

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GATCOMBE PARK INFANT SCHOOL**

Portsmouth

LEA area: Portsmouth City

Unique reference number: 116204

Headteacher: Mrs P Groombridge

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Francis  
2440

Dates of inspection: 22-25 May 2000

Inspection number: 188416

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school:              | Infant  |
| School category:             | Community   |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 – 7   |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed   |
| School address:              | St Barbara Way<br>Hilsea<br>Portsmouth<br>Hampshire |
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| Appropriate authority:       | The governing body                                  |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr G J Dowse  |
| Date of previous inspection: | 13 -16 May 1996                                     |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members  |                      | Subject responsibilities          | Aspect responsibilities  |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Mrs P Francis | Registered inspector | science                           | What sort of school is it?   |
|               |                      | art                               | The school's results and pupils' achievements                          |
|               |                      | geography                         | How well are pupils taught?  |
|               |                      | under-fives                       | How well is the school led and managed?                                |
| Mrs S Stock   | Lay inspector        |                                   | How well does the school care for its pupils?                          |
|               |                      |                                   | How well does the school work in partnership with parents?             |
| Dr P Buzing   | Team inspector       | English                           | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
|               |                      | history                           |  |
|               |                      | music                             |  |
|               |                      | religious education               |  |
|               |                      | equal opportunities               |  |
|               |                      | English as an additional language |  |
| Mr A Green    | Team inspector       | mathematics                       | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.                    |
|               |                      | information technology            |  |
|               |                      | design and technology             |  |
|               |                      | physical education                |  |
|               |                      | special educational needs         |  |

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a community infant school for boys and girls aged 4-7 years and is smaller than other primary schools. The school is to change its status in September to a primary school. It has 151 full-time pupils, including 13 pupils in the reception class who are under five. Pupils come from a mixed background of some homes that are rented from the armed services and from the local authority, and others that are owner occupied. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for a free school meal is below the national average. Although the full range of attainment is represented in the school, overall the range of pupils' attainment on entry is below average as there is a significant number of pupils who are of below average attainment, as shown by the results of the school's assessments shortly after entry. The school has a proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, 23 per cent, that is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational need, less than one per cent, is below the national average. Most pupils are white, and very few pupils have English as an additional language.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school that provides satisfactory value for money. Across the school, the pupils attain satisfactory standards in most subjects due to the sound teaching. The school is well led and managed with a shared commitment from the staff and governors to improving standards of attainment.

#### **What the school does well**

- Due to the good teaching in mathematics, pupils' standards are high at age seven.
- Teachers' good management of pupils and their good relationships with them foster good attitudes, values and behaviour for pupils across the school.
- The good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language ensures that they make good and very good progress.
- The good teaching in the reception classes meets the needs of pupils in the foundation stage and they achieve well and make a good start to school.
- The headteacher, key staff and the governors provide good leadership and management that promote good achievement and effective teaching and learning.
- The school has a very good partnership with its parents and good links with the community, with other schools and pre-school groups, which contribute positively to pupils' learning.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards of attainment in pupils' speaking and writing across all subjects.
- The effectiveness of the teaching of basic skills in Years 1 and 2 within the Literacy Strategy to improve pupils' skills in speaking and writing.
- Pupils' skills in information technology and their use in other subjects.
- Pupils' appreciation of how contributions from non-western cultures can enrich life in today's multicultural Britain to improve their personal development.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities to improve the curriculum and hence pupils' learning.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in May 1996. Since then, the school has made sound improvement. The response to the key issues of the last inspection has been satisfactory. Standards in mathematics have risen steadily, standards in pupils' writing skills have improved, although not enough yet, teaching has been improved and the quality of the school's strategic planning and monitoring of its performance has improved. As a result of the good leadership and management by the headteacher, key staff and governors, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

### **STANDARDS**

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 | Key                  |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|----------------------|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |                      |
|                 | 1997          | 1998 | 1999 | 1999            |                      |
| reading         | D             | A    | C    | C               | well above average A |
| writing         | D             | A    | D    | D               | above average B      |
| mathematics     | A             | A    | B    | B               | average C            |
|                 |               |      |      |                 | below average D      |
|                 |               |      |      |                 | well below average E |

The majority of children in the reception classes attain what is normally expected by the age of five in all the areas of learning and exceeds them in physical, and personal and social development. Many children's spoken language is a weakness, which has a negative impact on their writing. The teaching is consistently good in the reception classes and enables pupils to improve by the time they enter Key Stage 1, but is not sufficient to compensate fully for the low starting point of many.

In mathematics, pupils achieve very well and, by the age of seven, standards of attainment are a strength, as they are above the national average for age in the tests in 1999 and in work seen during the inspection. Although pupils achieve satisfactorily from their low standards in speaking and writing on entry, there are weaknesses in standards of attainment in speaking and writing identified in National Curriculum test results in 1999 and reflected in work seen during the inspection. The school is aware that these standards are not high enough and hinder the quality of pupils' work in other subjects. The standards in information technology are also lower than those expected for pupils at seven. Achievement in reading and science is good and pupils attain the standards expected by the age of seven.

The school's good test results in 1998 were due to a particularly good group of pupils who entered the school with higher than usual prior attainment. Excluding this year group, there has been an improving trend over four years. The school's targets for raising standards, based on pupils' individual targets, are realistic and are sufficiently high for each year group.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school                | Pupils have good attitudes to school. They are happy coming to school, arrive in a cheerful manner and go quickly to their lessons at the start of the day. Four-year-olds settle quickly into school. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Pupils' behaviour is good and there have been no recent exclusions.  |
| Personal development and relationships | Sound personal development. Relationships with each other and with adults are good and reflect the considerable effort adults devote to this area of children's development.                           |



|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Attendance | Good. The number of reported absences and unauthorised absences are below the national average for a school of this type. |
|------------|---|

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils:  | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Good               | Satisfactory   |

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

During the inspection, overall, the teaching was sound. Most teaching was judged to be sound or good, 52 per cent was good and a further six per cent was very good; the remaining 42 per cent was sound. Overall in English, teaching was sound with a strength in the teaching of reading and weaknesses in the teaching of speaking and writing. Teaching of mathematics, including numeracy skills, is good. The teaching of pupils in the reception classes is consistently good and the very good teaching was observed in those classes. This has a positive impact on children's achievement and accounts for the good start that children make to school.

In Years 1 and 2 half of the teaching was sound and half was good. There are strengths in some teachers' skilful questioning which probes pupils' understanding. Sometimes in English, teachers ask questions that require single word answers and do not allow sufficient time for pupils to reply, which does not encourage them to speak aloud to the class. All teachers and classroom assistants manage pupils well and enjoy good relationships with them. Encouragement and praise are used to good effect which results in pupils who try hard to succeed, sustain concentration and develop independence as they move through the school. Teachers deploy their support staff well and involve them regularly in the planning of work. They give good support to pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language, which enables them to make good progress. Generally pupils are interested in their lessons and they try hard to succeed.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Sound curriculum. Very good links with the community and good relationships with other schools and pre-school providers. Good provision for the foundation stage. Good strategy for numeracy with positive impact on standards in mathematics. Unsatisfactory extra-curricular provision and limited effectiveness of the literacy strategy to raise standards in writing. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good due to the work designed for them by their teachers and the extra support given by classroom assistants.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                 | The provision for the few pupils with English as an additional language is good due to the extra support given by classroom assistants.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Sound provision for pupils' personal development with a weakness in cultural development in that there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding that Britain is a multicultural society.   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. The school provides good support and guidance to pupils and has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' well-being. |
|--|--|

The school has a very good partnership with parents.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good. The developing partnership of the headteacher and her deputy provides good leadership and management to the school. They are supported well by the subject managers who provide a clear direction in their subjects and in the provision for special educational needs.  |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Good. The governing body is committed to the school's success, is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and plays a positive role in shaping the direction of the school.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Sound. The school has a general view of its work and a good evaluation of standards across the school. It has not succeeded fully in analysing the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and its impact on learning.  |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Overall sound. There is good use of finance to provide a favourable ratio of adults to pupils, good staffing and accommodation and satisfactory learning resources. The governors have applied best value principles satisfactorily. There are clear plans for the use of a financial surplus to establish the new primary school. |

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most  | What parents would like to see improved   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress in school.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities provided by the school outside lessons.</li> </ul> |

The inspectors agree with most of the parents' views of the school. While teaching is good in the reception classes, it is overall sound in Years 1 and 2 with a significant proportion of good teaching.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Since the last inspection, at the age of seven, in mathematics, standards of attainment have been significantly improved and in science and religious education they have been maintained. A key issue in the previous inspection to improve pupils' standards in writing has been improved but standards in speaking and writing are still not high enough and affect the quality of pupils' work in other subjects. Pupils' standards in information technology have declined due to the greater demands of the curriculum now than in 1996 and to a weakness in teachers' skills. Due to the consistently good teaching in the reception classes, pupils achieve well and make a good start to school. As a result of the overall sound teaching, with good teaching in mathematics, pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is sound, with some particularly good achievement in mathematics.
2. On entry to school, although the full range of attainment is represented, there is a significant proportion of children who are low attainers, particularly in their spoken language. Children make sound progress in creative development, good progress in language and literacy, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world, and very good progress in their physical, and personal and social development. By the time children reach the age of five, they attain the standards specified in national guidance in all the areas of learning and exceed them in physical, and personal and social development. The weakness in many children's spoken language has a negative impact on their writing. The teaching is consistently good in the reception classes and enables pupils to improve, but is not able to compensate fully for the low starting point of many, by the time the children enter Key Stage 1. They do not have the necessary breadth of understanding and skills in using language to sustain them through the added demands of the next stage. The progress of children in the reception has improved since the last inspection. They still attain the standards expected and sometimes higher, however, a greater proportion of children entered the reception classes with below average attainment than at the time of the last inspection when attainment on entry was average overall. Consequently, their achievement is better than at the time of the previous inspection.
3. In 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, the attainment of seven-year-olds in national tests in reading was average in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. In writing, attainment was below average. The percentages reaching the higher levels are close to the national average. Over the four years from 1996, the trend in results is upward, with well above average results in 1998, due to a particularly able group of pupils. The Teacher Assessments in 1999 showed that attainments in speaking and listening were well below the national average. On balance, boys perform better than girls in the tests. In some years, this has been due to exceptionally able boys and an unusual percentage of girls with learning difficulties, but the boys' performance is consistently better over the four years from 1996 to 1999.
4. In tests in mathematics, attainment was above national averages and above the average for similar schools. The number of pupils achieving higher levels is well above the national average. For the four years from 1996 to 1999 the trend has been steadily upward, with a slight fall in 1999 because of a higher number of pupils with learning difficulties in that year group. Over this four-year period, boys have consistently outperformed girls.
5. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English are below the expected standards overall at the age of seven. They are in line with expectations in reading and in listening, and below expectations in speaking and in writing. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly similar to those found in most schools, with a significant minority of pupils attaining standards that are better than this. Standards in writing are not as good, and are below the expected standards for pupils at seven. This was a weakness at the time of the previous inspection, and the school has worked hard to improve writing, so that standards are now closer to the national expectation than they were. The rising standards relate to the improvements the school has put in place in the past four years, the good levels of challenge provided for higher attaining pupils and the good support that pupils with learning difficulties are now receiving. The

main weaknesses relate to spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and composition. By the age of seven, standards in speaking are below those expected for pupils' ages. Most pupils listen adequately, and many respond well to questions and there are some pupils whose vocabulary is good, and who speak fluently and clearly, but many pupils, particularly the lower attainers, have limited vocabulary, and a significant minority does not speak confidently. During the inspection, examples of higher attaining pupils of both genders were observed, but there were also some examples of very quiet girls, who lacked confidence particularly in their speaking.

6. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of the key stage in mathematics, pupils are continuing to achieve standards that are above those expected for age with little difference between the performance of boys and girls. Due to the good teaching, pupils systematically develop a good understanding of mathematical ideas and consolidate their skills, particularly in mental calculations. Pupils use and apply the mathematics they learn satisfactorily in mathematical problems and in other subjects, for example, in science when pupils in the reception year sorted animals into sets based on where they lived. This is a good improvement on the judgements of the previous inspection report, which found standards to be in line with national expectations with a significant minority of pupils whose rate of learning was too slow. When the pupils' attainment on entry is taken into account, pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. Assessments shortly after pupils' entry to school show that significant numbers of pupils are below average on arrival at the school so they do very well to gain above average standards by the time they leave to go to the junior school.
7. In science in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, the attainment of seven-year-olds in national Teacher Assessments was slightly below average in comparison with national results and in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. As a result of the consistently good teaching, pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1 from their below average standards assessed at the beginning of their first term in school. Inspection evidence indicates that by the age of seven, they attain the expected standards for their age with nearly 30 per cent of pupils attaining higher levels. These inspection findings reflect the Teacher Assessments undertaken for seven-year-olds this year. Most pupils have good investigative skills and sound knowledge and understanding of materials and physical processes and use scientific terms, such as 'germination', proficiently.
8. In information technology, pupils do not achieve highly enough and, by the age of seven, pupils reach standards in information technology that are below those expected nationally. This represents a decline since the previous inspection report, which judged standards to be in line with national expectations. Over half of the Year 2 pupils lack confidence when using the keyboard and many are not sure of the layout of letters or how to use the cursor, delete, caps and shift keys. However, in one class a large majority of pupils can confidently use the mouse and keyboard. Their confidence is directly related to the confidence of the class teacher and the classroom assistant. In reception, pupils use the mouse confidently to control number games and programs to support their learning in reading and spelling. Computers are not used sufficiently as a tool to support learning across the curriculum.
9. In religious education, standards are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1. However, most pupils reach standards that are better than this in their oral work, but whenever they come to record their work, or write about what they know, they are hindered by their weak writing skills. Pupils make good progress through the school in developing their knowledge about Christianity and other world religions. There is relatively little written work in the subject, but some particularly challenging group work encourages the pupils to think. An example was seen in Year 2, where the teacher asked groups of pupils to find similarities and differences between the Christian and Hindu creation stories.
10. In art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and the standards attained at the age of seven are equal to those expected for this age. In art, pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed progressively as pupils move through the school but they have insufficient opportunities to paint and design compositions using computer software. In design and technology, pupils can identify appropriate materials that should be used. They design and make models from recyclable and

commercial materials and evaluate their results. They satisfactorily learn the skills of cutting, sticking and joining and can construct models from commercial construction kits. In geography, pupils in Key Stage 1 have satisfactory skills in drawing simple maps and in using drawings for physical features. In history, pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of the past. In music, pupils sing well and listen to recorded music and respond appropriately to the music's mood. The majority of pupils in Year 2 are quick to identify string instruments, brass and percussion. They follow a graphic score and enjoy making music to illustrate a story. They have a good range of action songs in their repertoire, and enjoy singing unaccompanied in pleasant, informal music sessions. In physical education, pupils perform safely with suppleness and control in a range of basic tasks such as balancing and travelling in a variety of ways and directions. They demonstrate good control when linking actions together and when using small apparatus in games.

11. Pupils with learning difficulties attain good standards in relation to their specific needs, targets and goals. Assessments on entry and test results are used well to target pupils' needs. Pupils' gains in knowledge, skills and understanding are good. Records are up to date. Individual educational plans are generally specific to the needs of the pupils. Good use is made of individual targets, which are set every half term and are shared with pupils and their parents. The few pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well and make very good progress as a result of the extra, closely targeted support they receive. Although the school has a significant proportion of low attainers, the full range of prior attainment is represented in the school's population and higher attainers are challenged appropriately to ensure that they make good progress. In literacy and numeracy, groups of higher attainers are regularly withdrawn for extra support and to challenge their thinking, as seen in Year 1 when a group of higher attainers solved difficult mathematical problems
12. The school has set targets for its performance in national tests in English, mathematics and science for 2000, 2001 and 2002. These are based on pupils' individual targets in English and mathematics, Teacher Assessments of pupils through the key stage and the progress made by pupils since the assessments at entry to the school. The targets are discussed with the local education authority's advisers to fit in with the authority's targets. They are realistic and the school is making good progress towards meeting them.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. Pupils' attitudes to school, behaviour and relationships are good. Their personal development is satisfactory. Judgements are similar to those of the previous inspection report.
14. Pupils have good attitudes to school. They are happy coming to school, arriving in a cheerful manner and going quickly to their lessons at the start of the day. Children under the age of five are confident when leaving their parents and come into school without fuss, a reflection of the supportive and caring attitude of all of the staff. Pupils generally move around the school calmly and sensibly. They respond well to what the school provides for them and are interested and involved in their work. They usually show an interest in their work during whole class discussions, group work and when working individually. For example, in a physical education lesson in a reception class, the pupils were totally absorbed during the introduction to the lesson, where they were required to move independently in stretch and curl movements, and continued to work well together in groups on the apparatus. However, a minority of older pupils loses concentration when whole class sessions on the carpet go on for too long and do not always consider the impact of noise on the class next door. For example, during a class session in Year 2 at the end of a mathematics lesson, one pupil lost concentration and began to draw imaginary pictures on the carpet. In another class in Year 2, pupils left the class talking loudly which disturbed the class next door who were finishing off their mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties respond well in class and when withdrawn for specific focused help by the part-time special educational needs teacher and classroom assistants. Their response to appropriate questions in class, group and individual sessions is good. Their behaviour is good and they are well integrated into all aspects of school life.
15. Pupils' behaviour is good. During lessons they are polite and treat each other, and adults, with respect. Movement around the school is generally orderly although, at the end of the morning,

noise from some pupils going to lunch disturbs those still working. There is a happy atmosphere during break and lunch times. No incidents of bullying or other oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection and it is not a common occurrence in the school. There have been no recent exclusions. Virtually all parents agree that behaviour in the school is good. Pupils use the school facilities with care and there is no evidence of litter or vandalism. They are trustworthy. They show an awareness of those around them and are polite to each other and to adults. There is no racial harassment and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, including those very few who speak English as an additional language, work and play happily together.

16. The personal development of pupils is sound. Children under five enjoy each other's company and share toys and equipment. They are developing their sense of independence and are prepared to try new things. They are able to tidy away their own work and treat equipment with respect. Older pupils help with the day-to-day management of the school in a number of ways. For example, they collect and return registers to the school office, ring the school bell, tidy away lunchtime playground equipment and befriend pupils who join the school at the start of, or during, the school year.
17. Pupils mostly demonstrate good social skills, with an appropriate awareness of the achievements of others. For example, in a computer lesson in Year 1, which introduced a program on graphs to the class, pupils watched attentively as others in the class showed how to enter information about their favourite type of pet. Pupils' understanding of the impact of their words and actions on others is satisfactory for their age. Relationships with each other and with adults are good and reflect the considerable effort the staff devotes to this area of children's development. All staff provide positive role models and pupils reflect the respect that they are shown. They work well together in groups even when these are of mixed ability and all contributions are welcomed and valued at whatever level. Pupils share resources amicably, for example, taking turns on the large apparatus during physical education or when using musical instruments.
18. The attendance of pupils is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. The numbers of reported absences and unauthorised absences are below the national average for a school of this type. In the previous academic year the attendance rate was below the national average and unauthorised absence was broadly in line with it. This was due to a small number of pupils returning to their home country whilst still remaining on the school roll. There are no specific groups of pupils with poor records of attendance.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

19. Teaching has shown good improvement since the last inspection when just over 20 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Across the school the majority of teaching is either sound or good. In 52 per cent of the lessons observed it was good and it was very good in a further six per cent. The teaching of pupils in the reception classes is consistently good and the very good teaching was observed in those classes. This has a positive impact on children's achievement and accounts for the good start that they make to school. In Years 1 and 2 half of the teaching was sound and half was good. No teaching was observed to be unsatisfactory. There was some good teaching in every class and for pupils with learning difficulties. Teaching in mathematics, science, art, and physical education is good overall and, as a result pupils make good progress in those subjects. Teaching is sound in English, music and religious education. The limited amount of teaching seen in information technology was sound. However, the teaching overall in the subject was judged to be unsatisfactory. There are weaknesses in teachers' expertise in the subject, in the teaching of basic skills, and in levels of challenge, particularly for pupils who have had some experience of using computers. Furthermore, there are no consistent procedures for assessment and pupils are not encouraged to use computers enough in their other subjects. The school plans to address these weaknesses by providing training for the staff next year.
20. Teaching of the four and five-year-olds in the reception classes is consistently good with 30 per cent of very good teaching. As a result children, including those with learning difficulties,

achieve well. Teachers and their assistants have good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children in the foundation stage, and of the curriculum to meet those needs. There is a very good team approach to working in the large open plan area and all adults know the children well. Teachers plan the curriculum to ensure that the under fives undertake many practical experiences and make good use of play to extend their learning. They plan effectively from the six areas of learning for under-fives and there is a seamless transition into subjects of the National Curriculum. They clearly identify what they intend children to learn and this thorough planning is shared weekly with the classroom assistants to give a consistently clear direction to the work of the reception. The strengths in the teaching are the high expectations of children's behaviour and attainment and the very good management of children, based on good relationships and a calm, quiet discipline. In this secure, challenging environment children try hard to succeed and work productively at a good pace. The organisation of the large area is very good; children know what is expected of them, know the routines well and become independent very quickly. Resources match the children's needs and are well organised for them to have access independently. The teachers use homework well so that learning is reinforced and parents are able to make a worthwhile contribution to their children's attainment and progress. All children have targets in language and literacy, and mathematics. These targets and teachers' discussion with children about their work ensures that they have good knowledge of how to improve.

21. Pupils make faster progress in the reception classes than in Years 1 and 2 due to the better teaching that they receive. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have a secure grasp of the subjects they teach with a weakness in some classes in information technology that affects pupils' standards and progress in the subject. Overall, the teaching of numeracy is good; it is based on the National Numeracy Strategy and has a positive effect on raising standards. Teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects, although some good examples were seen in science.
22. The teaching of reading is good. Despite the focus on literacy, there are weaknesses in the teaching of speaking and writing, though some examples of good practice were observed. In art in Year 1, the teacher gave pupils good opportunities to speak at the end of the lesson. She arranged pupils in a circle to ensure that they could see and hear each other and she guided their speech with two questions before they critically evaluated the work that had been undertaken. This was particularly effective in helping pupils to learn how to improve their work, to speak clearly to the rest of the class and to be heard by others. In other lessons, teachers did not give pupils sufficient guidance in speaking or intervene enough to help them to project their voices and improve their vocabulary and the structure of their sentences. As a result, pupils' speech was indistinct, often in single words and could not be heard by the rest of the class. Standards in pupils' writing are not yet high enough and are not being fully developed across the curriculum, for example, in religious education. Pupils are given too few real tasks in writing, such as electronic mail, which involves an audience other than the teacher, and which might provoke written replies. There are strengths in some teachers' skilful questioning which probes pupils' understanding. In Year 2 in science, the teacher's questions promoted pupils' thinking and challenged their understanding of an investigation and how to set one up successfully. Sometimes in English, teachers ask questions that require single word answers and do not allow sufficient time for pupils to reply, which does not encourage them to speak aloud to the class.
23. All teachers and classroom assistants manage pupils well and enjoy good relationships with them. Encouragement and praise are used to good effect which results in pupils who try hard to succeed, sustain concentration and develop independence as they move through the school. Teachers deploy their support staff well and involve them regularly in the planning of work. Teachers' planning is usually good in literacy and numeracy and identifies clearly what they intend pupils to learn. Occasionally the work does not match the prior attainment of all pupils, for example, in English and, except in one class, opportunities for assessment are not identified. Teachers make good use of well-chosen resources to match the objectives of the lesson. In science, teachers chose a good range of resources for pupils to investigate their senses in Year 1, which they greatly enjoyed. Pupils respond by working productively at a suitable pace. All pupils have targets for English and mathematics, which help pupils to know how to improve their work. Teachers discuss their work with pupils and the progress being

made towards their targets, and they constantly reward effort; however, written marking is not yet playing a full part in raising standards in writing, mathematics and science. In Year 2 there are some good examples of teachers' written marking in science which evaluates work and asks questions to improve it. These examples are rare. In some lessons in mathematics, teachers use their pupils' errors to clarify points and ensure that pupils understand their methods of calculation. In turn, pupils explain their answers and how they calculated them and are not afraid to try to succeed when they find work difficult. This does not happen consistently in all classes. Homework in English and mathematics is good, reinforces their learning and enables parents to contribute to their children's progress.

24. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection report. The match of work to the needs of the pupils is good. Pupils are challenged and targets in individual educational plan are well met. These are regularly reviewed and the targets shared with pupils and parents. When pupils meet their individual targets they are quickly moved on to new ones. However, in many classes, daily planning rarely makes specific reference to pupils with learning difficulties and to their learning outcomes. The part-time teacher for special educational needs and the learning support staff provide good support for pupils both individually and in small groups. Classroom assistants are given good guidance and are used well. They make a positive impact on pupils' learning. The use of resources to support learning is good. Pupils are well managed.

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

25. The curriculum that the school provides is satisfactory overall, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and of the locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The curriculum for pupils in the foundation stage is good, the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, so that the pupils make good progress and attain the standards expected by the age of five. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, where not enough time was allocated to mathematics. That report also criticised the school's provision in that it did not always enable the pupils to make appropriate progress, and found discrepancies between what was provided for pupils in classes of the same age. These problems have now been satisfactorily addressed, and teachers of parallel classes plan together. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties was effective, and has now improved so that it is good. The impact of the curriculum is extended by the provision of homework, and a very high percentage of parents who responded to the questionnaire (95 per cent) feel that their children get the right amount of work to do at home.
26. The school's strategy for numeracy is having a good impact on the development of the pupils' numeracy skills. The strategy for literacy is helping to raise standards within the literacy hour, but is unsatisfactory overall because policies and guidance on planning in all subjects do not contain statements on literacy. This means that opportunities are missed to develop the pupils' literacy skills, particularly in speaking and writing, across the curriculum.
27. Curricular planning has developed since the previous inspection. Guidance for teachers on planning is more fully developed, and there are policies for most subjects, but there is no whole school format to ensure that each policy contains agreed elements. Some contain statements on pupils with learning difficulties, some set out their beliefs or aims, but there is no overall pattern showing how each subject is contributing to the achievement of the school's aims. In practice, the curriculum is coherent, mainly because the school is small and teachers maintain good contact with each other, but the documents are not yet fully reflecting this.
28. Provision and planning for pupils with learning difficulties is good and contributes towards the good progress they make overall. The school's implementation of the Code of Practice is meeting the needs of the pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and ensures they have equal access to the curriculum.
29. An appropriate range of visits supports the curriculum, and the school is trying to extend these in order to provide more first-hand experience to stimulate the pupils' writing. There are visits to the library, for example, to an orchestral concert in the Guildhall, to HMS Warrior, and walks around the local area. The school also arranges curricular evenings for parents so that they will



understand what and how their children are learning. These initiatives make a positive impact on the way the pupils learn.

30. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory. Parents who answered the questionnaire and those at the pre-inspection parents' meeting, felt this to be true, and inspectors support their judgement. At the time of the last inspection, a little sport was provided outside the curriculum, and there was a recorder club. The latter has now been incorporated into the school day. The school does have plans to introduce some country dancing in the second half of the term, but is not yet harnessing pupils' enthusiasms in other areas.
31. The community makes a very good contribution to the pupils' learning. The school has good links with the police and the fire service, and a very good example was observed during the inspection, with the community policeman providing a session of high quality to the reception classes. The contacts with the local newspaper result in Year 2 producing their own newspaper, and there are good links with the City through environmental health initiatives, visits to the library, the City Landscape Architects and local computer companies.
32. The school has good links with partner institutions in education, from the Universities, Schools and Colleges that send student teachers, nurses and school pupils on work experience, to pre-school playgroups and their partnership junior school. Parents commented favourably on these links at their meetings before the inspection. All these links provide good opportunities for the pupils to develop confidence, to extend their social skills, and to broaden the range of tasks they have to do in school.
33. The provision the school makes for the pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory overall. An agreed PSHE programme is being introduced, and is firmly in place in the reception. Pupils who are now in Year 1 currently have a regular time in which they discuss issues that are relevant to their social and moral development. One class in Year 2 has no such provision. In this way, these pupils do not have equal access to the whole curriculum, despite the fact that their teachers know them well and provide good personal support for them. Spiritual, moral and social development are catered for satisfactorily, despite the absence of a whole school policy on this aspect and little mention in any of the subject policies, but there are some weaknesses in cultural development.
34. Provision for spiritual development is sound. At the time of the last inspection, the quality of acts of worship was variable, but all those observed during this inspection were at least sound and some were good. One good assembly involved pupils being chosen to play the characters in the story of the Good Samaritan. All statutory requirements are met. Pupils are asked to reflect on some of the bigger issues of life: during the inspection, Year 2 pupils discussed various different possibilities for the creation of the world. There is good development of the pupils' imaginations in music: they listen well, and reflection in assemblies is managed well.
35. Moral development is satisfactorily catered for. Assemblies deal with moral themes, all adults are good role models, and they encourage pupils to develop a clear sense of right and wrong. Teachers and classroom assistants spend time discussing with individual pupils the impact of their behaviour on others. The pupils are generally courteous and adhere to routines well. They line up quietly and walk sensitively through the hall on their way to the music room to ensure that they do not disturb lessons.
36. Provision for social development is sound. Adults encourage the pupils to work well together and to take some responsibility in lessons for getting out apparatus and equipment, and to help to put it away. There are a few opportunities for pupils to take daily responsibility. The school is an orderly community, so that assembly and lunchtime are pleasant occasions, and give pupils a good framework for their social development. The school encourages pupils to be aware of the needs of others: their work for The Children's Society, Children in Need, Tools for the Third World and the NSPCC are good examples.
37. The provision for cultural development is underdeveloped. Pupils study their own culture: they study the seaside in work in history and geography in Year 2. They study European artists, such

as Kandinsky, and they hear music in assembly by composers such as Beethoven. Religious education introduces them to a wider range of cultures through their study of creation and other topics. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of Britain as a multicultural society

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

38. The school has maintained the good levels of care and support reported in the previous inspection. Within this area of its work there is some very good practice. Assessment procedures are sound.
39. The headteacher and all the adults in the school work hard to fulfil the school's aim to provide a secure and stable environment for its pupils. The headteacher knows the pupils and their families very well which is an important factor in her ability to carry out her role as Child Protection Officer together with appropriate, regular training for herself and all the adults employed in the school. The school works well with outside agencies when necessary.
40. The school has very good procedures in place to ensure the safety and well being of its pupils. Regular health and safety checks are made with an appropriate input by the Governing Body. The school is aware of the necessity to be alert to the needs of the young pupils in its care and has a good system to monitor these throughout the school day. Consequently the pupils enjoy a safe and welcoming environment where they feel at home.
41. The school monitors and promotes the pupils' good behaviour well. The emphasis is always on praise and the vast majority of pupils respond well to this. They are keen to receive their rewards and value them. When teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and independence, the lessons have pace and fully involve the pupils. The resulting atmosphere is calm and workmanlike; this is particularly so in the reception classes.
42. The headteacher is aware of the need to react quickly if and when concerns over unacceptable behaviour are brought to her attention and she works closely with all involved. However, the school does not have in place a specific anti-bullying policy, which will provide clear guidelines and procedures for when it changes to a primary school.
43. Procedures for promoting and monitoring the pupils' attendance are good. The school is aware of the need to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and follows up reasons for absence appropriately.
44. The teachers and all the adults in the school know the pupils very well. This results in a friendly, happy atmosphere that is appreciated by the pupils and their families. There are good relationships between all, established in the reception. These continue throughout the school and make a positive contribution to the support and guidance pupils receive. Pupils in the reception classes are observed closely and detailed records of their personal development and progress are kept. Through well planned and organised activities the pupils in the reception year have very good opportunities to develop their initiative and take responsibility for their own learning, which makes a very good contribution to their personal development.
45. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. This represents a decline since the previous inspection. The results of assessments on entry and ongoing assessment in the reception classes are used well to match activities to the needs of the pupils. Appropriate targets are set which are shared and reviewed with the pupils and their parents. Assessment is also used well for the identification of pupils with learning difficulties, whose progress is also monitored thoroughly. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' progress in reading, writing and numeracy is comprehensively and systematically recorded in all classes. Satisfactory records are kept for science. However, few records are kept on pupils' progress in speaking and listening, information technology and other areas of the curriculum. In information technology, the majority of teachers record coverage of the use of computer programs but few record progression of skills. Good use is made of individual targets in reading and writing and mathematics for all pupils, which are reviewed every half term. Pupils know their targets well.

46. The school is using data provided by the local authority and its own data in English, mathematics and science to analyse trends, strengths and weaknesses. There is a consistent pattern of assessments in writing, reading, numeracy and science. However, this has not been extended to all areas of the core subjects or to foundation subjects. For example, the lack of assessment to track the development of skills in speaking and listening, information technology, religious education and physical education means that teachers are not planning lessons which build upon previous skills, knowledge and understanding. The new assessment co-ordinator is very well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in assessment and is beginning to develop whole school procedures for the use and recording of pupils' attainment and progress.
47. The use of "Special workbooks" each term provides a good record of every pupil's progress in writing, numeracy and science. Progress in writing is tracked well. These books are shared with parents. Portfolios of moderated samples of assessed and levelled work have yet to be developed by subject managers in order to support teachers in their assessment of pupils.
48. The arrangement for the assessment and identification of pupils with learning difficulties are good and are being implemented in accordance with the Code of Practice. This includes assessing pupils' needs, planning subsequent work and developing and using individual educational plans and targets. Liaison with outside agencies and external support staff is good. Pupils with learning difficulties are fully integrated into school life.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

49. The school has built on its good links with its parents as reported by the previous inspection and has now created a very good partnership with them. This is supported fully by the parents who have very positive views of the work of the school. In particular they appreciate the way the school responds to their concerns, the good behaviour of the pupils and the expectation that each pupil should work hard to achieve his or her best. The one area of concern is that there are insufficient activities outside lessons. The inspection corroborates the parents' views in these areas.
50. The school establishes very good relationships with its parents through home visits and a well-planned induction programme. The school places great emphasis on building a mutually supportive relationship with the pupils' families. To this end it seeks to be as flexible as possible to encourage parents and carers to take an active role in the pupils' learning. Curricular workshops are provided for parents and their views are sought in order to improve the school's practice. An important feature of this is the recent study carried out by the previous administrative officer to evaluate the best way to develop a meaningful and supportive dialogue between the school and home. The school's approach highlights its commitment to a productive home/school partnership which is much appreciated by parents.
51. In return, parents are very supportive of the work of the school and large numbers work regularly in all the classes. There is a very active 'Friends' of the school that raises large sums of money to augment the school's resources. The variety of activities also provides the pupils with good opportunities to take an active role, for example, by baking cakes and biscuits to sell at the summer fair. Parents are also keen to support the school's Christmas and Mothers' Day productions and the large numbers attending necessitate two performances of each.
52. Parents receive good information from the school through its clearly presented and readable prospectus. The school also provides parents of pre-school children with a very attractive and informative leaflet entitled 'Time for School'. There are regular monthly newsletters which help keep parents abreast of the school's activities. However the Annual Report from the Governing Body has several omissions and does not meet statutory requirements. It lacks detail on the progress made in implementing the action plan from the previous inspection, it omits financial details and it lacks details of steps to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils. It also omits information about the professional development undertaken by teaching staff and information about any changes to the policy for special educational needs during the last year.
53. There are six meetings a year for parents to see their children's work and discuss their

progress. The pupils' annual reports are sound. They give satisfactory information on work covered and progress made in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but are not always clear about how pupils might improve their work. In the non-core subjects the information is overly brief and does not give parents a clear understanding of their children's attainment and progress. There is a good overview of the pupils' personal development, which is a reflection of the effectiveness of the good relationships between the class teachers and their pupils.

54. The use of homework as a link between the school and home is good. Pupils have regular homework for reading and mathematics. The use of homework books which contain explanatory notes and helpful comments from the class teachers, together with opportunities for parents to report back, makes a good contribution to the school's home/school partnership and enables parents to enhance and consolidate the work of the school.
55. Liaison with parents of pupils with learning difficulties is good. They are aware of the point of contact in the school and regularly share in the setting of targets from the individual educational plans.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

56. Overall leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, in close co-operation with her new deputy head, provides good professional leadership that imparts a clear educational direction to the school and is focused upon raising standards. This judgement reflects the views of the majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire. They made many positive comments about the headteacher's leadership, and the good rapport and communication that the headteacher has with parents. Teachers who hold responsibilities for managing subjects provide at least sound leadership in their subjects and the managers for mathematics, science, information technology and music provide good leadership. The co-ordinator for special educational needs manages the aspect well and provides good leadership. She is well supported by class teachers, the part-time special needs teacher and the learning support staff.
57. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. The governors are committed to the school and take an active interest in all aspects. They are very supportive and have a clear view for the school's development and a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Communications between the school and the governors is good and individual governors visit classes to observe teachers and pupils at work to gain a greater understanding of the curriculum. Individual governors are linked to a particular subject manager to increase their knowledge of one subject. The responsible governor for special educational needs is very new to the post but is already ensuring that she has a good awareness of the needs of the pupils on the register for special educational needs and the requirements of the Code of Practice. There is an appropriate range of committees that report efficiently to the full governing body. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and statutory requirements are met, with the minor omission of some details from their annual report to parents.
58. The school measures its performance satisfactorily and checks its results against national standards and the performance of schools in similar circumstances. It diagnoses its strengths and weaknesses and generally takes effective action to secure improvements. The headteacher and deputy analyse the school's test results in English, mathematics and science and discuss their findings with subject managers. The subject managers, after training from the deputy head, produce an action plan that matches the priorities in the school's plan for improvement. The deputy head, the school's curricular co-ordinator, reviews each plan with subject managers to support them and ensure progress through the year. Each subject manager checks teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work to ensure that the requirements of the subject are covered and that standards are high enough. The headteacher started to observe teaching in literacy and numeracy in every class last term. She recognises the need to improve her monitoring of teaching by identifying a more specific focus in teaching. So far, except for the English manager, neither she nor the subject managers have focused on the teaching of specific subjects. Consequently, the school has not succeeded fully in analysing the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and its impact on learning. There is a good commitment

to improvement and the weaknesses identified in the last inspection on standards in mathematics, in teaching and in the quality of the school's plan for development have been fully addressed. Standards of writing have improved but are not yet high enough and are still a priority for the school. Since the appointment of the new deputy head, the school's capacity to secure improvements is good.

59. The school makes sound strategic use of resources and a recent audit by the local education authority found that financial management is efficient with no significant weaknesses. The school has identified appropriate priorities for development and the quality of the school's plan for improvement has improved significantly in response to the criticisms of the last inspection. The priorities have been largely driven by the need to implement the improvements advised by the previous inspection and the national imperatives, such as the literacy and numeracy strategies. The governors give good financial support to the educational priorities and they use the budget to provide a favourable ratio of teachers and classroom assistants to pupils as they are aware that attainment on entry is below average and many pupils require individual attention to make good progress. There are clear plans for the use of a financial surplus to establish the new primary school. The school makes sound use of specific grants such as the finance for special educational needs. The governors have applied best value principles satisfactorily and plan to develop a policy to increase their efficiency in using financial resources.
60. The appraisal and professional development of teachers are sound. All teachers have targets for their performance that are regularly reviewed by the headteacher or deputy. The school has good levels of staffing and has sustained the good judgement made at the time of the last inspection. Planning for staff development is now more closely related to the school's priorities, and this is an improvement. Teachers and classroom assistants share a common purpose, and plan effectively together to make their work more effective. The induction of teachers new to the school is good.
61. The accommodation is good and is used well to meet the demands of the curriculum. Classrooms are spacious, and the attractive outdoor area supports the pupils' learning effectively in science. The music room is particularly well used. The library is not conveniently situated, as it is separated from the rest of the school.
62. Resources are satisfactory and meet the demands of the curriculum. There is a good range of musical instruments, but the school's music stands are not suitable for young pupils. The result is that pupils do not use them and music is placed on the floor, resulting in some odd posture, and preventing the pupils from watching the conductor or each other. There are good resources for English, science, art, music and physical education but there are not enough computers in some classrooms.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. The school should now:

- (1) improve standards of attainment in pupils' speaking and writing across all subjects by:
  - providing more structured opportunities in Years 1 and 2 for pupils to speak and write in other subjects;
  - providing a greater range of real tasks for different audiences to encourage pupils to write;
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to use computers to improve the drafting process in writing;
  - using writing more prominently in displays around the school to create a better environment to motivate pupils to write;(paragraphs 1,3,5,9,22,23,77,80,81,84,98,109)
- (2) improve the effectiveness of the teaching of basic skills in Years 1 and 2 within the Literacy Strategy to improve pupils' skills in speaking and writing by:
  - making more effective use of the library; \*
  - sharing the good practice that exists, particularly in the reception classes;
  - including strategies for teaching literacy in the guidance on planning in subjects;
  - improving the confidence of quiet girls in speaking to improve their ability to express themselves orally;
  - improving the written marking of pupils' work to ensure that pupils know how to improve their compositions;\*(paragraphs 5,23,26,78,82,84,86,99,111,129)
- (3) improve pupils' skills in using computers so that they may use computers as a tool to better effect in other subjects by:
  - increasing teachers' skills in using computers;\*
  - including strategies for teaching and using computers in the guidance on planning in other subjects;
  - devising a consistent assessment system for tracking pupils' skills in information technology;(paragraphs 8,10,84,87,98,102)
- (4) strengthen pupils' appreciation of how contributions from non-western cultures can enrich life in today's multicultural Britain to improve their personal development.  
(paragraphs 37,104)

## OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- (1) Improve the provision for extra-curricular activities to strengthen the curricular

provision and hence pupils' learning. (paragraphs 30,125)

\*Items already identified for development by the school.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 48 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 14 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0         | 6         | 52   | 42           | 0              | 0    | 0         |

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll                                      | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) |         | 151     |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals        |         | 11      |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       |         | 1       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register |         | 35      |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 10           |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 14           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 4            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 5.7 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.5 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.



**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

|  | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 1999 | 19   | 19    | 38    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 18      | 16      | 19          |
|   | Girls    | 15      | 13      | 16          |
|   | Total    | 33      | 29      | 35          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 87 (89) | 76 (94) | 92 (95)     |
|   | National | 82 (80) | 83 (81) | 87 (84)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 16      | 18          | 18      |
|   | Girls    | 13      | 16          | 15      |
|   | Total    | 29      | 34          | 33      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 76 (95) | 89 (94)     | 87 (97) |
|   | National | 82 (81) | 86 (85)     | 87 (86) |

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 0            |
| Black – African heritage        | 0            |
| Black – other                   | 0            |
| Indian                          | 0            |
| Pakistani                       | 0            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 2            |
| Chinese                         | 4            |
| White                           | 129          |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 3            |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

**Exclusions in the last school year**

|                              | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage   | 0            | 0         |
| Black – African heritage     | 0            | 0         |
| Black – other                | 0            | 0         |
| Indian                       | 0            | 0         |
| Pakistani                    | 0            | 0         |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0            | 0         |
| Chinese                      | 0            | 0         |
| White                        | 0            | 0         |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0            | 0         |

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 7.4  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 20.1 |
| Average class size                       | 25.2 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Education support staff: YR – Y2**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 6   |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 103 |

**Financial information**

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 1999/2000 |
|----------------|-----------|

|  | £       |
|--|---------|
| Total income                               | 280,685 |
| Total expenditure                          | 277,806 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2,028   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 40,314  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 43,193  |

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 151 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 75  |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 75             | 19            | 4                | 1                 | 1          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 67             | 32            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 71             | 29            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 45             | 48            | 5                | 1                 | 0          |
| The teaching is good.  | 72             | 27            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 56             | 39            | 5                | 0                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 77             | 23            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 75             | 25            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 65             | 33            | 1                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 84             | 13            | 1                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 63             | 32            | 1                | 0                 | 4          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 32             | 35            | 17               | 7                 | 9          |

### Other issues raised by parents

Fifteen parents made further comments on the reverse of the questionnaire form and one letter was received. Most of the opinions expressed are reflected in the questionnaire responses summarised above.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

64. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Entry is phased so that pupils begin school on a part-time basis and move to full-time. During the inspection there were 13 four-year-olds in the reception classes. From an analysis of the school's assessments of pupils during their first term and from inspectors' observations, overall, attainment on entry to the school is below average. On entry there is a significant proportion of children who are below average, particularly in their spoken language, although the full range of attainment is represented. Under-fives are accommodated in the two reception classes and are taught with children who have reached the age of five.
65. Four-year-olds make sound progress in creative development, good progress in language and literacy, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world, and very good progress in their physical, and personal and social development. By the time children reach statutory school age, they meet the expected standards specified in national guidance in all the areas of learning, and exceed them in physical, and personal and social development. Children who have been identified as having learning difficulties make good progress. The achievement of children in the reception has improved since the last inspection; they still attain the standards expected and sometimes higher, however, a greater proportion of children entered the reception classes with below average attainment than at the time of the last inspection when attainment was average overall. This improvement is as a result of the quality of the teaching, which has improved from sound and better to consistently good with some very good features during the current inspection.
66. The curricular provision for under-fives is good. An initial assessment of children's attainment when they enter school and careful observations by teachers help to provide appropriate curricular challenges. Teaching for the four and five year olds in the reception classes is consistently good with 30 per cent of very good teaching. As a result children, including those with learning difficulties, make good, and sometimes very good progress. Teachers and their assistants have good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children in the foundation stage and of the curriculum to meet those needs. There is a very good team approach to working in the large open plan area and all adults know the children well. Teachers plan the curriculum to ensure that the children undertake many practical experiences and make good use of play to extend learning. They plan effectively from the six areas of learning for under-fives and clearly identify what they intend children to learn. This thorough planning is shared weekly with the classroom assistants to give a consistently clear direction to the work of the reception. Work is matched well to the needs of children of different prior attainment and when children have attained the expected standards at five, teachers' planning moves smoothly into the subjects of the National Curriculum.
67. The strengths in the teaching are the high expectations of children's behaviour and attainment and the very good management of children, based on good relationships and a calm, quiet discipline. In this secure, challenging environment children try hard to succeed and work productively at a good pace. The organisation of the large area is very good; children know what is expected of them, know the routines well and become independent very quickly. Resources match the children's needs and are well organised for them to have access independently. The teacher uses homework well so that learning is reinforced and parents are able to make a worthwhile contribution to their children's attainment and progress. All children have targets in language and literacy and mathematics that are displayed in the area. Targets in literacy are mounted on cards in the shape of a wise owl and are on the table when children are writing, to remind them of their goals. These targets and teachers' discussion with children about their work ensure that they have good knowledge of how to improve.

### **Personal and social development**

68. The under-fives achieve very well and most attain the expected standards in personal and social development on entry to statutory education and a significant proportion of children exceeds these standards. By the time children reach five, their behaviour is good, and they have good relationships with their teachers and classroom assistants, and each other. They work co-operatively in groups, as seen when children built models, and they also work independently as appropriate. They are willing to take turns and show this when they choose their activities in the afternoons. They are aware of the right and wrong way to treat each other during classroom activities and at playtimes.
69. Children share resources fairly, are confident and they treat property with care, for example, in the role-play area, the vet's surgery, where they showed great care for the resources. Children show their feelings and enjoy the tasks they are given. They sustain concentration and persevere, as seen when they undertook mathematical and play activities. They show good personal independence when they select activities for the afternoon and move on to the next planned activity and they dress themselves for physical education and in aprons for messy activities. The teaching is good; the teachers and classroom assistants have high expectations, they establish good routines and their discipline, based on good relationships, is quiet but firm. The teachers make good use of visitors to develop children's personal and social development. Children were very interested when a local policeman talked to the reception about their personal safety and they made enthusiastic contributions in their comments to him. Children are treated courteously by teachers and respond to them with similar consideration when, for example, they pass in front of another child, they are well mannered.

### **Language and literacy**

70. As a result of the good teaching, children achieve well and, by the time they are five, most attain in line with the recommended outcomes for children of this age in language and literacy. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to speak during the day. They have high expectations and ensure that children speak in sentences rather than in single words and they correct grammatical mistakes. They continually probe children's initial response to encourage the use of a more varied vocabulary and they ask those who speak indistinctly to try again for other children to hear their contributions clearly. Most children listen to their teachers attentively but many, particularly those who are of below average ability and many girls, lack confidence in speaking and their skills are below the levels expected for five-year-olds. Children of higher prior attainment speak confidently and articulately for their age.
71. Children have good attitudes to reading. They know how books work and that print carries meaning. Some children recognise familiar words and use their phonic skills to support their reading. They enjoy talking about the stories they have read and effectively relate them to their own experiences. They are particularly good at using the clues in pictures to help them understand and re-tell stories. Children are beginning to write; they write words using their phonic knowledge and are willing to try to write them independently, using a picture alphabet and words on the apples from trees of words around the room. Most children identify and write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters; their handwriting is clear and letters are formed satisfactorily. Children of lower prior attainment often have difficulty in writing letters independently and will try to avoid writing by taking a longer time to draw a picture first.

### **Mathematics**

72. Due to the good teaching, four-year-olds achieve well and they attain the standards expected by the time they are of statutory school age. Higher attainers count forwards and backwards from zero to 25 while other children count and order numbers to 14. In practical activities children can estimate which of two toys is heavier and use a balance to check their answer. They understand that the middle pointer is vertical when the scale pans balance. Other children work out a way of finding out which of three containers holds the most pet food and others compare the length of mice's tails using the correct mathematical terms. Teachers make good use of practical activities to consolidate children's knowledge and understanding of number and there is good teaching of basic skills with many opportunities for children to talk about their work and explain how they arrived at their answers. Teachers' good questioning

searches continually for pupils to expand their answers and to be specific. For example, when a child described a mouse's tail as the biggest of the group, the teacher asked, "Do you mean the biggest or the longest?" The painting table and the role play area are used well for four year olds to illustrate terms they have used and undertake calculations, such as dividing the bones between two dogs in the vet's surgery.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

73. Because of the consistently good teaching children achieve well and most attain the expected standards by the time they are five. The current topic in the reception classes is 'Animals' with a bias towards knowledge and understanding of the world. In science, children talk about the toy animals the teacher had provided and sort them into sets according to whether they live in the water, under the ground, on plants, on trees or on the ground. Children talk about their chosen animal, where it lives and with help from the questions asked by the teacher, they find a common feature for all the animals in the same set, for example, the animals who live under the ground possess claws for digging. Children explore and select equipment when they use the water and sand trays and in previous work, identified why they found it easier to make a sandcastle from damp sand rather than dry sand. There are frequent opportunities to use information technology to support early learning as seen when children used talking stories, an animated alphabet and a number train to support language and mathematics. A policeman visited the reception area and introduced the children to the variety of uniforms worn by police officers and he reviewed the way in which children could help themselves if they were lost. Many children knew their home addresses and his talk made a positive contribution to the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The teachers use a good balance of activities for children to explore the world around them, some of which are directed by an adult and some where children find out for themselves. The very good organisation of the reception area and the high expectations of children's behaviour and independence enable them to increase successfully their knowledge and understanding of the world.

### **Physical development**

74. As a result of the very good teaching, children achieve very well and their attainment exceeds the standards expected by the time they are five and they are working within the early levels of the National Curriculum in physical education. They move confidently and imaginatively and demonstrate good awareness of space when they perform sequences of movement in a physical education lesson. The teacher works enthusiastically with the children and ensures their safety and that they use the equipment very sensibly. Children's manipulative skills are sound, in that they handle pencils and other tools and materials, such as Lego, with increasing co-ordination and control. Children derive great enjoyment from their physical activities. Although not seen during the inspection because of wet weather, teachers give children frequent opportunities to use large wheeled vehicles in their play outdoors, to develop their physical skills.

### **Creative development**

75. Children make sound progress and attain the expected standards by the time they are five. Teaching is good and teachers give them frequent opportunities to use paint to express their ideas and emotions during the free activities in the afternoons. Children paint pictures of their pets at home and illustrate mathematical vocabulary correctly when they paint a picture of a giraffe with a long neck. Art techniques are also taught well and children apply these skills to make a collage of a face on a paper plate and good quality models of Humpty Dumpty sitting on a wall. The role-play area is regularly changed to provide opportunities for imaginative play. During the inspection it was the vet's surgery from the topic on animals and was well used to reinforce work on speaking, listening and writing. Adults regularly intervene to develop language and literacy skills. No music was seen as the regular lesson occurred on Friday after the inspection had finished.

## **ENGLISH**

76. When they enter the school as four-year-olds, results of assessments undertaken shortly after

entry shows that many children have limited skills in their language and literacy work. Although they make good progress in the under fives so that the majority attain the expected standards at the age of five, they do not have the necessary breadth of understanding and skills in using language to sustain them through the added demands of Key Stage 1.

77. In the 1999 national tests in reading, taken at the end of Year 2, the pupils' results are broadly in line with the average for schools nationally, and for similar schools. They are below average in writing. The percentages reaching the higher Level 3 are close to the national average. Over the four years from 1996, the trend in results is upward, with well above average results in 1998, due to a particularly able group of pupils. The Teacher Assessments in 1999 show that attainments in speaking and listening are well below the national average.
78. On balance, boys perform better than girls in the tests. In some years, this has been due to exceptionally able boys and an unusual percentage of girls with special educational needs, but the boys' performance is consistently better over the four years from 1996 to 1999. During the inspection, examples of higher attaining pupils of both genders were observed, but there were also some examples of very quiet girls, who lacked confidence particularly in their speaking.
79. In work seen, standards in English are below expectations overall. They are in line with expectations in reading and in listening, and below expectations in speaking and in writing.
80. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly similar to those found in most schools, with a significant minority of pupils attaining standards that are better than this. Standards in writing are not as good, and are below national expectations. This was a weakness at the time of the previous inspection, and the school has worked hard to improve writing, so that standards are now closer to the national expectation than they were. The rising standards relate to the improvements the school has put in place in the past four years, the good levels of challenge provided for higher attaining pupils and the good support that pupils with learning difficulties are now receiving. The main weaknesses relate to spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and composition.
81. By the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening overall are below those expected nationally. Most pupils listen adequately, and many respond well to questions, but standards in speaking are below expectations. Though there are some pupils whose vocabulary is good, and who speak fluently and clearly, many pupils have limited vocabulary, and a significant minority does not speak confidently. As a result, other pupils do not hear what they say, and sometimes several pupils give the same answer to the teacher's question, as they do not realise that what they are contributing has already been said. This makes it difficult for class discussion to proceed productively, as not all pupils can hear what everyone says. In some lessons, pupils are hesitant when they try to explain what words mean. Some structured opportunities are provided across the curriculum for pupils to speak, but questions often require single word answers, and teachers sometimes cut them off as they try to reply. Rarely are there opportunities for pupils to think out or prepare what they will say in advance.
82. Standards in reading are in line with the standards expected nationally at the age of seven. Pupils are clearly benefiting from the introduction of the literacy hour. During whole class reading sessions, even the youngest and lowest attaining pupils read simple text accurately and with understanding. Most have learnt to use picture and context clues to predict what might come next in a sentence. By Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the role of the author and illustrator, and make connections between the books they are currently reading, and other books they have read by the same author. They recognise the difference between fiction and non-fiction, but their research skills are not highly developed. The library is inconveniently situated, in a temporary classroom, and class dictionaries are not easily accessible. The school plans to move the library so that it is in the centre of the school, and this offers opportunities to develop research and reference skills.
83. Most pupils enjoy reading and sharing books with adults. The majority of pupils is well supported at home and most pupils read regularly. Teachers, classroom assistants, parents and voluntary helpers contribute to maintaining satisfactory reading records, and there is a good dialogue between home and school through the contact books. The school holds regular book

weeks to encourage positive attitudes to reading, and pupils are taken to the public library to meet authors.

84. Standards in writing are not as good as expected by the age of seven. A number of higher attaining pupils in Year 2 try to make their writing interesting and exciting but many do not have sufficient skills in spelling, punctuation or vocabulary, and information technology is insufficiently used to support the pupils' writing. The range of tasks set for pupils has increased since the school worked with a consultant to address problems in writing. However, there are still too few real tasks in writing which involve an audience other than the teacher, and which might provoke written replies to stimulate the pupils to write more. Marking is not yet playing a full part in raising standards in writing: though teachers constantly reward effort, and discuss the pupils' work with them, there are few written comments, stickers or other reminders in the pupils' books that will help them to improve.
85. The quality of handwriting is now generally satisfactory, though a significant minority of pupils still uses letters that are inconsistent in size, or positions them incorrectly. For many pupils, writing is a physical effort that they find difficult.
86. There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. First, the National Literacy Hour has been successfully and thoroughly introduced, and staff have worked hard to implement the daily hour of literacy teaching. Additional sessions through the week are devoted to reading and writing, but these are not all wholly successful: a session in Year 1 on speaking and listening focused on a taped story, and the pupils responded well, but the group comprised over forty pupils. This was too many for the teacher to provide the necessary interaction to develop skills in speaking and listening. In some of these extra sessions, teachers pass quickly over a summing up of what has been learned, resulting in missed opportunities to consolidate the pupils' learning. In most subjects of the curriculum, there is no reference to writing in subject policies and little in the guidance on the planning of work in subjects. Consequently, many lessons in the foundation subjects do not take opportunities to provide exciting tasks that will help the pupils to develop their writing skills. As a result, the school's strategy for literacy is not yet having sufficient impact on the pupils' writing to raise standards as much as the teachers have hoped.
87. All class teachers were observed teaching English, and the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good teaching. The teachers' understanding of literacy is satisfactory. Lessons are adequately planned, apart from the inclusion of information technology to support the development of writing. Sessions are well organised, so that pupils make sound progress, starting from a low baseline. However, expectations are variable so that the match of the tasks the pupils are given to their needs is not always close enough. Where the same task is set for the whole class, this sometimes results in lower attaining pupils being unable to complete the work they have been set. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the extra, closely targeted support they receive. Teachers know their pupils well and, in most classes, they manage the class effectively, so that maximum time is spent on learning. As a result, the pupils make good efforts in their English lessons.
88. Teachers use support staff well; the classroom assistants are well briefed, and carry out their duties unobtrusively and effectively. The extra support that adult helpers give to the pupils' reading helps their standards improve, and the pupils commented on how much they enjoyed reading to a variety of people. The use of targets to help the pupils to make progress is an important element in helping their learning to move forward.
89. The manager for English gives clear leadership and the staff are coping well. There is a clear action plan, with writing as a focus this year, and speaking and listening next year. Information from assessment is used to an extent to guide curricular planning: the focus on speaking and listening in the next academic year is a response to the well below average speaking and listening results in the 1999 Teacher Assessments, for example. However sometimes, as in this case, there is a long time lag between the assessments and changes to curricular planning. The manager has monitored the delivery of the National Literacy strategy, and has observed every teacher teaching the Literacy Hour. The school's accommodation for teaching English is good,



there are good levels of staffing, with three English specialists on the staff, and resources support the English curriculum well, apart from software to develop literacy skills. There is a shared commitment on the part of all at the school to raise standards in English, and the subject's capacity for improvement is good.

## **MATHEMATICS**

90. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum assessment tests show that pupils' attainment was above the national average and above average when compared to schools with a similar intake. When the levels actually achieved are examined, the number of pupils achieving level two or above in tests is close to the national average. However, the number of pupils achieving higher levels is well above the national average. For the four years from 1996 to 1999 the trend has been steadily upward, with a slight fall in 1999 because of a higher number of pupils with learning problems in that year group. Over this four-year period boys have consistently outperformed girls. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of the key stage pupils are continuing to achieve standards that are above national expectations, with little difference between the performance of boys and girls. This is a good improvement on the judgements of the previous inspection report that found standards to be in line with national expectations. When the pupils' attainment on entry is taken into account, pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. Assessments shortly after pupils' entry to school show that significant numbers of pupils are below average on arrival at the school so they do very well to gain above average standards by the time they leave to go to the juniors. Pupils who have learning difficulties make good progress.
91. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils can identify odd and even numbers and number patterns, add and subtract small numbers, identify halves and quarters and have a sound understanding of the place value of hundreds, tens and units. Pupils are developing personal strategies for mental calculations. For example, in a Year 1 class, a group of more able pupils was challenged to solve a number puzzle involving division and confidently explained their strategy. In another lesson in Year 1, the teacher used a one hundred number-square to show pupils how to develop strategies for counting in fives and tens. In a class in Year 2 the teacher encouraged pupils to explain their strategies for doubling and halving numbers up to 70. However, not all teachers ask pupils to explain their personal strategies and some are dismissive of "wrong" answers rather than using the answer as a teaching point. The use of numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory. For example, in science, graphs are plotted to show how well seeds grow or how far a toy car will travel. In the reception classes, a number program is used on the computer to develop counting skills to twenty. In Year 1, a graph program is used on the computer, which involves counting favourite pets. However, opportunities to use numeracy in other areas of the curriculum are less well developed.
92. In their work on shape, space and measurement, pupils in Year 1 are able to estimate the length of objects using non-standard and standard measures and can sort shapes by simple attributes. They can tell the time on the hour, quarter-hour and half-hour and relate the position of the fingers of the clock to right angles. More able pupils know the minutes from and to the hour. Pupils in Year 2 can describe common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes by their mathematical attributes, such as number of faces, edges and vertices. They can produce shape pictures using the Chinese 'Tangram' game, whereby a square is cut into a number of smaller parallelograms, squares and triangles. They can describe the properties of each shape. Pupils are beginning to measure accurately in centimetres and metres.
93. When handling data, pupils at the end of the key stage sort objects using a variety of reasons. They can draw and interpret simple bar charts based on tally counts. Pupils in Year 2 draw graphs in science to show the distance travelled by a toy car on different surfaces and use the computer to draw graphs to show their favourite fruits.
94. The overall quality of teaching is good and has improved since the previous inspection, when it was described as "variable" from satisfactory to unsatisfactory. The good teaching is resulting in the annual above average standards in the national test results. Generally, teachers make good use of questions to assess and move pupils on to their next stage of learning. The majority of

teachers share the objectives of the lesson with the pupils but it is not consistent in every class. Work is regularly marked but not all teachers write comments that will take the pupil on to the next stage of learning. Teachers give good guidance to classroom assistants who support pupils very well. Throughout the school, the attitudes of pupils to learning are good. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to questions, work well together, share willingly and treat resources with care. When given the opportunity, they are not afraid to offer answers and strategies, which may be incorrect but when they are encouraged to share their errors and strategies they learn from their mistakes. Pupils work independently as required. Relations between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are good. Generally challenging tasks ensure that pupils make good progress within lessons. Pupils are developing well their recall of tables and number facts to support mental calculations.

95. The subject manager provides good leadership and has a good awareness of the strengths of the subject and areas for development. As a result of good tracking and target setting, the school has ensured that the school's targets have been met every year. Long and medium term plans are monitored every half term and short term plans every week. However, the manager has had no opportunity to monitor in the classroom or work alongside colleagues. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' progress and understanding. The school is systematically assessing all pupils and sets individual targets every half term, which are shared with the pupils and parents. The manager is tracking the predicted assessment levels of all pupils. The "Special Workbooks" are a good way for teachers and parents to monitor pupils' progress; however, they do not show the levels at which pupils are working. The use of information technology is satisfactory. For example, a number program is used in the reception classes to reinforce counting and sequencing skills: in Year 1, a data program is used to plot and draw graphs of pupils' favourite pets; and in Year 2 a program is used to develop pupils' understanding of the properties of shapes. A floor "robot" is used to develop concepts in number, shape, space and measurement. A workshop for parents has been held to explain the National Numeracy Strategy. In the spring term, an open day is held for parents, so that they can join in with mathematical activities. Good use is made of homework, which is set on a regular basis.

## SCIENCE

96. In 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, the attainment of seven-year-olds in national Teacher Assessments was slightly below average in comparison with national results and in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. However, the attainment in each aspect of science was in line with the standards expected nationally at seven and the proportion of pupils who attained a higher level was above the national average and above average for similar schools.
97. As a result of the consistently good teaching, pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1 from their below average standards assessed at the beginning of their first term in school. By the age of seven, they attain the expected standards for their age with nearly 30 per cent of pupils attaining higher levels. These inspection findings reflect the Teacher Assessments undertaken for seven-year-olds this year. The school's realistic targets for teacher assessments in science in 2000 are being met.
98. During the inspection all classes were working on the programme of study related to life processes and living things. The school's guidance on planning science covers all programmes of study effectively and previous work showed that most pupils have good investigative skills and sound knowledge and understanding of materials and physical processes in science. Pupils in the reception class know that animals live in different places and that they are adapted to live in different environments and depend on their environment for their food. Pupils in Year 1 know that humans depend on their five senses to investigate the world around them. They use their sense of smell to identify unknown substances, touch to identify objects they cannot see, hearing to identify sounds from a recorded tape and sight to observe objects carefully. In Year 2, pupils investigate the conditions that plants need for growth. They devise an investigation to show that plants need light or water. They predict the outcome of their tests and, with support from the teacher's good questioning, they identify the resources needed and plan the investigation. They understand that their test needs to be fair and that only one variable should

be changed. They understand scientific terms such as 'germination'. The lessons in Year 2 showed that pupils plan an investigation collaboratively and that they understand the scientific ideas, but many pupils have difficulties in recording those ideas because their skills in writing are below average for their age. They use mathematical skills to measure results, for example, when they measure the growth of plants in centimetres. They make insufficient use of information technology to record and analyse their data as their skills in using computers are insufficiently developed.

99. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers plan their lessons well identifying clear objectives for the lesson. They deploy their classroom assistants effectively to give extra support to pupils with learning difficulties and those who have English as an additional language, with the result that both groups of pupils make good progress and learn well. Teachers use a good balance of explanation, discussion and practical activity in their lessons and they review the learning from the lesson at the end. This review and the discussion with pupils as they work ensures that pupils know how to improve their work. All teachers and classroom assistants manage their pupils well and have good relationships with them that result in pupils who are interested, try hard, concentrate on their work, behave well and have good attitudes towards science. In most lessons, teachers encourage pupils to develop their investigative skills to increase their knowledge and understanding of science through practical experiences. A positive feature of the good teaching is the teachers' skilful questioning to challenge pupils' understanding, to extend their thinking and to assess their work. This was seen in Year 2 when the teacher moved from group to group assessing their initial ideas on how to set up an investigation into the conditions necessary for plant growth. She continually challenged pupils through her questioning to improve their ideas. One teacher's marking in Year 2 is also very effective as written questions are asked to improve pupils' work; this is rarely seen in other classes. Teachers do not always teach the basic skills of speaking and writing effectively in science. In the reception classes, teachers continually probe pupils' initial answers for further information to develop their speaking and to encourage the use of the correct vocabulary and they insist that pupils speak in voices that are loud enough to be heard by the class. These strategies are not always used in all classes and pupils have difficulty in hearing other pupils' contributions.
100. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. There is a good balance of scientific investigation across the other programmes of study in the National Curriculum. The science manager provides good leadership for the subject. She has adapted the national guidance on planning by adding extra investigations and has provided good guidance on progression in the methods of recording science. She has monitored teachers' medium-term planning to ensure that the curriculum is covered, she has sampled pupils' work to monitor standards and she has analysed predictions of the levels attained by pupils in Year 2 to check whether the annual targets for pupils' performance in science will be met. She has also used the information from the assessments in science to track pupils' progress from their attainment on entry to school to the end of Year 2. She has not yet observed the teaching of science. The science manager plays an important role in helping to achieve the priorities in the school's plan for improvement through her action plan that outlines her work for the year. She manages a budget to provide good resources for the subject and the recently established wildlife garden provides a very good resource for the study of living things. Pupils in Year 2 used this area well when comparing the different habitats for plants in the school grounds and there are some careful observational drawings of seeds and parts of plants on display in the hall as a result of their study.
101. There has been good improvement in science since the last inspection. Standards of attainment have risen, there has been an appropriate emphasis on the development of investigative skills, the establishment of the wildlife garden and teaching has improved from very sound to consistently good.

## **ART**

102. The impact of the good teaching, in the few lessons seen, has the effect that pupils make satisfactory progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills across the key stage and, at seven, the standards attained are as expected. Pupils in the reception classes have many

opportunities to use art as a means of expressing a response to emotions and imagination in the free activity time in the afternoons. They have also used paint for lively pictures of Father Christmas. Their work includes a good balance of compositions in two and three dimensions. Each child has made a good quality model of Humpty Dumpty sitting on a wall and a face on a paper plate with paint and wool. Pupils in Year 1 have made good quality models of people with expressive faces, portraits of their friends in pencil, and in lessons explore printing with hard and soft objects in preparation for designing wrapping paper. Pupils in Year 2 continue to develop their skills in using techniques with various media and apply these skills in three-dimensional models of animals, and in printing linking their work with the style of Seurat. There is also sound knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists in the work in Year 2 based on the shapes and colours used by Kandinsky. There is limited use of computer programs to compose pictures in all classes.

103. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and their assistants have sound knowledge and understanding of art and they teach skills and techniques proficiently. Teachers plan well to identify clear learning objectives, and the good ratio of adults to pupils enables good support to be given to pupils with learning difficulties and English as an additional language, who make sound progress in their skills, knowledge and understanding as a result. Teachers and their assistants have high expectations and insist on high standards and correct techniques. While lessons proceed at a good pace there is sufficient time for pupils to take care and a pride in their work. Because teachers and classroom assistants have positive relationships with pupils and manage them well, pupils behave well and have good attitudes to art. They try hard, work productively at a good pace and enjoy the work. Teachers use a good balance of effective teaching methods. The lesson usually starts with a review of the previous work and input from the teacher on the development of the techniques learned. The teacher gives pupils opportunities to experiment with the techniques and media before bringing the class together to evaluate their work critically. In a lesson in Year 1 on printing with hard and soft objects, this was particularly effective in helping pupils to learn how to improve their work and to speak clearly to the rest of the class. The teacher chose eight samples of work completed during the lesson and asked the pupils whether the work fulfilled the brief and which prints they liked and why. Most pupils responded and were able to contribute good reasons why they preferred some prints.
104. The art manager provides sound leadership. She has produced revised guidance for teachers that provides appropriate breadth, balance and relevance to meet the needs of pupils and a good balance of both programmes of study in the National Curriculum. The school's work is organised into drawing, painting, clay, paper and paste models, printing, collage and textiles for half a term annually in each year group and ensures good progression in skills throughout the school. The art manager has a thorough action plan for the development of the subject through the year related to the school's plan for improvement. Assessment of art is unsatisfactory, as there are no procedures in place yet. The art manager monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work and manages a budget to develop the subject, but does not observe teaching. Opportunities are missed to promote cultural development. There has been a visit from a wood carver to share artist's work but pupils do not visit art galleries and there is limited work from non-western cultures although these cultures are represented in the school's population.
105. Standards have been maintained and there has been significant improvement since the previous inspection. The criticism about the imbalance of the curriculum in favour of investigating and making has been addressed and pupils have more opportunities to look at the work of a range of artists and compare and contrast different styles. Teaching is now good.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. No lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection week. Therefore, judgements are based on the scrutiny of the pupils' work, discussion with pupils and staff, displays and photographic evidence. Inspection findings are similar to those of the previous inspection report.
107. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. For example, pupils in reception make

Easter cards with simple hinged flaps to reveal pictures. They build models from scrap materials, as part of their work on shape. Pupils in Year 1 make cards with sliding parts and use construction toys to make models of buildings. By the end of the key stage, pupils can identify appropriate materials that should be used. They design and make models from recyclable and commercial materials and evaluate their results. They satisfactorily learn the skills of cutting, sticking and joining and can construct models from commercial construction kits. For example, they cut and sew glove puppets using felt and cotton and design, make and evaluate wheeled vehicles using wood and dowel and pegs for axles. In their food technology work, pupils in reception make yoghurts as part of a healthy diet and simple cakes and biscuits for a teddy bears' picnic. By Year 2, pupils design and make sandwiches with healthy fillings.

108. The policy and guidance on planning have recently been revised using national guidelines. Assessment in reception is good but in the majority of other classes is unsatisfactory and the progress made by pupils in their development of skills is not systematically recorded in order to inform future planning.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

109. Only two lessons were taught in history during the time of the inspection and no lessons were observed in geography as none is planned during the current half term. Scrutiny of work in the pupils' books shows that they broadly meet the standards expected of pupils of their age in both subjects, but weaknesses in their writing hinder them when they come to record what they have learned. This matches the judgements at the time of the previous inspection. The teaching in history in those lessons that were observed was satisfactory, but no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching in the school overall.
110. The geography and history manager's curriculum files show that there is guidance on work in the subjects that satisfactorily meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Geography alternates with history each half term in Years 1 and 2, except in Year 2 when both are taught in a topic on the seaside during the last half term of the summer. The work in history starts from the pupils' interests in Year 1, with a study of toys from the past. Parents are involved in providing written descriptions of their own favourite toys. Year 2 study elements from the distant past in their focus on castles, and they use Portchester Castle as an actual example. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development by making them aware of the culture of a seaside town in their study of the seaside in the summer term of Year 2, and makes good use of local resources in the Museum's exhibition on a seaside town.
111. The manager for history and geography is relatively new to the role, but has a good grasp of what needs to be done. She monitors planning, and has already initiated some changes to the curriculum; however she does not yet monitor teaching. Currently, the policies and guidance for work do not give a high enough priority to literacy, or to structured opportunities for speaking and listening. There are no assessment procedures for geography or history. Teachers are keen on their work in the humanities, and there is good capacity for improvement. The manager has made good progress in her action plans for both subjects within the school's plan for improvement.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

112. Only one lesson of direct teaching was observed during the inspection week, in Year 1. Therefore, judgements are based on observations of pupils using the computer during lessons to support other subjects, the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays around the school and discussion with pupils and teachers.
113. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in information technology that are below those expected nationally. This represents a decline since the previous inspection, which judged standards to be in line with national expectations. Over half of the Year 2 pupils lack confidence when using the keyboard and many are not sure of the layout of letters or how to use the cursor, delete, caps and shift keys. However, in one class a large majority of pupils can confidently use the mouse and keyboard. They can open a file, delete and insert letters and words, highlight, change the style and size of fonts and print. Their confidence is directly related

to the confidence of the class teacher and the classroom assistant. In reception, pupils use the mouse confidently to control number games and programs to support their reading and spelling development. Throughout the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the use to which their skills can be applied. They are aware that information control technology can be directly controlled in the home and at school. However, discussion with Year 2 pupils revealed that a number of them could not distinguish between the printer and the hard drive when describing the computer.

114. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make unsatisfactory progress over a period of time. A lack of assessment of pupils' skills and tracking, means that able pupils and those bringing skills from home are not being sufficiently challenged. For example, one pupil in Year 2 is developing her own web page at home but was given a simple word processing task in class. She drafted her work on to paper and copied it on to the computer rather than drafting directly on to the screen. In both classes in Year 2, pupils were observed copying work on to the screen which had first been drafted on to paper, rather than using the computer as a drafting tool. Some pupils found it difficult to type with one hand and hold the paper with the other, as a document holder was not available. In the one class lesson observed, in Year 1, which introduced pupils to a graph-making program, pupils made satisfactory progress. In the reception classes, pupils use the mouse and keyboard with confidence to type simple stories and to 'drag and drop' pictures. For example, in the number program used, they drag and drop pictures of ducklings behind a duck in order to develop counting and ordering skills. In Year 1, pupils used 'drag and drop' to label parts of the body. In one Year 2 class, pupils can use the mouse to move the cursor instantly around the screen to highlight sentences in order to change the format and layout of their work. However, in the other Year 2 class, pupils were unable to highlight work or move the cursor with the mouse. When given the opportunity to use the computer, pupils have a good attitude to their work. They are interested and motivated and share the equipment well. Their behaviour is good.
115. The subject manager is new to the post and has already made a good impact on the subject. She has reviewed and updated the policy and guidance on planning for teachers based on a national scheme and has begun to assess staff needs and provide training. A portfolio of work has begun but it does not assign National Curriculum levels to the work in order to assist teachers in their moderation of pupils' work. New multimedia computers have been purchased to replace ageing equipment. However, classroom computers are generally underused and during the inspection week some were not used at all. Poor use is made of the computer in the library. In the majority of cases this is because of a lack of confidence and knowledge in some teachers.
116. Staff training will be fully addressed when a national training initiative is implemented in the autumn. In the reception classes and one Year 2 class, teachers and classroom assistants have sufficiently high expectations of pupils but not all staff have sufficient knowledge of the programs available on the new computers or the skills required to teach those programs. In a number of classes, good use is made of classroom assistants. For example, in the reception classes the classroom assistants efficiently change programs throughout the day in line with planned activities for different areas of the curriculum. In a Year 2 class, the classroom assistant provides good support for pupils in their word processing work. The school does not have a digital camera and has yet to develop its use of the scanner and the Internet. However, the use of the Internet has been highlighted for development in the autumn term. Links across the curriculum are unsatisfactory. Pupils' exercise books, displays and "Special workbooks" indicate a limited use of computers to support other subjects. However, pupils in the reception classes use counting and word programs. Pupils in Year 1 were observed being introduced to a data-handling program and pupils in Year 2 use a program on shapes for mathematics and a word-processing program to write about their art. Assessment is unsatisfactory, with no agreed system of recording pupils' attainment or progress; some teachers record programs used whilst others record skills covered.

## **MUSIC**

117. The previous inspection report found that there was insufficient guidance on some aspects of teaching music, and the school has responded well to the criticism. A specialist teacher is now

employed to teach reception and Year 1 in the autumn and spring terms. Financial constraints prevent this from being an all-year-round arrangement, but the impact, even of limited provision, is good. At the time of the inspection, all class teachers taught their own classes and, by the end of the key stage, the pupils are attaining standards that are appropriate for their age. Standards in singing are better than this. Pupils sing with a very pleasant tone, and they enjoy singing together in assembly, where they are sensitively supported on the piano by one of their teachers.

118. Pupils listen to recorded music and respond appropriately to the music's mood. One pupil in Year 2 identified the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy as 'sounding like a ballerina'. The majority of pupils in Year 2 are quick to identify string instruments, brass and percussion. They follow a graphic score and enjoy making music to illustrate a story. They have a good range of action songs in their repertoire, and enjoy singing unaccompanied in pleasant, informal music sessions. Their enthusiasm contributes to the success of the sessions.
119. The quality of teaching music is satisfactory overall, and some lessons are good. Teachers lead the singing well with their own voices, and their own enthusiasm and enjoyment are infectious. They manage their pupils well, and make good use of time in short, twenty minute sessions, so that the pace of the lesson is kept up, and they accomplish a great deal in the time.
120. The subject manager leads well, and takes the pupils who play the recorder from both Year 2 classes in one afternoon music lesson. A particularly good feature of these lessons is the way in which the manager provides opportunities for the pupils to improvise, thus developing their musicianship, as well as teaching them to play the instrument.
121. The accommodation for music is currently good, with a separate room in a temporary classroom, where instruments are easily accessible and ready for use. There is a good range of instruments, but more appropriate music stands are needed, as the recorder players currently put their music on the floor. When the specialist musician teaches, the Year 1 and reception teachers use this as in-service training, and stay in the sessions with their classes. This is a good use of specialist expertise.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

122. By the end of the key stage, standards are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils perform with suppleness, control and with safety, a range of basic tasks such as balancing and travelling in a variety of ways and directions. They demonstrate good control when linking actions together and when using apparatus. This is similar to the judgements of the previous inspection report.
123. Overall, teaching is good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject, and the majority set a good example to pupils by dressing appropriately and leading by example. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage the pupils well throughout lessons. Lessons are well planned and include the essential elements of warming up and cooling down. However, in one Year 1 class observed, the warm up was too short. In most lessons, pupils are not given enough opportunities to observe each other and to discuss and refine their work with each other or with the class teacher.
124. Progress of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, is good. They are enthusiastic about their learning. They work purposefully, and quietly, to produce improvement, and make good use of practice and repetition in order to refine performance. They respond well to activities, and show enjoyment in lessons. They work well individually, in pairs and in groups. For example, in a reception class, pupils were very motivated when warming up individually to stretching and curling movements. They then put these movements together as a sequence across apparatus and worked well as a group. In two Year 1 games lessons, pupils concentrated hard on improving their skills of throwing and catching a small ball by themselves and then around a group. In two games lessons in Year 2, pupils used a small bat and ball individually and then worked as a group to invent their own bat and ball games. They put their skills of hitting the ball with the bat, balancing the ball on the bat and catching the ball to good use. Concentration was good when working individually and when working with a partner for ball passing skills.

125. A new policy and guidance on the curriculum, based on a national scheme, has recently been implemented to ensure progression in the subject. However, there is no assessment of pupils' progression of skills in order to support planning of their next stage of development. The subject manager monitors planning but has not had the opportunity to monitor lessons or to work alongside colleagues. The range of equipment is good. The school benefits from a large, well-equipped hall and a large hard and grass area. Recently, pupils have benefited from a visit by two basketball players, as part of a local initiative. There are no extra-curricular sporting activities, which is a significant omission.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

126. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards identified in the previous inspection report. This judgement was drawn from the evidence of the pupils' written work, since no lessons were observed during the previous inspection. Currently, standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1. However, most pupils reach standards that are better than this in their oral work, but whenever they come to record their work, or write about what they know, they are hindered by their weak writing skills.
127. Year 2 pupils know that the Christian creation stories are found in the Old Testament, and most remember the Hindu Creation story. One pupil, who has learning difficulties, retold this story well. Pupils make good progress through the school in developing their knowledge about Christianity and other world religions. The pupils respect each other's ideas and views on the whole, though a minority was scathing when one pupil suggested the world might have begun with an enormous explosion.
128. Teaching is sound. The enthusiasm of their teachers enables the pupils to gain insights into their own beliefs and to respect the beliefs of others. As a result they concentrate hard. In Year 1, the simulation of a christening in each class enabled the pupils to take part as godparents, parents or members of the congregation. In one lesson, the teacher deepened their understanding by linking what they had experienced to characteristics of celebrations, and they explored the symbolism of water, light and the white robe and shawl. This was a very good feature of the lesson, though the pace slowed towards the end of it.
129. There is relatively little written work in the subject, but some particularly challenging group work encourages the pupils to think. An example was seen in Year 2, where the teacher asked groups of pupils to find similarities and differences between the Christian and Hindu creation stories. Higher attaining pupils managed this well, and most pupils spotted similarities. Lower attaining pupils, including those with learning difficulties, struggled, but the teacher had structured the groups well, so that all were involved in discussion, and every group had something to report at the end of the lesson. However, in some lessons, teachers do not structure opportunities for the pupils to talk, and they sometimes cut pupils off when they are trying to explain something. This is partly because of pressure of time, and partly because opportunities to discuss are almost exclusively class discussions led by the teacher, so that hesitant pupils hold up the whole class. Where pupils' oral skills are well developed, their contributions show that they are interested, and have understood what is taught. Quieter pupils, especially some girls, do not always speak clearly, and teachers do not always ensure that everyone has heard the answers they give.
130. The teachers' knowledge of the subject is satisfactory, and there are appropriate plans in place for further developments to enhance religious education. The subject is soundly led and managed. The subject manager is relatively new to the role, and has a number of other management responsibilities, which have limited the time available to spend on religious education. However, the draft guidance on planning for teachers has been fleshed out, and the school has taken advice from the local subject adviser. The policy for religious education is due for review. Teachers receive helpful feedback on their planning, and this has a positive impact on teaching and learning.