since the last inspection.
64. **Music** has a high status in the school and participation in performances is good. A good standard of singing was observed both during a whole school hymn practice and as part of collective worship. The school has an appropriately wide range of musical instruments. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a realistic overview of the subject and a clear plan for development.
65. The curriculum for **physical education** is very well planned and detailed with a good sequence of activities covering all of the required aspects for pupils of this age. This is supplemented well by enrichment activities such as country dancing, which pupils enjoy greatly. Where teaching was seen, this showed a very clear focus on improving the quality of movement and pupils' technique, enabling them to make very good progress and achieve above average standards in gymnastics. The pupils' very good attitudes and response ensure that these sessions are productive. The subject is well led and managed and the co-ordinator has good personal skills and knowledge.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

66. No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgement is made about overall provision. However, there are many examples of good work to be seen in the evidence retained by the school. A very well organised and structured scheme of work ensures that there is a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. This is promoted very well

through work in most subjects, as well as in particular lessons when pupils explore and talk about relevant issues. The school council makes a very positive contribution to this aspect of pupils' development. Pupils extend their understanding of a healthy lifestyle through work in science and physical education.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
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	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	1
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	1
<i>Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).</i>	