

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Townhill Junior School**  
Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique Reference Number: 116134

Inspection Number: 187250

Headteacher: Mr K Batchelor

Reporting inspector: Jeff Hart  
4339

Dates of inspection: 15 – 19 November 1999

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Junior
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Townhill Junior School Benhams Road Southampton SO18 2NX
Telephone number:	01703 473611
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs H Pritchett Brown
Date of previous inspection:	11 March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Jeff Hart, Registered Inspector	English	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Angela Smith, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
David Reeves	Mathematics Special educational needs	The efficiency of the school
Jo Watkins	Art Music Religious education	Pupils' spiritual, moral cultural and social development
Mike Hillary	History Geography Physical education Swimming	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Laura Lindsay-Clift	Equal opportunities Science Design and technology Information and communication technology	The curriculum and assessment Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The school is very well led by the headteacher.
- The school achieves high standards, especially in mathematics and science.
- There is a clear, successful plan to improve the school even further.
- The quality of teaching is good and lessons are very well planned.
- The staff work very hard and work well as a team.
- The non-teaching staff support learning very well.
- The pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Behaviour is very good and relationships are very positive across the school.
- Parents are closely involved in the life of the school and are well informed.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school is well resourced with high quality displays throughout the school.
- The school provides very good value for money.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I.The high standards and challenge evident in English, mathematics and science are not maintained across other subjects.
- II.Progress in information and communication technology is held back through barely adequate and inefficient resources.
- III.The time allowed for design and technology is inadequate and does not allow the pupils to make sufficient progress.
- IV.Many pupils miss the same lessons weekly through attendance at music practice.

**The school's many strengths clearly outweigh its weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has overcome all the weaknesses identified in the last inspection in 1996 and is now a much better school in several respects. Standards are higher, as reflected in National Curriculum assessment results and other inspection evidence. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average. The quality of teaching has improved, with a far higher proportion of lessons in this inspection being judged good or better with no unsatisfactory teaching. These improvements are largely due to the very good leadership of the headteacher in galvanising the staff and governors in a strong drive to raise standards further. Also, the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have had a positive impact on attainment and progress. The school clearly has a very high capacity for further improvement and is keen to provide the very best education possible.

The key issues for action, as reported in the 1996 inspection, have all been addressed. The value for

money of spending decisions has been considered by the governing body and a clear policy put in place. The school's management structure has been reviewed and a new staffing structure agreed. Roles and responsibilities are now much more carefully defined, with job descriptions agreed and staff undertaking their duties in full knowledge of their goals and contribution to the school's development. Curriculum planning is now detailed and comprehensive. The monitoring of the school's performance has been significantly improved and is now very good. The school has set ambitious but manageable targets in literacy and numeracy for future years. The targets set for 1999 were all achieved and in fact the school has already exceeded the Year 2000 target for numeracy and met the target for literacy. New targets have been agreed for 2001.

### Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by eleven year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> A
			<i>above average</i> B
			<i>average</i> C
			<i>below average</i> D
			<i>well below average</i> E
English	C	B	
Mathematics	B	A	
Science	B	A	

The 1999 assessment results for the eleven year olds reflect above average attainment in mathematics and science compared with all schools nationally. Attainment in English in the 1999 tests was average.

When compared to schools with similar characteristics, the 1999 results are more impressive: above average results for English; well above average results for mathematics and science. The findings from this inspection overall confirm these standards as reflected in the tests. However, attainment in English is now above the national average, with the current Year 6 pupils in line to achieve above average results at the end of Key Stage 2. This is largely because of the positive impact of the National Literacy Strategy. The pupils make good progress across the school in all three core subjects.

Standards in religious education are in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus and the pupils make good progress. In information and communication technology, the pupils attain average standards and make satisfactory progress.

The pupils are attaining standards which are similar to those of pupils of a similar age in history, geography, art, music and physical education. They are making satisfactory progress in all these subjects, except in geography, where the rate of progress is good. In design and technology, standards are below average due largely to insufficient time in the curriculum for the pupils to develop skills or to cover the necessary range of experiences. Progress here is unsatisfactory.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English			Good
Mathematics			Good
Science			Good
Information and communication technology			Satisfactory
Religious education			Good
Other subjects			Satisfactory

The overall quality of teaching is good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. It is good or better in 70 per cent of the lessons. In 16 per cent of lessons it is very good. The teaching is particularly strong in literacy and numeracy lessons. It is also consistently good in science, geography and religious education. The teaching of the pupils with special educational needs is also good.

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

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. The pupils have positive attitudes and relationships are very good across the school community.
Attendance	Good overall. Unauthorised absence is below the national average for similar schools.
Ethos*	Very good. The school community works very well together. Strong efforts are made to create an attractive environment for learning.
Leadership and management	Very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very clear and has a significant impact on standards. There is very good monitoring by the school of its own performance based on very careful planning.
Curriculum	Good overall. Very good extra-curricular provision. Insufficient time for design and technology. Many pupils miss the same lessons weekly due to music practice.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. The learning support tutors provide very good support. The systems are well managed. Individual pupils are carefully identified for support.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. Very committed and hard-working staff who plan and work well as a team. Resources are good except for the barely adequate equipment for information and communication technology. Accommodation is good generally but the library space is inadequate.
Value for money	Very good. The school uses its money prudently. Financial planning is very effective and all spending is very carefully monitored. There is very good use made of staffing, resources and accommodation.

*\* Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

## The parents' views of the school



<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
V. The strong guidance and support for the children. VI. Parents are strongly encouraged to take part in the life of the school. VII. The wide range of extra-curricular provision and residential visits. VIII. Children very much enjoy going to school. IX. The high standards of work and behaviour. X. The annual Christmas production involving all the children. XI. The school is very approachable.	

The parents share very positive views of the school. They are pleased with improvements since the last inspection and feel well informed about school life. They feel the school provides a very good and well-rounded education. The findings of this inspection confirm these views.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

### **1.Improve the resourcing of information and communication technology and the progress made by the pupils through:**

- increasing the range of efficient and reliable computers;
- providing in-service training for staff to increase the use made of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

### **1.Improve the progress made by pupils and time provided for design and technology by:**

- increasing the time allocated in the curriculum for this subject;
- ensuring the pupils cover a wider range of skills and experiences .

(See paragraphs 13, 35 and 108.)

### **1. Provide greater challenge in the teaching of the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum by:**

- matching the tasks set more precisely to the abilities of the pupils in foundation subjects;
- challenging the higher attainers through specific activities and groupings;
- using information and communication technology more frequently in these lessons.

(See paragraphs 13 and 31.)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

Ensure that the orchestra practice does not allow the players to miss the same lessons every week. (See paragraphs 36 and 66.)

Ensure that all statutory requirements are met by including all the necessary information in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to the parents. (See paragraph 56.)

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Townhill School is situated in Southampton. It serves a mixed area of private and council housing. There are currently 403 pupils in the school.

2. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the school is in line with that expected of similar aged pupils.

3. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is far higher than the national average. There are 139 pupils on the register for special educational needs - 34 per cent of the pupils - compared with the national average of 20 per cent in 1998. Only one pupil has a statement of special educational needs: at well below one per cent, this is a very low proportion compared with the national average. The main needs catered for are speech and communication difficulties.

4. Since the last inspection in 1996, the school roll has remained stable. The proportion of girls is now higher. There is now a higher proportion of parents selecting the school as their first choice due to the school's popularity.

5. The school's aims include:

- the best possible education to enable independent development in a multi-cultural society;
- developing self-esteem, co-operation, conscientiousness, personal standards, pride, special interests and talents.

1. The school's current priorities include:

- literacy;
- numeracy;
- information and communication technology.

1. The school has agreed annual targets for literacy and numeracy with the local education authority up to 2002. These targets are carefully negotiated and manageable. The school has already (in 1999) met the literacy target for 2000 and exceeded the numeracy target.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	60	41	101

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	42	49	54
	Girls	30	32	35
	Total	72	81	89
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71 (57)	80 (54)	88 (70)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	37	41	55
	Girls	30	29	35
	Total	67	70	90
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	66 (49)	69 (56)	89 (65)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.3
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.4
	National comparative data	0.5

<sup>1</sup>

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

## Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	16
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **7. Attainment and Progress**

2.The pupils enter the school achieving average levels of attainment. In the National Curriculum assessments in English and mathematics at age seven, just prior to entry to the school, the pupils' achievements match the national average. By the time they leave Townhill Junior School, the pupils are reaching above average levels in mathematics and science. The 1999 National Curriculum assessments for the eleven year olds reflect this above average attainment in mathematics and science compared with all schools nationally. Attainment in English was average, although inspection evidence indicates that attainment now in English is above average. When compared to schools with similar characteristics, the 1999 results are more impressive still: above average results for English; well above average results for mathematics and science. The improvement in those results compared to the previous year (1998) beats the national upward trend considerably: mathematics improving by 26 per cent the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level or beyond; science by 18 per cent; English by 14 per cent. There are several reasons for the 1999 results improving so well: the positive impact of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy; the school's increasing confidence in using data to identify underachieving pupils and then providing appropriate support; a substantive preparation and revision programme for the Year 6 pupils undertaking the tests.

3.The last inspection in 1996 reported overall average attainment but above average results in mathematics. Since this time, the trend in attainment has been for performance in all three core subjects to be close to the national average. The 1999 results overall reflect higher achievement than in previous years, particularly in mathematics and science. In fact, the targets agreed with the LEA for literacy and numeracy have been outstripped and the school currently is performing beyond the numeracy target for the Year 2000.

4.The school is now appropriately planning to consolidate and maintain the very good performance in mathematics and science. In English, the pupils have achieved very well in reading but comparatively poorly in writing. Hence, the school is currently working hard to improve results in writing and this is an appropriate strategy. In fact, the additional time and effort devoted to writing is already improving the quality of work achieved by many pupils.

5.The findings from this inspection show that standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. The current Year 6 pupils are on line to achieve above average results by the end of Key Stage 2 in all three subjects. Standards are evidently rising. Some of the reasons for this improvement are outlined above in relation to the 1999 assessment results. However, there are other factors which account for the school's recent improvement: the headteacher has successfully galvanised the staff and governors in a strong drive to raise standards further; teaching is very focused and the teachers' planning links assessment closely to tasks; the staffing structure enables an "additional" teacher in each year group to reduce class size or focus support on specific groups of underachieving pupils. The only difference between assessment results and this inspection's findings is in English: the strong attention now being given to improve the quality of writing will enable the above average attainment in English reported by the inspectors to be seen in future test results.

6.Overall, standards across the school are sufficiently high and the teachers are striving hard to improve these results even further. In terms of gender, over time the boys and girls have achieved in line with the national comparisons but the 1999 results reflect much better attainment by boys in English and science than expected nationally. The school undertakes close analysis of all its assessment data and puts in place practical strategies to ensure that any underachieving groups are appropriately supported. A good example of this is the way in which pupils performing just below a National Curriculum level are identified and provided with additional “short bursts” of support to try and reach this next level and achieve their potential.

7.In religious education, standards are in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In information and communication technology, the pupils attain average standards. In foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, attainment is generally as expected for pupils of a similar age. This largely reflects the findings of the last inspection. The school has focused attention on raising attainment in the core, rather than foundation subjects. Thus, standards of achievement in history, geography, art, music and physical education are in line with those expected for the pupils’ age. In design and technology, attainment is below average, as the range of experiences offered and the skills practised by the pupils are insufficient to enable the pupils to reach sufficiently high standards.

8.Within **English**, inspection evidence reflects an improvement in attainment since the last inspection report. This is due to the greater attention being paid to writing skills and also the positive impact of the National Literacy Strategy. Standards in speaking and listening are above average. Attainment in reading is also above average. This is clearly reflected in the National Curriculum test results in reading. The school is also most successful in identifying and supporting the weaker readers. Standards in writing are weaker, with attainment currently just matching the national expectation..

9.Within **mathematics**, standards have risen sharply over the last two years. Attainment now is above the national average and well above average when compared with similar schools. The National Numeracy Strategy has been rigorously implemented a year earlier than in most other schools and this has had a very positive impact on the progress pupils are making throughout the school. By Year 6, the majority of the pupils have very good basic number skills. Their ability to calculate numbers mentally is also strong.

10.Within **science**, standards have improved since the last inspection. Attainment now is above the national average and, given the pupils’ average attainment on entry, this reflects considerable achievement by the pupils. Across the school, the pupils are consolidating and successfully adding to their knowledge and understanding. By the time they leave the school, the pupils can plan, predict outcomes, giving scientific reasons, and ensure fair testing. They measure and observe accurately, record findings and draw conclusions.

11.Overall, the pupils make good progress throughout the school. Progress is particularly good in English, mathematics, science, religious education and geography. In these subjects, good gains are made in individual lessons (particularly in the three core subjects) and strong progress is evident over time, as reflected in the pupils’ written work. It is unsatisfactory over time in design and technology, largely due to insufficient attention and time paid to this subject. In other subjects, progress is satisfactory. The pupils’ rate of progress is impeded in information and communication technology due to barely adequate and insufficient equipment and resources.

12.In the core subjects particularly, progress is good because of the close attention paid by teachers

to accurately assessing pupils' present capabilities. This means that individual lessons can focus on specific new objectives and good progress is thereby ensured. Very good progress was observed, for example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson where the teacher moved pupils on from halving and doubling two digit numbers to using these strategies in solving money and number problems. A Year 5 English lesson also demonstrated very good progress during the lesson, as the pupils constructed their own poems on a 'magic box' idea based on discussion at depth of a shared published poem. Over time, progress is also evident from the scrutiny of pupils' written work. Since the start of this term, in almost all books there is clear evidence of an improvement in the layout, presentation and quality of writing. This is due to the teachers' helpful suggestions for improvement and the pupils' sense of pride in their work. The topic areas covered by each class further reflect strong progress over time: many pupils are producing increasingly complex and challenging folders of work based on the class topic. Boys and girls are progressing appropriately, in line with the national trends. Progress for all pupils is better monitored since the last inspection due to the rapid improvement in assessment data and analysis.

13.The pupils with special educational needs make good progress, improving their literacy and numeracy skills significantly by the time they leave the school. National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 indicate that only a minority of pupils attain less than level 3 in English, mathematics and science, the core subjects. The school uses data from the National Curriculum tests, from nationally standardised numeracy tests, and from reading, spelling and teacher assessments to analyse attainment on entry. Assessment data are then used to set targets and appropriate teaching for these pupils. Higher attaining pupils are also identified on entry and placed on the school's register for more able children. These pupils are given specially adapted programmes of study and their progress is tracked during their time at the school. The 1999 National Curriculum results for Key Stage 2 show that in the core subjects a significant number of pupils are achieving beyond national expectations for their age, especially in science. Since the last report, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs has risen. Procedures for identification are good.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

14.The pupils' attitudes are good and have a positive impact on their learning. In lessons they concentrate well on the tasks set, listen carefully to teachers and respond confidently. They are often excited and enthusiastic about their learning. For example, Year 3 pupils in a mental mathematics session, participating in a competition about fast addition, showed such excitement, as did a Year 6 science class investigating non-reversible reactions which produce a gas. The pupils often work independently, without direct teacher supervision, for example, in the shared areas and with computers at lunch time. They do so with maturity and good organisational skills.

15.The pupils' behaviour in classrooms, in the dining hall and around the school is very good. This is a strength of the school. Pupils know the school's routines and follow them well. They play harmoniously together out of doors. They are polite to each other and to adults. The school site is tidy and learning resources are in good condition. There have been no exclusions during the past year.

16.There is a friendly atmosphere in the school, very good relationships and clear racial harmony. These are also strengths of the school, which was acknowledged in the last inspection report. The pupils respond quickly to instructions and co-operate well with adults. They collaborate well on shared tasks; for example, pairs of Year 5 pupils worked well together on a computer simulation programme, and groups of Year 3 pupils on testing strengths of materials. The pupils show respect for, and value, each other's ideas and feelings. A good example of this was when pupils in



a Year 5 'Circle Time' session listened respectfully to each other's imaginative thoughts and feelings about a piece of music which had just been played to them.

17. The pupils willingly take on responsibilities in school. Some act competently and effectively as monitors in the library; others in the music room; and others with the computers. Some look after physical education equipment; some are register monitors; and some volunteer to collect litter. The pupils contribute significantly to the life of the school, for example, by presenting weekly class assemblies, and by all being involved in the school's annual Christmas production.

## **Attendance**

18. Attendance rates are good when compared with the national average for similar schools and there is little unauthorised absence. Although some deterioration in the attendance rates occurred after the last inspection, these have now improved significantly. The rates of unauthorised absence are also good and are below the national average for similar schools. Registers are closed in reasonable time and follow-up procedures are well defined and effective. Lessons start on time and formal registration is quickly and efficiently carried out at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions.

19. Most pupils are punctual to school and there are reliable procedures in use for maintaining and improving the good levels of attendance and punctuality.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

20. The overall quality of teaching is good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. It is good or better in 70 per cent of the lessons. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection where teaching overall was judged to be sound and where a minority of lessons had shortcomings. The quality of teaching is one of the main reasons for the recent significant rise in standards. The headteacher is rigorous in monitoring the quality of teaching and this largely accounts for the improvement in teaching since the last inspection. The other principle reasons for this better teaching is the impact in classrooms of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Teaching is consistently strong across the year groups.

21. This high quality of teaching makes a positive contribution to the pupils' attainment and progress. The school benefits from an enthusiastic team of teachers who are interested in innovation and best practice. For example, the school implemented the National Numeracy Strategy a year earlier than necessary and hence has gained from new teaching methods and resources. During the inspection, the teaching of numeracy was very good in one lesson in four and good or better in three lessons in four. The teaching of literacy was almost as strong: one in four lessons being very good; good or better in five out of seven lessons. The teaching of science, religious education and geography is also good. It is satisfactory overall in history, art, music, design and technology and physical education. In information and communication technology (ICT), the quality of teaching is sound but restricted by barely adequate resourcing. In science, lessons are well planned and thoroughly prepared. Teachers provide a good variety of activities which interest the pupils. In religious education, teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding and make appropriate links with the pupils' own experiences. In geography, the teaching has clear objectives related to the local area and the activities are stimulating and involve all the pupils in the lesson.

22. Much good and very good teaching was observed during the inspection. The best teaching clearly occurs when the pupils are carefully grouped for the literacy and numeracy hours. Here, recent in-service training in the national strategies has an extremely positive impact on the quality of teaching. These lessons are very carefully planned with clear outcomes, which are shared with the pupils. In fact, in all classrooms, teachers have the lesson's objectives written up for the pupils to read and understand at the start of lessons. This is a very successful strategy as the class can then evaluate at the end of the lesson how well the objectives have been met. Subject expertise is

strong for literacy and numeracy: a team of literacy co-ordinators work closely with year teams in planning; the numeracy co-ordinator is a Leading Mathematics Teacher, an identified model of good practice for local schools. The quality of planning in these two core subjects is very good indeed. Although the planning is detailed and focused, the teachers use their planning flexibly and adjust activities on a daily basis according to levels of understanding in the previous lessons. A further strong feature is the use of questioning by the teacher to elicit response and gauge levels of comprehension. The innovative teaching methods demanded by the literacy and numeracy strategies are also being effectively used in other subjects. For example, pupils in a science lesson held up different coloured cards to indicate their answers and hence immediately enabled the teacher to measure levels of understanding. This device is one used consistently in the numeracy strategy and its usage in science demonstrates the high quality of teaching approaches across the curriculum. The use of learning support tutors is also highly effective in the school. Particularly for literacy and numeracy, they impact positively on the pupils' learning, providing focused and relevant support to individuals and small groups.

23.The features of this successful teaching were evident in many lessons. A Year 3 literacy lesson demonstrated very good teaching. The teacher used the shared big book in many exciting ways to generate the pupils' response: she had replaced some words with deliberately misspelt words; she had inserted speech bubbles; she had covered sections of the text with plain paper. Hence, the pupils had to actively identify the words that were misspelt; they had to create character's words for the speech bubbles; they had to predict the next section of the story where it had been covered. Using focused questioning, the teacher effectively brought in the quieter members of the class and elicited creative and thought-provoking responses. The writing task was equally demanding – producing sustained writing which extended the big book's structure and storyline. This lesson illustrates many of the good features evident in teaching across the school: strong subject knowledge and understanding; very detailed and purposeful planning, which contained manageable objectives for the lesson; high expectations and real challenge in the tasks set for the different groups.

24.A Year 4 numeracy lesson also demonstrated very good teaching. The teacher made a brisk start to the lesson with a mental mathematics session recalling a multiplication table, using demanding technical language and skilful questioning to assess the group's level of competence. She then extended into the main activity, teaching the grid method of multiplication, using pencil and paper. The higher attainers were set a different, difficult task and the teacher targeted her time on a group needing her support. The plenary session reinforced the learning and assessed where the pupils had reached. In this lesson, further features of the school's teaching is evident; very successful methods and organisation to deliver the lesson's objectives; closely matching the tasks set to the capabilities of the different groups; the teacher planning the use of her time very successfully and targeting a specific group; assessment being used effectively in the lesson at different times to gauge the pupils' understanding and decide the next activity. As in almost all lessons observed, the teacher managed the pupils well and maintained high standards of discipline.

25.Although no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, there are some weaker aspects apparent in a minority of lessons. The crisp pace and sharp delivery of the literacy and numeracy hours are not apparent in some foundation subjects. The challenge for the most able pupils is also less prevalent outside literacy and numeracy. The weaker aspects of teaching are largely due to a less precise match of task to the pupils' abilities - often the entire class undertaking the same activity which is too difficult for some and insufficiently challenging to others. The use of ICT is also failing to impact sufficiently well in classrooms.

26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is frequently good, with very effective use of learning support tutors both in small group situations and in whole class activities. The high quality of teaching here is because the teachers have carefully identified the pupils' needs and then prepared appropriately matched work. There is a very good communication between the special needs co-ordinator and the team of learning support tutors, who are very clear about the objectives set for groups of pupils and how best to support them in making progress. There is a good balance between support work taking place and small group work outside the classroom.

27. Day-to-day assessment of the pupils' progress is used well to plan the next stages of learning. This is very strong in planning for literacy and numeracy. Year teams plan well together and devise good opportunities for assessment during lessons. Marking is good and targets agreed with pupils are often effective and clearly being met. The way in which assessment information is used to focus the teaching is impressive.

28. The setting of homework is satisfactory. The system works fairly well, particularly with the new reading log books whereby parents, pupils and staff can record progress on a daily basis. However, particularly for the older pupils, there is little challenge in the quality or quantity of homework being set. For example, the school is currently addressing an identified weaknesses in writing across the school but is not using homework consistently as a strategy to make the pupils improve their extended writing.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

29. The curriculum is broad, relevant and meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The balance, however, is unsatisfactory with respect to design and technology. Insufficient time is allocated to this subject, with the range of experiences offered and the skills practised insufficiently broad. There is adequate provision for personal and social education, and health education. There is planned provision for sex and drugs education, which are taught through science and personal, social and health education. The school has very successfully implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies. The timetable appropriately includes daily lessons of literacy and numeracy.

30. The school provides equality of opportunity, and access to the curriculum for all pupils, apart from the 48 members of the orchestra. These pupils are withdrawn for orchestra practice for the same afternoon hour every week. As a result, throughout the whole year, these pupils always miss the particular lessons which are regularly timetabled for that hour.

31. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The setting arrangements and time provided for individual tuition at registration time greatly facilitate their learning. The school has a clear special educational needs policy; individual education plans are sharply focused and regularly reviewed.

32. The shortcomings in the management of the whole curriculum highlighted in the last inspection have been remedied. Effective long term planning and very detailed medium term planning are now published for all subjects. This ensures good continuity and progression throughout the school. Medium term planning is drawn up by year teams; this joint planning leads to consistency in teaching in each year group across all areas of the curriculum. Teachers' daily planning is very thorough. Shortcomings in teacher guidance for art, physical education and poetry, mentioned in the last inspection report, have been dealt with by teacher in-service training and revised planning, which now offers detailed guidance.

33.As at the time of the last inspection, extra-curricular provision is very good, and is a strength of the school. Since the last inspection, provision has been considerably extended by the addition of a number of sporting activities and a French club. There is now a wide range of sporting and musical clubs. Participation rates are very high in extra-curricular sport. Around 150 pupils participate each year. The school has a strong record of success in competitive sports: the boys' football team winning the local league; the girls' football team winning their league; the girls' athletics team becoming city champions; the tag rugby and cricket teams also winning local competitions. Six teachers are involved in extra-curricular sport. An annual Christmas production is a major event and involves the whole school through drama and music. The curriculum is further enhanced by a number of trips and visits, including three residential visits.

34.Overall, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good; those for numeracy are very good. Formal tests in the core subjects, based on intended learning outcomes, are given to all pupils at the end of each year; National Curriculum levels are allocated; two pieces of work in each subject are retained in pupils' individual Records of Achievement. In each year group, pupils complete NFER reading tests and QCA tests in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics. The results of all these formal tests, together with SATs results, are recorded on individual pupil tracking sheets; these are passed on to the next teacher. In addition, formal testing is carried out in numeracy half-termly and in literacy termly. There are firm plans to introduce formal testing at the end of each unit of work in science. For all subjects, the teachers assess and consistently record pupils' progress at the end of units of work. This progress is recorded in terms of how thoroughly each pupil has learned and understood the targets set in the medium term planning for that unit. Thus, methods of assessment are consistent across the curriculum. The lack of consistency in assessment highlighted in the last inspection report has been successfully addressed.

35.Assessment is used effectively to inform curriculum planning, particularly in the core subjects. Teachers receive the tracking records of pupils entering their classes. They use these together with on-going assessment to plan their teaching and the grouping of their pupils, in order to ensure progression for individuals. Results of formal assessment and teacher assessment are analysed; shortcomings in learning and teaching are identified and dealt with by further work. In Years 3 and 4, teachers use assessment to identify pupils who are just below the expected National Curriculum levels in literacy and numeracy; the Additional Literacy Support is effective and helps these pupils to reach the required standard. The overall quality of assessment work in the school is high.

36.Statutory requirements for assessing the work of pupils with special educational needs are fully met.

37.All pupils on the school's Code of Practice special educational needs register have full access to all parts of the school's curriculum. The use of the additional teacher in each year group, especially during literacy and numeracy lessons, enables the pupils with special educational need to receive specific help with their learning difficulties. Assessment of the needs of pupils with special educational needs is very good. An appropriate range of spelling and reading tests is used to identify learning difficulties as well as nationally standardised numeracy tests. Regular reviews are carried out thoroughly, involving parents. Individual education plans and individual behaviour plans provide effective targets to help the pupils improve and the pupils are fully aware of these targets.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

38.The school has continued to provide well for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since the last inspection. Values and beliefs are clear and are taught consistently and effectively throughout the school.

39.The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is sound. There is a planned programme of assemblies which meets requirements and in which pupils and visitors make occasional contributions. Themes frequently focus on issues such as belonging, the community, people we depend on and celebrating festivals. Studies in religious education lessons positively support the pupils' spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to reflect upon the beliefs of others of different world faiths. The pupils are also encouraged to consider issues such as co-operation, teamwork and the feelings of others. 'Circle time', introduced into the life of the school in Year 5, has provided additional opportunities for pupils to talk effectively about their own personal concerns and share these with others.

40.The provision for the pupils' moral development is good. The school is an orderly community where pupils are encouraged to care for and respond positively to each other. The staff provide pupils with good role models and actively promote the values of honesty, fairness and justice. The pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and personal life experiences are used well to stimulate discussions on moral issues. For example, a Year 5 'circle time' session successfully generated real feelings about the importance of listening properly to others at certain times. The school's ethos encourages pupils to care for equipment, resources and the school environment.

41.The provision for the pupils' social development is good. The behaviour policy is supported by everyone in the school and this has assisted pupils in understanding the need for good relationships. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and work together amicably. Staff give generously of their time to lead the numerous sports, musical and leisure activities. Around half the pupils benefit from these extra curricular opportunities. Residential experiences for three year groups further promote the social development of pupils. Fund raising for charity and celebrating harvest gifts with the local community are actively encouraged.

42.The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. There is good provision to help pupils' appreciate aspects of their own culture through such activities as sports, musical experiences, arts week, visits to places of cultural interest and through visitors to the school. The school promotes cultural awareness and understanding by comparing other cultures, using artefacts and resources. The pupils have good opportunities to learn about their local area and about countries in other parts of the world in history and geography. The pupils are taught successfully to appreciate the uniqueness of different cultures through studies of India, Ancient Greece and the Aztecs. In religious education, the pupils develop a good awareness of other religious traditions when learning about world faiths. In art, the pupils explore different cultures through the study of famous artists. Displays and records of special celebrations show the school's commitment to helping pupils appreciate the richness and diversity of different cultural traditions.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

43.The quality of support, guidance and pupils' welfare is good and impacts positively on standards. The school has a strong ethos marked by the provision of a clean and ordered environment in which pupils can learn effectively and in which parents are made welcome. At the last inspection it was reported that pupils feel secure and well cared for. This has continued to remain true as the teachers know their pupils well and are supportive of both their academic and pastoral needs. Parents feel that the school provides good support and guidance. Staff are skilful

at meeting the needs of pupils with learning or other difficulties. Arrangements for the induction of new pupils, especially for those coming from the adjoining infant school, are thorough and comprehensive, as are the arrangements for transfer to secondary schools. These arrangements contribute towards the pupils' enjoying a continuity of sound educational provision as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2.

44.The monitoring of pupils' academic progress and personal development is very good, and a strength of the school. In following a whole-school policy, consistent procedures are in place for the systematic monitoring of pupils' overall attainment and progress over time. These are used to set targets and to encourage all pupils, regardless of ability, to improve their personal standards. Through ensuring that planning and assessment is effective, the overall progress and attainment of pupils since the last inspection has improved. School reports are used to record the pupils' targets and the pupils are encouraged to comment on their progress and set themselves future targets.

45.The school has procedures that are very good and well developed for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour. These have continued to encourage high expectations since the last inspection and emphasise positive behaviour management. Through commonly understood and shared ethos and practice, all staff actively promote a consistent approach to behaviour throughout all aspects of the school life. This is reinforced in lessons and assemblies and by the example of all the adults who work in the school. There is very little bullying and harassment as, through a policy of immediately involving pupils, teachers and parents, the school effectively avoids any serious incidences.

46.Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good overall. They are consistent and work well. Registers are completed and stored in accordance with statutory regulations. Unauthorised absences are followed up by the headteacher and an Educational Welfare Officer continues to be helpful in reminding some parents of their legal duties and the educational consequences that follow pupils with records of poor attendance. During the inspection, lessons observed started on time and there was evidence of procedures to account consistently and accurately for all pupils during the course of the school day. The implementation of sound monitoring procedures during the last year has promoted good attendance, so that attendance and punctuality are now better than at the last inspection.

47.The school has satisfactory procedures for promoting pupils' health, safety and welfare overall. The good induction process for new pupils provides a supportive transition from the feeder infant schools to Townhill Junior. The school fully complies with the child protection procedures and the headteacher is the designated person with responsibility for this area. The arrangements for dealing with first aid, child sickness, accidents and emergencies are understood by the pupils and staff. Records are kept of accidents and facilities and procedures for dealing with accidents and sickness are good as several members of staff hold first aid qualifications. Fire drills are regularly undertaken and accurate records are kept. The school has been awarded a 1999/2000 'Heart Beat' award for the provision of healthy food choices for pupils. Good use is made of support staff and this contributes positively to the well being and progress of all pupils.

48.Pupils with behaviour problems are well supported and encouraged to monitor their own behaviour. The school has been successful in obtaining a grant to fund an anger management course that has proved to be very helpful for a number of pupils. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is extremely good. The staff know the pupils well and provide individual help and guidance which is clearly improving the quality of work achieved.

## **Partnership with parents and the community**

49.Overall, the school enjoys good links and partnerships with parents and the community and these make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. These judgements broadly reflect the findings of the last inspection.

50.The quality of information provided to parents is good overall, although there are some weaknesses. Newsletters to parents are frequent, of a good standard and inform parents about events and issues whilst also celebrating the school's successes. The parents of new pupils are well informed through the useful prospectus and through meetings and personal interviews. However, the information contained in the prospectus does not totally comply with statutory requirements. The headteacher has an 'open-door' policy to enable most parents to feel able to contact the school easily with any concerns. Annual reports give parents details of their children's attainment and progress. Parents' meetings each term provide useful opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress and attainment and to agree targets for pupils. Parents of pupils with a statement of special educational need receive appropriate information through an annual review and are invited to attend meetings to discuss these. The Governors' Annual Report to Parents provides another valuable source of information for parents, although the Report lacks some detail and omits essential information. For example, it does not include the progress made on the previous school action plan or the arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils and facilities for their access.

51.The parents' involvement in their children's learning is good and enriches the curriculum by making a valuable contribution to both the pupils' attainment and personal development. There is an active Home School Association that arranges regular functions for parents and the wider community alongside a programme of effective fundraising. For example, the association runs a disco each term for pupils and is planning a Christmas Fayre for later in the term. Many parents help in school, particularly with helping the younger pupils to read. Parents also help with football coaching, using e-mail and the Internet, on school trips and with a number of other activities. There are reading logs in use as effective links between school and parents. The school offers guidance and training to those parents who help with children's learning and reading.

52.The school enjoys satisfactory links with the community and these enrich and broaden the curriculum provided by the school to make a valuable contribution to the pupils' attainment and personal development. For example, pupils in Year 5 have recently explored the River Itchen and its source, Year 3 pupils have enjoyed a residential visit to the New Forest and many pupils in Year 6 have taken part in the visit to Woodmill Outdoor Centre. The pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, both during and after school. The pupils' awareness of citizenship is raised through involvement in charities and they have recently taken harvest festival gifts to members of the local community. Links with other local schools are strong and good liaison with the secondary schools aids the smooth transition of Year 6 pupils into secondary education.

53.Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to help their children with their learning. The school provides guidance and resources to assist parents with their children's development.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**



54. The overall leadership and management of the school are very good. The very strong leadership of the headteacher has been the main reason for the clear improvement of the school since the last inspection in 1996. An ethos for high achievement has been carefully established with all members of the school community, based on a drive to raise standards and improve provision. The range of systems and practices now in place gives the school very considerable capacity for further improvement still.

55. Since the last inspection, the school has carefully addressed all the identified weaknesses. The value for money of spending decisions has been considered by the governing body and a clear policy put in place. The school's management structure has been reviewed and a new staffing structure agreed. Roles and responsibilities are now much more carefully defined, with job descriptions agreed and staff undertaking their duties in full knowledge of their goals and contribution to the school's development. Curriculum planning is now detailed and comprehensive, with the national strategies for literacy and numeracy recently integrated. The monitoring of the school's performance has been significantly improved and is now very good. Thus, the school has responded extremely well to its last inspection with the senior managers contributing fully to improvement strategies.

56. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He has worked closely with the staff and governors to raise standards, particularly in the core subjects, and then successfully implemented many changes to improve provision and the pupils' performance. The impact of his leadership is particularly evident in the improvement of assessment results, especially in mathematics and science, and the way in which the environment for learning has developed through centralised resourcing and very stimulating display. Another very successful focus has been the identification of cohorts of underachieving pupils from a range of assessment data. The headteacher's understanding and use of data are impressive and usefully help to inform the strategies for school improvement. The average assessment results of recent years have been significantly improved in 1999 through his intervention in targeting additional support. The headteacher leads by personal example and has successfully motivated the whole school community into expecting higher standards and creating a better resourced learning environment. Many of the successful strategies he has introduced encourage the pupils and staff to set clear personal targets and to monitor their progress in reaching these. The parents and wider school community recognise the way in which the school has improved and the number of parents applying for a place as their first choice school has significantly increased.

57. The headteacher has a clear vision of the school's future over the next three years and he has planned specific strategies to reach his goals. This vision includes further improving standards, centralising all resources into a learning resource centre (with appropriate ICT facilities) and developing the community role of the school. The quality of monitoring and support for teaching and curriculum development is very good. It is largely through this monitoring that standards have risen so swiftly. The school has been scrutinising pupils' work for the past four years and now has in place a clear system for regularly monitoring this area. Over time, there has been greater involvement by co-ordinators and this is an appropriate development. In literacy, for example, the co-ordinators are currently monitoring the writing undertaken by pupils to identify common weaknesses and adjust planning accordingly. The quality of teaching is monitored closely by the headteacher with support from the LEA. Reports on teaching are appropriately shared with the governing body. The school is also very effective in monitoring and improving the quality of planning undertaken by the year teams and also in monitoring the pupils' progress through assessment data. Action is clearly taken where weaknesses are found and thus there is a positive

impact on standards and the quality of education through the school's emphasis on self-evaluation. This development is a clear improvement since the last inspection.

58. There are many other positive features of the school's leadership and management. The deputy headteacher has a clear role in several areas across the whole school, as well as teaching. He contributes effectively to professional development activities and to the positive ethos evident in the school. Subject co-ordinators are generally highly effective. They improve the quality of planning and enthuse non-specialist teachers to deliver a range of subjects. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are being extremely well implemented and have clearly had a positive impact on standards and the quality of teaching across the school. The governing body is effective. Governors are appropriately involved in the life of the school and support the headteacher and staff well. They are kept well informed of financial and curricular developments. The governors are clear about how the school is doing and what needs doing next.

59. The school's aims and values are clearly reflected in its work. The aims are clearly stated in the school's prospectus and there is accompanying evidence listed to demonstrate how well the school achieves these aims. The school does generate a climate of high expectation which is effectively supported by the headteacher, staff and governors. Staff and governors testify to this strong community ethos, with everyone working hard to provide the best possible opportunities for the children. The school's motto, "Promoting Teamwork", is constantly referred to in assemblies, lessons, circle time, etc., with very positive outcomes. For example, a class assembly time was spent largely by the pupils sharing personal experiences of times when listening to others was important. The teacher finally shared her own experiences and drew all the threads effectively together in stressing the importance of working and playing well with each other.

60. The school development plan is comprehensive and rooted in raising standards. The plan appropriately spans three years and has been constructed effectively to improve key aspects of provision and subject areas. Staff and governors have been closely involved in the generation of the plan and helped identify priorities and targets. The document is extremely extensive but breaks down into a network of smaller, focused school improvement strategies. It is impressive that assessment data are included usefully to prioritise action. The quality of this plan clearly remedies the minor weaknesses identified in the last inspection. A further strong feature in the plan is the way in which proposals for change are clearly ranked in priority order. The school is also very effective in tracking the progress of implementation. For example, a copy of the plan is kept in the staff room and this is annotated as targets are reached.

61. The management of special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator provides clear leadership and works very hard to support colleagues. The programmes for SEN are very well managed and statutory requirements are met. All staff, including the learning support tutors, work closely with the special needs co-ordinator, who successfully ensures that the targets in the individual education plans are addressed.

62. There is equality of access to the curriculum and all pupils are provided with the opportunity to achieve. In fact, the school works extremely hard to target cohorts of pupils who are at risk of not achieving sufficiently well. Thus, recently, the school has identified pupils who are likely to achieve just below a National Curriculum level. Additional support is provided at 'short bursts' for those pupils to help them achieve their full potential. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy include processes like this to ensure all achieve through targeted support – the school is extremely rigorous in implementing this type of approach. The only weakness here is the large number of pupils who attend the school orchestra practice during one hour of lesson time. Although these pupils benefit from the musical opportunities, they may well be missing the only time accorded to a foundation subject of the National Curriculum.

63. In respect of statutory requirements, the school does not provide the full legally required information to parents in the governors' annual report to parents and in the prospectus.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

64. Teachers and support staff at Townhill are very committed and hard working. They work well in year teams and as a whole staff. There is a range of suitably experienced and qualified teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. Support staff are effectively deployed and involved in the planning of the curriculum. They make a very effective contribution to the high standards generally achieved by the pupils. Since the last inspection, there has been a comprehensive programme of staff development in areas such as assessment, special educational needs and science. More recently there has been effective in-school support for literacy and numeracy and one member of staff acts as a Leading Teacher for Mathematics. A programme of monitoring has been implemented in many subjects, particularly literacy and numeracy. Sharing of good practice through staff meetings and joint planning has been effective in raising the quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science. Co-ordinators and year leaders now have appropriate job descriptions and time to co-ordinate and plan for their subjects. The special educational needs co-ordinator makes good use of the available time. The organisation of staff into year teams, with four teachers allocated to three classes is most effective, allowing for flexibility and facilitating planning and continuity of learning for the pupils. The well-trained learning support tutors provide high quality support for pupils with special education needs, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

65. All staff have the appropriate opportunity to discuss their individual professional development needs in an annual discussion with the headteacher. Staff have attended a wide range of in-service courses and this has helped improve standards in such areas as literacy and numeracy. There is an effective system of induction and support for new staff and the school has fully implemented the new arrangements for newly qualified teachers. The school has its own arrangements for appraisal which operate successfully.

66. Accommodation overall is good. Although the teaching rooms are too small for practical activities and groupwork, the school makes good use of the shared areas between classrooms. Computers and pupils' trays are stored in the common areas. This shared accommodation, together with the teaching bases, means that for most of the time pupils are working in groups of around 25 in areas which are suited to the nature of the activity. The school has a good range of practical areas, including the music room and large hall. The different areas and spaces within the school are very well managed with good storage systems and some very good display throughout the school, particularly for literacy, numeracy and geography. There are separate entrances and cloakroom areas, which prevents overcrowding.

67. At present there are three library areas serving different purposes and year groups. The non-fiction library is a converted corridor and so small that pupils cannot access the necessary library resources nor use the computers effectively. There is currently no central library and resources area to help the pupils develop their research skills as well as providing an area for a central computer resource for larger groups to work together on developing their information and communication technology skills. Although there are large grounds that are used for sport, there are limited environmental areas. There are good sized play areas. The steep area between the two play areas is a hazard.

68. There is a good range of resources to meet the needs of the curriculum. The shortages in resources for art have been addressed since the last inspection and they are now good. The resources for ICT are barely adequate and have had an adverse impact on the quality of the pupils' learning. Many computers operate poorly and there are insufficient available for use across the curriculum. Resources are used well by the staff and pupils to enhance the learning in the school. The school's learning resources manager, together with the teachers, has organised the resources very effectively. The wide range of resources for literacy, numeracy and science is having a positive effect on standards. They are either stored centrally or made readily available in classrooms or shared areas for pupils to use. The school makes best use of its available resources. There is now a clear procedure for costing and monitoring the effectiveness of resources by governors. A policy has been agreed and criteria established. The head and governors are involved in monitoring value for money, as recommended in the last inspection report. The library stock has been constantly updated and is gradually being computerised. Good use is made of the local library service. There are good resources for pupils with special educational needs.

69. The local area and other locations are well used as a resource. There are regular trips which are well supported and valued by parents. Out of school activities include a range of residential and day visits and use of local art galleries and a church. Teaching staff also provide a wide range of extra curricular activities.

## **The efficiency of the school**

70.The school's financial planning is very good. A strength is the way in which expenditure is very clearly focused on the school's educational objectives as outlined in its development plan. For example, additional expenditure for English and mathematics has been a contributory factor in the very good improvement in the attainment of many pupils in literacy and particularly in numeracy.

71.Effective leadership and strategic financial planning are provided by the headteacher, administrative officer and governors, who are very efficient in anticipating the school's financial needs and making the appropriate provision. A good example of this is the way in which the decision to utilise the budget for supply staff has been used to help fund the additional teachers attached to each year group. The cost-effectiveness of this decision is evident in the high quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection.

72.The budget planning cycle is well structured. The development plan is very well integrated into the cycle. The plan is reviewed by staff and governors before the final detailed planning of the budget. The plan is then finalised simultaneously with the budget. The plan itself, including projections for the next three years, is very clearly costed.

73.The school places a priority on retaining a high level of teaching and support staff. Good use is made of the staff, who are effectively deployed, providing a good purposeful mixture of groups for teaching. This has a very good impact on the standards of attainment and the progress that the pupils achieve. The school spends its grant for staff training. Money for pupils with special educational needs is used carefully; the special needs co-ordinator manages the resources efficiently and the school gets very good service from the learning support tutors it employs. As a result, support for these pupils is effective and is a clear factor in the good progress made by many. The school makes good use of its available accommodation and resources. The one area in which the school is poorly resourced is information and communication technology, although this has been identified by the school as its next major investment area.

74.The school controls its finances very well. The headteacher, administrative officer and chair of governors' finance committee scrutinise expenditure on a monthly basis. Since the last inspection the committee has established procedures for closely monitoring the value for money of spending decisions. The allocation of funds to subjects is carefully organised. Financial allocations are based on subject curriculum plans that are linked to the School Development Plan. Subject co-ordinators also receive monthly expenditure information.

75.The school uses its money prudently. Both its income and expenditure per pupil are broadly average. It is keeping within its set budget and a small surplus that has accrued has been earmarked for improving ICT resources. School administration is very good. The school provides very good value for money. From average attainment on entry, the pupils are making good or very good progress across the school and leaving with attainment levels generally above average. The teaching is consistently good and progress is also high. The pupils develop very positive attitudes to their work. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is due to the quality of teaching, the higher standards being attained and the effectiveness of the headteacher's leadership.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

#### **English**

76. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above average. In the 1999 national assessment, attainment matched the national average but was better than the results of similar schools. Test results over the past three years reflect attainment close to the national average. However, the current Year 6 pupils are on line to achieve above average results due to the school's new emphasis on improving writing skills. The 1999 results demonstrated good reading scores but poor writing results. Additional time and effort is now being given to writing. Past tests results are high for reading but the writing results indicate some underachievement in this area. The previous inspection report in 1996 reflected these trends. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher National Curriculum levels is average. The improvement in performance evident now in the school relates to this greater attention being paid to writing skills but also to the impact of the National Literacy Strategy, which has galvanised all staff to focus on the quality of teaching.

77. Attainment in speaking and listening is above average, as reported in the previous inspection. This is largely because the school gives high priority to speaking and drama across the curriculum. The pupils contribute with great confidence in whole class discussion. For example, a Year 3 class brainstormed an impressive and creative list of venues for an elephant to visit after sharing a big book entitled "You can't park an elephant in a car park". Throughout the Literacy Hour, the pupils consistently generate and articulate fresh and thoughtful ideas when responding to different texts. Listening is strongly encouraged and rewarded by teachers; this is clearly improving standards.

78. Standards in reading are above average. The National Curriculum tests demonstrate this high attainment. The literacy strategy is clearly improving reading levels and all classrooms are book-rich and print-rich. Reading is given a high profile in the school and the new reading logs usefully enable parents, pupils and teachers to record progress on a daily basis. Weaker readers are given strong support - learning support tutors effectively work with individuals; the new additional literacy support scheme is impacting positively on small groups. The school uses data and test results very well to identify pupils who need extra help in order to reach the next attainment level. Reading for pleasure is undertaken with great enthusiasm and interest. Reading for information is less successfully implemented, due largely to the fragmentary library accommodation and the poor resources for information and communication technology (ICT).

79. Writing is the weakest area but due attention is being paid to this aspect by the staff. Attainment currently just matches the national expectation but there is some underachievement evident. This weakness is largely due to insufficient opportunities for extended writing. The pupils undertake insufficient writing beyond the school day, when there are opportunities (through homework) for greater reflection and improvement on initial attempts. Examples of well-crafted sustained writing can be found around the school: the school's entrance hall contains inventive, alternative endings to "Bill's New Frock" by Year 3 pupils; a Year 6 display of extended writing includes some humorous book reviews in direct and reported speech. The pupils present their written work well: writing is generally neat and well organised. Spelling is generally accurate and punctuation appropriately in place. There is insufficient use of ICT to help the pupils improve their writing.

80. Progress is good across the school. Lower attainers make good progress due to effective support from teachers, learning support tutors and parent helpers. The pupils with special educational needs benefit from well-organised provision and make extremely good progress. The school is adept in using any opportunities to provide additional support for individuals or small groups – before, during and after the Literacy Hour. The focus of most individual education plans is literacy and thus the pupils receive solid, targeted support in English. Average attainers also progress well. Higher attainers are well challenged through separate activities for the guided reading/writing time in the Literacy Hour and extension group work on a weekly basis. The school keeps careful track of the most able pupils and ensures good support.

81. The pupils' attitudes are a strength of the school. This was also reported in the last inspection. In almost all classrooms, they settle down efficiently to work and show very strong interests in all aspects of English. They respond enthusiastically to the heavy demands of the Literacy Hour – undertaking their individual and group tasks independently and maturely. For example, a Year 4 lower attaining group listened attentively and participated fully in a half-hour whole class poetry session and then immediately and purposefully moved to their writing tables to reflect and write about the teacher's input. Behaviour is consistently very good and the pupils are keen to undertake responsibility, as opportunities arise. There is insufficient attention paid to personal study and research, largely due to the lack of sufficient library accommodation.

82. The teaching is consistently good overall. The quality of teaching is often very good and there is clear improvement here since the last inspection. The staff have all been enthused by the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and in-service training has helped provide very successful strategies for teaching. This high quality of teaching ensures good progress by the pupils across the school.

83. Strengths, evident in much of the teaching, include: sheer enthusiasm and clear knowledge of the aspect under study; accurate assessment of the pupils' capabilities and resultant appropriate planning; active involvement of all the pupils, particularly through questioning in the whole class section of the Literacy Hour; high quality resource provision; and very effective and detailed planning by the year teams.

84. Some very good teaching was observed during the inspection. For example, a Year 5 lesson focused on the poem "The Magic Box": the teacher elicited some very imaginative responses when brainstorming ideas for inclusion in the pupils' own poems (e.g. "ripples of the clearest water"); she cleverly shaped the pupils' ideas into a stream of images and hence built the pupils' confidence as poets. A Year 4 lesson also demonstrated very good teaching. The pupils were asked to compare and contrast two very different poems but were fully challenged as they needed to employ all their recall skills in remembering one of the poems from a previous lesson. The teacher enabled the class to analyse poetry in great depth, covering aspects such as personification and alliteration.

85. The subject is very well co-ordinated by a team of three teachers. The school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy with considerable rigour and this development has clearly improved the quality of teaching and standards since the last inspection. Monitoring of literacy across the school is undertaken well and has a positive impact on attainment. The quality of planning is particularly high and the co-ordinators work hard to maintain this standard. Other subjects contribute well to the pupils' competence in English: the Numeracy Strategy has extended the technical vocabulary used in relation to mathematics; and science activities are reported well through a wide range of writing.

## 91. **Mathematics**

86.The results of the National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that the percentage of eleven year olds who attained the expected level was above the national average. The number of pupils who attained the higher levels was in line with the national average. Compared with similar schools the results are well above average. There has been a very good improvement in the standards of mathematics over the last two years. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a very positive impact on the progress pupils are making throughout the school. By Year 6, the majority of the pupils have very good basic number skills. Their ability to calculate numbers mentally is strong. They know how to partition numbers and handle decimal calculations confidently. Some pupils are able to visualise three-dimensional shapes from two-dimensional drawings and use the correct mathematical language to describe the properties associated with these shapes. However, there is little evidence of ICT being used to support mathematical understanding.

87.Progress in number is good and the daily focus on developing mental mathematics is having a good effect on the pupils' thinking and understanding. For example, pupils in Year 4 are making very good progress in their ability to halve and double two digit numbers and they use these strategies to solve number and money problems. Progress in shape work is good, with pupils in Year 5 developing the strategies for recognising and classifying triangles and quadrilaterals. They have a good knowledge of the properties of different shapes and can correctly identify angles, area and perimeters. Progress for special educational needs is good because of the use of the additional teacher attached to each year group and the planned help received from the learning support tutors. There are also opportunities for the mathematically able to extend their ideas and develop new lines of thought. This was evident in Year 3 when a group of pupils constructed three-dimensional arrays whilst the rest of their year group were understanding two-dimensional arrays.

88.The quality of teaching is good. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and in the majority of lessons it is good and sometimes very good. In good lessons, the teachers have high expectations, the pupils know the learning objectives and the tasks match their needs. The teachers consistently introduce the mathematics lessons using visual or practical materials, encouraging pupils to develop thinking skills and to use the correct terminology. The pupils' ideas are valued and shared with the rest of the class so that they can see that there is often more than one way to resolve a problem. A positive feature in all lessons is the use of the plenary session to recap the main ideas and to assess the pupils' understanding through skilful questioning.

89.Pupils across all four year groups show a very positive response to mathematics. They enjoy being set challenges, whether it is to discover new number patterns or improve their ability to solve spatial problems. For example, Year 4 pupils responded enthusiastically to a letter from a gnome who needed help planning his home. They not only presented a variety of accurately-drawn plans for the best use of the area available, but also designed suitable geometric tiles for the bathroom and kitchen. Attitudes and behaviour are consistently good in lessons, with the pupils developing the skills and understanding of working co-operatively.

90.The mathematics department is well organised. Planning is very thorough and well focused, and progression is carefully monitored. The co-ordinator has made a very good job of analysing the results of pupils' test scores and using the areas of weakness to set appropriate targets for improving performance. The last inspection report presented a very positive picture of the subject and this has clearly been improved by the positive impact of the National Numeracy Strategy.



91. Numeracy levels across the curriculum are good. The pupils use and develop their mathematical knowledge and skills in other areas of the curriculum; for example, time lines in history, measurement in physical education and collecting and interpreting data in science.

## **Science**

92. Standards have improved since the last inspection. In the 1999 statutory assessments at Key Stage 2, attainment was above the national average and well above the average for similar schools.

Given the pupils' attainment on entry, these results are good. There has been an improving trend in the school's attainment over the last three years, better than the improvement nationally. The standard of work of the pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national average.

93. The progress of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. This good progress is facilitated by the positive attitudes that pupils bring to lessons and by good teaching. The teachers ensure that tasks match pupils' abilities, continually checking that pupils have understood and remembered past work and, at the end of the key stage, organising a systematic programme of revision. For pupils with special educational needs, it is also facilitated by the effective deployment of extra adult help.

94. Throughout the key stage, the pupils are consolidating and successfully adding to their knowledge and understanding. By the end of the key stage, the majority of the pupils are beginning to understand the science principles associated with their knowledge. They know about and can explain, for example, the separation of mixtures, and understand the terms dissolve, solution, filtration, evaporation and condensation. Good opportunities are provided for practical work, including open ended investigations. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils can plan, predict outcomes, give scientific reasons and ensure fair testing. They can measure and observe accurately, record findings, and draw conclusions. They are competent in the construction and interpretation of graphs and charts. They confidently use scientific vocabulary and use correct spelling when writing it. The higher attainers at the end of the key stage write good accounts of what they have done in science. The application of information and communication technology to science, however, is unsatisfactory.

95. Attitudes to science are good. The pupils are well behaved and attentive. They willingly co-operate with their teachers, eagerly answering questions and responding to instructions. They collaborate in pairs and groups. They are interested in science and particularly enthusiastic about practical activities.

96. Teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned and thoroughly prepared. Teachers provide a good variety of activities which interest pupils, and often start the lesson with brisk revision activities. Many teachers skilfully question pupils, for example, to distinguish between strong and weak materials. They ensure that pupils work safely. The pupils' written work is regularly marked and the teachers' written comments are helpful. In one very good lesson in Year 3 on rocks, the teacher started with an imaginative revision session on identification. She then demonstrated the concept of permeability using techniques which very much interested the pupils. These strategies enabled pupils thoroughly to consolidate their knowledge about rocks and gain a good understanding of permeability. These strategies also enthused pupils, who were then very eager to start the planned out-door investigation on permeability.

97.Science is co-ordinated enthusiastically and very effectively. Thorough planning of the curriculum, focusing on key learning objectives, has had a positive impact on standards. Informal teacher assessment of pupils' attainment is regular and used effectively to inform curriculum planning. There is some formal assessment at the end of Year 6, but formal assessment is not yet developed in other year groups. The science development plan, however, indicates an intention to provide regular 'end of unit' tests.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **103. Art**

98.Throughout the school, the pupils make satisfactory progress and the majority attain standards in line with those expected for their age. These levels are similar to those found by the previous inspection. In their lessons, pupils have access to a variety of materials and they experiment using a range of media, including chalks, paint, card, textiles and clay. There are some good examples of quality work in all year groups, including batik prints in Year 3 and attractive three-dimensional Greek masks in Year 4. In Year 5, colour wash paintings of swimmers, recognising the techniques used by the artists Jackson Pollock and David Hockney and, in Year 6, colourful interpretations of Art Deco in the style of Clarice Cliff, Andy Warhol style pop art and clay models inspired by Stephen Lowry demonstrate the high quality of much of the pupils' work. The pupils have a sound knowledge of the work of famous artists and use their understanding to creative effect when producing their own art. The emphasis on developing the pupils' artistic skills is clearly addressed in the school policy and scheme of work for art. The pupils build on previous knowledge and experience and apply this to new tasks. Increasing accuracy and technical skill is evident over the key stage as shown by the work pupils produce. There is, however, limited use made of the computer as an aid to the pupils' learning.

99.The pupils enjoy their art lessons and are enthusiastic in their approach to art activities. They listen carefully to instructions and sustain concentration whilst working on tasks. They generally discuss their work sensibly and offer suggestions for improvement. The pupils are co-operative in lessons; they share resources and equipment well and demonstrate good routines in their care for these.

106. Overall, the quality of teaching is sound. The teachers attempt to demonstrate techniques, using a range of materials and giving clear explanations to pupils. Lessons are well prepared and the teachers adopt a supportive role, encouraging the pupils and offering suggestions for further improvement of work. For example, in one lesson focused on observational pencil sketches of leaves and in another based on making papier-mâché masks, the facilitating role of the teacher directly impacted on the quality of the learning experience for the pupils.

### **106. Design and Technology**

100.At the time of the inspection, no lessons in design and technology were being taught. Evidence was obtained by discussions with the teachers and pupils, examination of curriculum planning and artefacts made during the past academic year. Photographs and pupils' work were also scrutinised.

101.Overall, standards are below those expected for the pupils' ages. During the last academic year, insufficient time was allocated to design and technology and the pupils completed only one or,

at the most, two projects. The standard of the work actually completed is at least in line with national expectations and sometimes better. However, the range of experiences offered and the skills practised is insufficiently broad. For this reason the overall progress of pupils is unsatisfactory. Some pupils have made good progress, nevertheless, in particular projects which have interested them, for example, making marble mazes in Year 3 and picture frames in Year 5.

102. The pupils produce satisfactory designs and sometimes provide alternatives, for example, when designing marble mazes. In Year 4 they have experienced disassembling and evaluating commercially-produced carrier bags. There is no evidence of pupils having evaluated their own work. Throughout the school, the pupils use materials such as paper, plastic, wood and card. They practice skills of measuring and cutting and some techniques for fixing, securing and decorating. The pupils have little or no experience, through design and technology lessons, of using food, textiles, construction kits, or electrical and mechanical components. Thus, the curriculum provided for design and technology is inadequate.

103. The pupils interviewed have positive attitudes towards design and technology. They say that it is fun and that they particularly enjoy the making process.

104. Evidence from a variety of sources indicates that the teaching is generally sound, although the time allocated is too little. Most teachers encourage pupils to produce designs and sometimes practise design skills within other curriculum areas, for instance, in art (designing Greek masks) and in history (designing a Roman missile launcher). When appropriate, the teachers offer a choice of materials to pupils, for example, to decorate picture frames. They expect the pupils to produce well made artefacts, and give sufficient time within projects for them to do so. The recently appointed temporary co-ordinator has attended an in-service training course which has helped him to make a start on the reorganisation of the subject. Firm plans are in hand to increase the time allocated and reorganise the curriculum, ensuring greater breadth of experience and skills.

## 111. **Geography**

105. The pupils are making sound progress in geography and are attaining in line with that expected for pupils of a similar age. The Year 3 pupils can draw a plan view of objects and are able to use a key to identify recent changes on a plan view of the school grounds. They can also identify places on maps, from the local area, to the county and country. The Year 5 pupils identify water features in the local area and on a world map. The pupils correctly label diagrams showing the water cycle and identify features on a map of a river system. The more able pupils correctly describe the meaning of geographical terms and describe the route taken by a local river. The Year 5 pupils are developing basic mapwork skills, being able to identify features on a 1:50,000 map but are not using 6 figure grid reference consistently.

106. The pupils have been motivated by their walk around their locality and are keen to answer questions and generate their own questions about the local area. They co-operate successfully in lessons. They can describe their work in geography clearly. In one Year 3 lesson, pupils were able to describe the plan of the school buildings and the use of a key in order to identify features and changes in the school grounds. Other pupils were able to locate their local area on an Ordnance Survey map and many are developing their geographical vocabulary. In other lessons, Year 3 pupils were able to locate the place where photographs had been taken on a large scale map of the area surrounding the school.

107.The pupils are well motivated and keen in lessons observed. They work well in pairs and groups and the vast majority are motivated to try and answer questions. Pupils in the Year 3 group with special educational needs are making good progress because of the direct intervention by the class teacher.

108.Teaching is good, with clear objectives related to the local area. The teachers use very interesting activities for generating questions and involving all pupils in the lesson. They offer support to the less able pupils and simple guides for the rest of the class to frame their questions. Previous work had helped the pupils to develop their mapwork skills and locational knowledge. Good use is being made of local maps and aerial photographs.

109.Teaching of geography is well co-ordinated with a range of good quality resources. Despite the reduction in time available, worthwhile activities are still continuing in all year groups. Work in geography is beginning to make a sound contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Although there are some good examples of using information and communication technology in geography, it is still not fully integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.

#### 116. **History**

110.Only a limited number of lessons were seen during the week of the inspection but from discussion with pupils and scrutiny of the pupils' work it is evident that the pupils are making sound progress in history and are attaining in line with that expected for pupils of a similar age. They can describe the life of people in the past and some of the major events associated with famous people. The Year 4 pupils are able to use pictorial sources to investigate the events surrounding the Trojan Horse, identifying differences in alternative historical accounts. The pupils are using a range of pictures, drawings and cartoons and beginning to interpret sources in their study of life in Ancient Greece. The Year 6 pupils are using a range of texts, including letters, menus, postcards and book reviews to study life in Britain since the 1930s. They can describe the differences in the lives of men and women and people from different classes and the effects of the Blitz on people's lives. Most pupils can compare life in different periods with that of today and are developing their sense of chronology.

111.In the few lessons observed, teaching and the pupils' response were sound. Lessons are well organised and the teachers make effective use of the resources available. The teachers give clear instructions and are beginning to develop the use of historical questions. Some pupils have a good recall of previous work and make a sustained effort during the lesson. The pupils can collaborate effectively but in the lessons observed there were few opportunities for the more able pupils to make further progress.

112.The co-ordinator makes good use of the existing resources as well as organising the loan of artefacts from local sources. Good use is made of visits to Fishbourne Roman Palace, the Mary Rose, Southampton Walks and the Maritime Museum. Sound use is made of the local community and of local artefacts. The use of computers is developing in some areas of the subject but is still not fully integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

#### 119. **Information and Communication Technology**

113.Overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations. At the end of the key stage the pupils can create text, edit, experiment with layout, use graphic images to

complement text, and choose text styles to suit specific audiences. They have experience, at appropriate levels, in creating, accessing and interrogating data bases; of a variety of modelling and simulation programmes; and of control mechanisms. Selected classes are learning to use the Internet and to use e-mail.

114.The progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is sound overall. It is often good when pupils are particularly interested in a topic, such as word processing in Year 3, and the multi-media study in Year 6. Progress is restricted, however, by the resources available in the school. Some computers are out of date and unreliable; there are insufficient Personal Computers and compatible software; and teachers have not yet received the professional training to be provided through the National Grid for Learning.

115.The pupils' responses to information and communication technology are good. They are keen to learn and concentrate well on teachers' instructions and explanations. They collaborate well, sharing their skills and ideas. Many work effectively without direct teacher supervision. They use equipment carefully.

116.Overall, teaching is satisfactory; it is at times good in individual lessons. The teachers are confident to use the present computers; they give clear demonstrations and explanations; they provide helpful printed resources and offer appropriate help to pupils. The teachers keep consistent records of pupils' progress and use these to inform their teaching. However, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support work in other subjects.

117.Present resources are barely adequate and this has an adverse effect on the quality of learning. Information and communication technology, however, features in the School Development Plan for the current year. New schemes of work, which provide detailed teacher guidance and plan for continuity and progression, have been introduced this term. There are clear and imminent plans to take the subject further forward by purchasing additional personal computers; networking the personal computers throughout the school; and by providing appropriate staff in-service training. The poor level of resourcing for ICT was reported in the last inspection in 1996.

#### 124. **Music**

118.Standards of music are at the expected levels for the age of the pupils and are broadly similar to those reported in the last inspection. The pupils make satisfactory progress in music in practising and developing skills. They increase their knowledge of musical instruments by using a variety in their practical work and by evaluating families of instruments using a CD Rom programme.

119.The pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to recognise how musical sounds are used to create specific effects and they are able to respond appropriately to a piece of recorded music. They are learning to recognise the beat in music, they can vary the dynamics and they can respond effectively with soft or loud sounds as the activity demands. They use untuned percussion instruments with developing confidence. By the time the pupils reach Year 6, they can compose their own musical scores using graphic symbols and they can evaluate the performance of their own pieces as well as describing sounds heard in recorded music. They can effectively identify the musical elements of Big Band Sound.

120.The pupils' response in lessons is at least satisfactory. In some of the lessons observed, the

pupils participated with interest. They worked together well and were keen to support each other. In a small number of lessons, largely as a direct result of the prolonged length of activity, pupils' attitudes were less positive, characterised by lack of motivation and off-task behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to take part in extra curricular opportunities, such as recorders and choir. An impressive number of pupils attend the orchestra and the choir. A good range of instruments is available for pupils to play. A full programme of peripatetic tuition provides additional opportunities for pupils to develop their emerging musical skills.

121.Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers plan well to select music that links appropriately with topics being studied in other subjects, such as, Britain since the 1930s and Water/The River Itchen. Appropriate use is made of recorded music, which reinforces the pupils' ability to describe the effect of sounds and the mood created by the music. The best teaching is characterised by a secure knowledge of the subject. In one observation, for example, the teacher's understanding of the subject and effective management of the pupils had a direct impact on pupils' learning and drive for improvement. Instrumental teaching is good and pupils make good progress in these lessons.

### **Physical Education**

122.The pupils are making sound progress overall in physical education, although some good progress was observed in two lessons during the inspection. Overall, the pupils are attaining levels expected for their age. The pupils are able to plan, remember and perform a series of controlled and linked movements. In their gymnastic lessons, the pupils in Year 3 can perform a range of simple jumps from low apparatus. The pupils are making sound progress in developing finishing balances after their jumps. The pupils are improving their performance with increasing balance and control. Some pupils show considerable poise in their balance. In football games lessons, the pupils are practising their ball skills and many can make controlled passes and trap the ball. The Year 4 pupils can stretch in a variety of shapes. Here, the pupils are able to plan and practise a sequence of linked movements in pairs. Standards are now higher than those reported in the last inspection in 1996.

123.The pupils have a positive attitude to their lessons and try hard to follow instructions and perform to the best of their ability. They are able to co-operate effectively in pairs and encourage each other. Some pupils are developing the ability to evaluate other pupils' performance sensitively.

124.The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons, there is a brisk but thorough warm-up ably demonstrated by the teacher. The teachers explain activities clearly and are able to demonstrate good technique. They instruct and support with humour and good knowledge of the pupils' abilities. The best teaching is also developing the pupils' ability to evaluate their own performance and other pupils' routines. The subject co-ordinator has been effective in resourcing the subject and providing suitable in-service training since the last inspection.

125.Many pupils enjoy and value the range of after-school clubs, which the teachers support considerably. In the girls' football club, the teacher was observed providing good guidance and encouragement as well as demonstrating good practice.

126.Swimming lessons are provided for pupils in Year 5. By the end of the year approximately 80% are able to swim 25 metres with confidence. Non-swimmers receive extra time and the school uses the local authority's tests and its own certificates to reward success at a variety of levels. The

school makes good use of a nearby learners' pool where there are suitable facilities and good safety procedures. The supervision and travel arrangements are very well organised and little time is lost.

In the session observed, there was good detailed instruction with a brisk pace to the learning. New skills were developed quickly and the teacher gave lots of praise and encouragement. The pupils were able to float, scull, push and glide by the end of the lesson. Some are beginning to swim 15 metres with confidence, both front and backstroke. All the pupils quickly gained confidence and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

### 133. **Religious Education**

127. Attainment in religious education is in line with that expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The pupils make good progress throughout the school. They learn effectively about Christianity and other world religions, such as Hinduism and Judaism. In complementary studies, the pupils know a good deal about other religions, such as Buddhism and Islam. They reflect on their own responses to a variety of beliefs and are able to show respect for the thoughts and opinions of others.

128. The pupils have a good knowledge of people and stories from the Christian faith. Younger pupils understand the importance of prayer in the life of Christians and other believers and write their own. They have a good understanding of the emphasis believers place on special places for worship and are beginning to appreciate the place of artefacts within religious practice. Older pupils are able to discuss ways in which ceremonies are organised for important events, such as baptism. They are able to consider the importance of promises and discuss the significance of these in religious ceremonies.

129. The pupils' attitudes are good. They listen carefully and are fully involved in discussions in religious education lessons. They are keen to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter, recalling previous learning. They are enthusiastic and thoughtful. Almost all the pupils consider the feelings, experiences and viewpoints of others. In one particular lesson, the pupils were effectively reflecting upon how man affects the environment. They were respectful in their considerations and sensitive to others' views when discussing how they would like to see human behaviour changed.

130. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is evident from lessons, from looking at pupils' work and from talking with pupils that teaching throughout the school succeeds in bringing pupils to a broad understanding of people's religious practices and beliefs. The teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding and make appropriate links with the pupils' own experience. In all lessons, the teachers have good relationships with their pupils and show respect for their viewpoints. They manage pupils effectively, are supportive and use praise well. The teachers prepare lessons well and use good questioning techniques that challenge pupils' thinking and understanding. They make good use of artefacts and books to support learning. The pupils' work is celebrated well in good quality classroom displays. The teachers receive good support from the co-ordinator, who successfully shares her enthusiasm for the subject. This has a direct impact on the quality of provision for pupils.

131. Religious education makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in the school. There are sufficient opportunities for reflection and the consideration of moral and social issues in the context of the cultures based on the major world religions. The provision is enhanced by assemblies, visits to places of religious interest and by

visitors to the school. Since the last inspection, standards in religious education have been broadly maintained.



## PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

132. The school was inspected by a team of six inspectors who spent a total of twenty inspector days in the school. A total of 55 hours and 50 minutes were spent in observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' work and in discussions with pupils about their work and life in the school. A total of 74 lessons were observed. Approximately 25 meetings were held with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff and with governors. Documentation received from the school was scrutinised both before and during the inspection. Some extra-curricular activity was observed. Assemblies and registration sessions were also visited. 114 questionnaires completed by parents were analysed and a meeting was held with 18 parents before the inspection to hear parental views about the school.

### DATA AND INDICATORS

#### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	403	1	139	83

#### Teachers and classes

##### Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	17.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	24

##### Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	163

Average class size:	34
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## Financial data

Financial year: 

98/99
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	£
Total Income	641,265
Total Expenditure	639,919
Expenditure per pupil	1,572
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,165
Balance carried forward to next year	8,510

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	403
Number of questionnaires returned:	114

### Responses (percentage of answers in each category)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	44	54	2	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	54	43	1	1	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	28	58	12	1	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	31	60	6	1	2
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	36	59	4	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	47	50	3	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	51	44	5	1	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	40	57	0	2	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	49	47	4	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	32	64	4	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	53	45	1	1	0

### Other issues raised by parents

The parents share very positive views of the school. They are pleased with improvements since the last inspection and feel well informed about school life. They feel the school provides a very good and well-rounded education.