

INSPECTION REPORT

RIDERS INFANT SCHOOL

Leigh Park, Havant

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115909

Headteacher: Mrs H Boyd

Reporting inspector: Mr C Wilson
2569

Dates of inspection: 12 – 15 June 2000

Inspection number: 190375

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 children:	4 - 7
Gender of children:	Mixed
School address:	Kingsclere Avenue Leigh Park Havant Hampshire
Postcode:	PO9 4RY
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Lynne Jolliffe-Smith
Date of previous inspection:	11 November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Chris Wilson	Reporting inspector	art	What sort of school is it?
		religious education	How high are standards?
			How well are children taught?
			How well is the school led or managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Lorina Pilgrim	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its children?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
David Gott	Team inspector	science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to children?
		information technology	
		design and technology	
		geography	
		physical education	
Rebecca Matthews	Team inspector	maths	
		English	
		history	
		music	
		under-fives	
		equal opportunities	
		special educational needs	
		English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a smaller than average-sized infant school for children aged from four to seven years. The school shares an extensive site with the junior school and is situated on Leigh Park near Havant, a large housing estate of social housing and some owner-occupied. The school is part of the Leigh Park Education Action Zone (EAZ).

There are 177 full-time children attending the school, with an equal number of boys and girls, who are taught in six mixed-ability single age classes. Since the last inspection the roll has increased by 10 children.

The area has unfavourable social and economic circumstances; all the children come from the catchment area around the school. About 41% of children are eligible for free school meals, well above the national average. This trend has been consistent since the last inspection. Children's mobility is high, with about 21% of children either leaving or joining the school during the year. In some year groups this figure rises to above 50%. This is also a consistent trend. There are no children from an ethnic minority group and no child for whom English is an additional language. A very small number of children accounts for the higher than average absence rate in the school.

Attainment on entry reflects a broad range of ability but is generally well below average, particularly for literacy and language. Most of the children have had some form of pre-school experience. 108 children (61%) have been identified by the school as having a special educational need, which is well above the national average. One child has a statement of special educational needs (0.56%), in line with the national average. At the time of the inspection there were 15 children under five in the school's two reception classes.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with many strengths. Children's standards in writing, mathematics and science are at the level expected by the age of seven. In design and technology (DT) and information technology (IT) standards of attainment are better than those expected. Children behave excellently. Teaching is good overall. Children learn well throughout the school and make good progress. The school is very well led and well managed. The school has successfully tackled the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report, although there are now other weaknesses identified in this report that the school needs to address. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaches children well throughout the school and very well in the reception classes.
- Cares very well for the children, knows them well and sets high expectations for them.
- Builds excellent relationships with the community, parents and other schools.
- Provides excellent personal, moral and social development for the children.
- Provides an excellent ethos for learning and manages children very well.
- Adds value to the achievements of children during their time in the school.
- Ensures children with special educational needs (SEN) learn well and make good progress.
- Is very well led by the headteacher, soundly managed and gives good value for money.
- Cares as well as it can under difficult circumstances for the site and grounds.

What could be improved

- Not enough children reach the standards expected of them at age seven in English, particularly in reading, speaking and listening, and in art.
- Not enough use is made of the information the school holds, to set personal targets for children or to evaluate whether the school is sufficiently successful in what it does.
- Senior staff do not have enough time to focus sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Teachers' understanding of how children make progress in learning is not strong enough so that children do not always make best use of the time to produce enough work.
- The governing body is not yet effective enough in holding the school to account for what it achieves and in setting the strategic direction of the school through knowing its strengths and weaknesses.
- The separation of vehicles and pedestrians coming into the car park is not safe enough.

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 November 1996. Since then, the school has continued to add value to children's achievements. It has successfully improved in all the areas identified in that report, although until recently momentum was lost in improving the effectiveness of the governing body. Boys now achieve relatively higher standards of literacy than girls. Teachers' expectations for what children should achieve throughout the curriculum are clear and teachers' knowledge has improved. The school has a good programme of extra-curricular activities open to all in the school. However, there are a number of different weaknesses to be tackled.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
reading	E	E	E	C
writing	E	C	E	C
mathematics	E	E	E	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In each of the last three years, standards have been well below average in reading, mathematics and, except for 1998, in writing.

Although test results in 1999, when compared with schools nationally was well below average in all three subjects, the school's performance improves to average when compared with similar schools. Trends over the three years show little variation but findings of the inspection and the unvalidated results of the 2000 tests show improvement on 1999. In 1999, the number of children attaining higher levels was average compared with similar

schools in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. However, the number of children attaining the level expected of them in reading was below average for similar schools. Targets have been set for 2001, which reflect the lower attainment level of the year group on entry but are still challenging overall.

Information supplied to the school by the LEA shows that in 1999 the school added value to children's attainment. These children achieved at the level expected of them when compared with their level of attainment on entry to the school. This is borne out by the work and achievements observed during the inspection.

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent: the children are interested and enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent: the children behave very well in lessons, around the school and during playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent: the school makes success in this area of learning a key aim for children.
Attendance	Good: the school has good systems for encouraging and monitoring attendance.

Children's attitudes, values and personal development are a strength of the school. They are the strong foundation for the good climate for learning and the excellent order throughout the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of children:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	good

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

Throughout the school teaching is good in English and mathematics where the skills of literacy and numeracy are carefully planned, making good use of the national strategies in these subjects. Expectations of above-average-ability children in mathematics could be higher.

Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory or better in over nine out of ten lessons (94%) and good or better in seven lessons out of ten (70%). In four out of ten lessons (40%) it is very good or excellent. In only three lessons (6%) was teaching unsatisfactory largely because of the limited knowledge teachers have of how to help children improve.

The quality of teaching is consistently good in all year groups, although there was more very good or excellent teaching seen in the reception classes. The little unsatisfactory teaching was equally spread through each of the three year groups. Teachers' planning is

highly effective and they use suitably appropriate and well-pitched methods to teach the various groups of children in their classes. Throughout the school teachers have high expectations of what children can achieve academically and especially in their personal and social development. Teaching generally meets the needs of all children and children with SEN are particularly well taught.

Children learn well. They are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding progressively. In the reception year, they acquire these skills very well. All children are interested in their work. They concentrate and work at a generally good pace, particularly in the reception classes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good: the school places appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. In the reception classes the children benefit from a very well planned curriculum.
Provision for children with special educational needs	Very good: the provision enables children with SEN to make good progress and is aided by good use of support staff as part of the teaching team.
Provision for children's personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall: moral and social development are excellent, spiritual development is very good but provision for cultural development is only satisfactory because opportunities are missed to use a wider range of resources.
How well the school cares for its children	The school cares very well for children but too little use is made of personal targets to set small steps for children's improved attainment.

The school works excellently well with parents. They hold the school in very high regard and almost universally approve of its work. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school, think that it works closely with them and that it is well led and managed.

The good use made of the start of the day to encourage children to read with their parents contributes positively to the children's learning and to the involvement of parents in the school. Not enough use is made of IT in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The very strong emphasis on children's early development of good personal and social skills in the reception classes contributes to their good learning throughout the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff provide very good leadership and sound management. There is a need to improve the use the school makes of the data it holds and how it evaluates what it does in order to guide where it next needs to focus to improve standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well led and very supportive of the school. They meet their statutory responsibilities. However, they need to have a better view as a body of the school's comparative strengths and weaknesses and of the strategic direction to take to help the school improve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory, although improvement is needed through a better understanding of the use of data and the commitment of more time to evaluating and improving the teaching of some groups of children within classes.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory: resources are put to identified needs and are well used.

There are sufficient staff and learning resources. Accommodation and grounds are very good, but regularly blighted by vandalism. The school is very well led by the headteacher whose vision and commitment to the school's aims form the basis for the very good climate for learning in the school and the sense of a whole team working together for the children. Evaluation needs to be more sharply focused on areas of strength and weakness in the teaching of parts of the curriculum and of some groups in classes so that resources can be concentrated on areas in most need of improvement. The school is beginning to apply the principles of best value but needs to develop a better understanding of how the school compares with others.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and make good progress. • Behaviour and teaching are good. • Parents are well informed about how their children are getting on and find the school approachable. • Children are expected to work hard and to achieve well. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work children are given to do at home.

The findings of this inspection confirm parents' views but found children were given enough and appropriate work to do at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 Analysis of the school's national test results shows that compared with all schools standards have remained well below average in reading, writing and mathematics over the last three years. There has been no improvement since the last inspection in the number of children attaining the level expected of them in reading or mathematics, although there has been improvement in writing. In 1999, standards were well below the national average in all three subjects.
- 2 Trends over the three years show little variation but the unvalidated results of the 2000 tests show improvement on 1999. In 1999, the number of children attaining the level expected of them was below average in reading and in mathematics, compared with similar schools but above average in writing. The numbers attaining the higher levels were average compared with similar schools in reading and writing and above average in mathematics.
- 3 In science, teachers' assessments in 1999 indicated that the number of children attaining at least the level expected of them was well below the national average but average in comparison with children in similar schools. However, the number attaining the higher level was in line with the national average and above the average for children in similar schools. This is a trend that has been maintained over the previous four years. The inspection confirms that standards are broadly in line with the national average and teacher assessments are accurate.
- 4 In 1999 there were 11 more 7-year-old boys than girls in the year group. There was little difference in the performance of boys and girls in reading and writing, but boys did better than girls in mathematics. However, since the last inspection, boys have attained relatively better standards than girls compared with the national picture. Over the last two years, the level of attainment of girls in literacy and language skills on entry to the school has been lower than that of boys and much lower relatively when compared with other children of that age in the LEA.
- 5 Information supplied to the school by the LEA shows that in 1999 the school added value to children's attainment. At age seven these children achieved at least the level expected of them when compared with their level of attainment on entry to the school. This is borne out by children's work and achievements observed during the inspection.
- 6 Targets have been set for 2001, which reflect the lower attainment level of the year group on entry but are still challenging overall. These targets also reflect the overall targets set by the EAZ for all infant children within the zone. In subsequent years, these zone targets are not sufficiently challenging for this school. The school needs to analyse available data to ensure that it identifies groups of children that are performing less well than others.
- 7 The evidence from this inspection shows that by the age of seven standards are in line with those expected nationally in mathematics, science, RE, history, geography, music and PE. Standards are higher in IT and DT, but below those expected in English and in art.

- 8 By the time they leave school, most children can read but at a level below that expected. However, the range of strategies introduced to improve reading standards is having a good impact across the school. Children's standards in speaking and listening are generally low because they lack confidence and clarity, and are unsure of grammatical constructions. The school has identified the improvement of these standards as a key focus from September 2000. Children's standards of writing and spelling are satisfactory but they rarely write at length. Handwriting standards are generally below average because many find it difficult to develop a clear and flowing style. IT is used insufficiently in the teaching and learning of English. In mathematics, children are developing quick mental recall and confidence in handling number. Standards are satisfactory. In science, the children are able to use a range of scientific skills, particularly for investigative work.
- 9 In all other subjects except art, children show knowledge and understanding that is broadly average for their ages. For example, they can explain the effectiveness of their models in DT and can judge the quality of others' work in PE. In art, standards are below average because the older children, particularly, lack the skills to paint or draw at the level expected for their age.
- 10 By the time they are five, the majority of children meet the national expectations for many of the areas of children's learning as described within the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's 'Desirable Learning Outcomes' for children under five. The exception to this is in language and literacy, where standards for the majority are still below average. There is a significant minority of children who will still need to develop skills in many areas of learning before they are in line with the national expectations but the often very good teaching in the reception classes raises children's attainment and enables them to learn well.
- 11 Children with SEN make good progress in the reception classes and in all areas of the curriculum, because their work is planned appropriately and they are well supported by teaching staff and special needs assistants.
- 12 All children in the school make good progress and learn well. The achievement of standards in most subjects at or close to the national expectation indicates good progress for most in the school because of the relatively low levels of attainment they start with. Children have come to school over the last four years with very low levels of skills in speaking and listening. Many have difficulty relating to each other and to adults so the focus of the highly successful teaching in the reception classes and continued elsewhere in the school is on improving the standards of children's social and personal development and learning. This good teaching throughout the school enables children quickly to behave excellently and enables some of the youngest children to improve their level of skills rapidly. However, this good teaching has not yet been able to compensate fully for the low starting point of many in the school by the time they leave, especially in reading. The school nevertheless compares favourably with similar schools.

Children's attitudes, values and personal development

- 13 The very positive attitudes fostered in children, their excellent behaviour and the consistent way in which the school promotes their personal development are outstanding features of the school. These are strengths that enable children to make good progress in their learning and reflect the findings of the previous report. A

particularly good feature is the way in which young children are encouraged to take the initiative for their own learning in many lessons.

- 14 Children have very positive attitudes to their work and have established excellent relationships with their peers and adults in the school community. They experience high levels of enjoyment and satisfaction in their work. This is evident in their enthusiasm and in their ability to sustain concentration in carrying out tasks and activities. They set about tasks purposefully and with keen interest. Children with SEN have good attitudes to school. They are accepted well in the classroom and other children are protective and supportive of them.
- 15 The behaviour of children in class, at meal times and at play is excellent. They are patient at taking turns, in sharing resources and are considerate of others' needs, values and beliefs. No harassment or bullying was observed during the inspection. In classrooms, children are constantly busy, moving purposefully from one activity or task to another. Good habits are taught when children first start school and these provide a very good foundation for their time at school.
- 16 Teachers, support staff and adult helpers are consistent in the use of positive guidance which promotes a sense of willingness and co-operation in children. The key feature of the whole-school behavioural policy is the sharing of objectives among children, parents and staff. Clear and high expectations are understood by all. Children make best use of lesson time to work well with each other and to sustain their interest and concentration with few interruptions.
- 17 The excellent relationships within the school have a very beneficial effect on progress. All children, including those with SEN, respond willingly to teachers. They carry out instructions promptly and they speak with warmth and respect to all adults. Children are very courteous and orderly when moving about the school. They work well alone and in collaboration with others. On many occasions children work in groups or pairs and discuss their tasks, for example in science investigations, DT, PE lessons and in working with computers. In PE, children use the good demonstrations of others' performances to help improve their own. Children are good listeners and are confident in asking questions. They select and use resources appropriately.
- 18 Children are very keen and eager to come to school. The excellent start to each school day promotes children's independent learning and a very positive work ethic. Although the level of attendance is well below the national average and has not improved since the last inspection, a very small number of children account for the majority of these absences and the school has improved its processes for encouraging attendance and accounting for absence. The level of unauthorised absences is below the national average because of these processes and the school's very strong partnership with parents.

HOW WELL ARE CHILDREN TAUGHT?

- 19 Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory or better in over nine out of ten lessons (94%) and good or better in seven lessons out of ten (70%). In four out of ten lessons (40%) it is very good or excellent. This is an improvement on the good teaching seen during the last inspection in 1996. In only three lessons (6%) was teaching unsatisfactory largely because of the limited subject knowledge teachers have of how to help children improve.

- 20 The quality of teaching is consistently good in all year groups, although there was more very good or excellent teaching seen in the reception classes (64%) than in the older year groups (37%). Teaching is very good overall in the reception classes and good overall in the other classes. Teaching is better in Year 1 classes than in Year 2. The unsatisfactory teaching was equally spread through each of the three year groups.
- 21 In Years 1 and 2, teaching is very good overall in science, music and DT. It is good in English, mathematics, and IT. Teaching is satisfactory in PE but too few lessons were seen during the inspection in art, geography, history and RE for an overall judgement to be made in these subjects.
- 22 In all classes the quality of teaching has a positive impact on how children learn, the progress they make and how they develop social and personal skills. The marked progress made by the youngest children is a result of the high proportion of very good and excellent teaching in their classes. In the reception year teachers have worked hard to establish a good plan for the Early Years curriculum upon which to base a good range of appropriate activities broken down into small steps of progress for children to make. Expectations of what these children can achieve are high and the teachers skilfully use a good balance of direct teaching, opportunities for independent learning and good questioning to ensure all children do make good progress.
- 23 In Years 1 and 2 children make good progress in their learning because the teaching is good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are carefully planned, making good use of the national strategies in these subjects. Teachers have generally good subject knowledge, especially in the core subjects and in how to teach basic skills. Their planning is highly effective and they use suitably appropriate and well-pitched methods to teach the various groups of children in their classes. Throughout the school teachers have high expectations of what children can achieve academically and especially in their personal and social development. All teachers manage children excellently. Good use is made of time, for example during the start to the day. By encouraging children to be independent and to think for themselves, help each other and use their initiatives, teachers ensure they can focus their attention on the groups or individuals they are teaching. Good use is made of resources, for example the big book written by some teachers about their early life in Leigh Park, used as a text in the literacy hour and for history teaching. The use of assessment is only satisfactory, however. This is because sometimes the teachers' knowledge of, for example the mathematics curriculum prevents them pitching activities at a sufficiently high level for some children, restricting progress and not asking enough of them in the time given. Homework is well used in all year groups in the reading books sent home, words to be learnt and number work to be rehearsed. In this the inspection did not agree with the minority of parents' views about the insufficiency of the work done at home.
- 24 All staff in the school work very well as a team. Classroom assistants and volunteer helpers make very valuable contributions to the learning of children because they work very closely with teachers, are knowledgeable and well organised. This is indicative of the school's ethos that all adults in the school contribute through consistent application of the school's policies, to the learning of all the children.
- 25 Children learn well. They are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding progressively. In the reception year, they acquire these skills very well. All children are interested in their work. They concentrate and work at a generally good pace, particularly in the reception classes.

- 26 Teaching meets the needs of all children. Children with SEN are particularly well taught. Work is appropriate to their needs and activities are well chosen and supported in the classroom. Activities and learning opportunities for the more able are less consistent and occasionally there is insufficient challenge for them, particularly in mathematics. They do, however, make satisfactory progress. Children with SEN are generally well supported by special needs assistants in all literacy and numeracy lessons in the classroom. They are occasionally and appropriately withdrawn for individual language programmes.
- 27 The school meets the needs of children with SEN well. All children have an individual education plan, which supports the children to move forward in small achievable steps. The school makes every attempt to raise children's self-esteem through celebrating success publicly.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO CHILDREN?

- 28 The curriculum for children under five provides a broad range of rich and varied experiences. It covers all the areas of learning outlined in the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) 'Desirable Learning Outcomes' for children under five. There is a very strong emphasis on fostering children's personal and social development. Similarly, the curriculum places an important priority on teaching language, literacy and mathematical skills. Children are well prepared for the subjects of the National Curriculum and RE. The school uses the Hampshire Baseline Assessment procedures to find out about individual children's strengths and weaknesses. This information is used very effectively to provide focused teaching that enables children to make good progress and achieve the targets that have been set for them.
- 29 The curriculum in Key Stage 1 is broad and appropriately balanced to promote children's intellectual, physical and personal development through a rich range of activities. The school rightly gives priority to national improvement strategies in literacy and mathematics. Teachers provide a very good range of first-hand experiences that capitalise on children's interests and curiosity. Since the last inspection, detailed guidance has been produced to support planning in all areas of the curriculum. Schemes of work have been modified in most subjects in line with QCA guidance. These now provide a good basis to ensure appropriate demands are made on children as they progress through the school. Year team planning supports consistency of coverage and opportunity. Provision for IT has improved recently in line with requirements of the school improvement plan. However, as yet, there is little evidence of children using IT to support their learning in other subjects.
- 30 The school has effective strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy. Children's standards in literacy improve from a low base to below the national average. Strategies for teaching numeracy skills are satisfactory overall. However, not all teachers are confident enough yet to adjust their planned work to increase the challenge within a lesson for children who successfully complete their set tasks with comparative ease.
- 31 The school meets all statutory requirements relating to the curriculum. Religious education (RE) is taught in line with the current Locally Agreed Syllabus. Sex education is covered informally by teachers answering the questions that children

raise. The programme for personal, social, health and citizen education (PSHCE) is well balanced. Some teachers make provision for circle time and this enhances children's personal development. Overall, the provision for children's PSHCE is excellent. Curriculum enrichment is formalised through a designated week where health is the children's curricular topic work. The school's approach to snacks and lunchtime also promote a healthy lifestyle.

- 32 The curriculum is accessible to all groups of children. All boys and girls have equal opportunities to work on all the activities provided, including after-school clubs. Provision for children with SEN is very good. This is because the special needs co-ordinator uses information from the SEN audit and from the baseline assessment of children on entry to the school at age four to ensure that they are grouped according to their ability in classes. She advises other teachers on the level of work, resources and challenge appropriate for these children who, in some classes, form the substantial majority.
- 33 The curriculum is enriched through a number of visits, fieldwork and extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school. For example, children visit Leigh Park and Old Portsmouth as part of their history and geography topics. These visits have a clear impact on the standards of children's work. After-school activities in the summer term include recorder club, football, art club, story-time and Lightzone. These and other clubs, run at different times of the year, are well attended and engage children's interests. During the lunch hour all children are able to develop their skills for competitive sports by playing with bats, balls and other small games equipment. This is well organised and children are fully aware of the rules for taking turns, sharing equipment and playing fairly and safely. During the inspection, all Year 2 children mixed enthusiastically with 300 others from equivalent year groups from local schools in a very well organised annual sports festival on the school site.
- 34 A highly notable feature of curricular enrichment derives from the very strong links that the school has forged with parents and the local community. For 20 minutes at the start of each day parents and carers are encouraged to work alongside children and take part in activities such as reading or using computers. The school's Better Reading Partnership has been successful in improving the literacy and reading skills of children and adults in partnership with the school. This has enabled parents to share positive attitudes to learning with their children and to improve their own support of children's learning, consistent with the school's aims of the active involvement of the community in raising standards of achievement for its children. The strong links forged with the pre-school group on site and with the neighbouring junior school, as well as those established as part of the EAZ, contribute consistency to children's learning and an integrity to the aims and values of the school community as a whole.
- 35 The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.
- 36 Provision for children's spiritual development is very good. RE lessons and the equal valuing of all in the school, explicitly taught as part of the PSHCE curriculum, enhance children's learning. Children are given regular opportunities, particularly during the acts of collective worship and at assembly times, to consider and reflect on their own lives and the world around them through story, discussion and song.
- 37 The provision for the moral development of the children is excellent. Children can

distinguish between right and wrong and know when they have done well. The school has developed a strong system for rewarding them which includes presenting gold medals to the parents of successful children. Adults set high standards by example. They are patient, kind and good humoured which gives the children a strong sense of natural justice. Where children's behaviour is unacceptable then staff respond fairly and evenly with appropriate actions in accordance with the policies set out in the school's prospectus.

- 38 The provision for the social development of the children is also excellent. Children are polite and courteous. The relationships between children and adults work extremely well. Children work well together in the classroom, in pairs and groups. They play well and take turns with each other in the playground. This is because teachers and other staff organise lunchtimes well and supervise children carefully in the playgrounds. Children are involved as monitors collecting and delivering registers and unlocking doors at the close of the day. They raise money for charity and take part in a number of extra-curricular activities outside of school.
- 39 The provision for the cultural development of the children is satisfactory. There is a good range of multicultural story books in the library, children learn about their local area, have visitors from outside groups and take part in local festivals such as the Havant Arts Festival. The school has celebrated Divali, one classroom had work about India on display and in one class some French was being spoken. However, the school could provide more opportunities for children to learn about other cultures by extending the resources, like texts, artefacts and pictures, used in parts of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS CHILDREN?

- 40 The school's overall arrangements for promoting the welfare, health and safety of the children are very good and this has been maintained since the last inspection. There are appropriate policies to support health and safety. The school tries hard to secure the grounds against ongoing vandalism and is working with the LEA to improve the entrance to the carpark which is currently unsafe for pedestrians.
- 41 The school has a policy and clear procedure for child protection. Staff know who the designated member of staff is and are all watchful and aware of child protection issues. The school works well with external agencies to secure children's welfare, health and safety.
- 42 The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. There is a clear policy on behaviour, which matches a clear teaching and learning policy. The school's practices in this area are particularly strong. In the classroom and around the school children show enormous respect for each other. Circles of friends have been established to encourage children to support each other. A large number of children arrives throughout the year and the school attaches new children to these circles so they feel welcome and included as soon as they arrive.
- 43 Parents were keen to point out that the school deals quickly and comprehensively with any rare incidences of bullying. This reinforces the school's policy and value statements and demonstrates that what the school says, it means.
- 44 The school provides a very good learning environment, which positively encourages children to give of their best. What they can do when they first come to school is

assessed and targets are set for what children might achieve. The teachers then record the academic progress of each child in the classroom in a systematic way. However, more use needs to be made of the information analysed from these data so that resources and support can be put to improving the achievements of particularly vulnerable or underperforming groups of children and to identifying the achievements of different ability groups.

- 45 The school's record of attendance by children continues to be below the national average. However, the school has worked hard to try to improve attendance, including giving rewards for those with 100% attendance. Further improvement has been held back by a high percentage of absences from a very small minority of children which distorts the overall picture.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 46 The parents hold the school in very high regard and almost universally approve of its work. This is an improved level of satisfaction since the last inspection. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school and think that it works closely with them and that it is well led and managed. The open and inclusive style of the headteacher has played a key role in building respect for the school and parents are, increasingly, becoming more involved.
- 47 All parents are actively encouraged and welcomed into all aspects of the life of the school. New children and their parents are quickly made to feel comfortable and secure. The school operates a programme which includes the headteacher or other staff visiting them at home and reciprocal visits to school before the children start so they are familiar with their new surroundings when they first arrive.
- 48 The school has built strong relationships with the schools around it. A pre-school playgroup is based on site and the school encourages it to be involved with school activities so that children moving into the school are already familiar with how the school runs and what they will need to learn. Together with the Leigh Park cluster, the school has successfully established an Education Action Zone (EAZ). This will provide a pool of resources, for each school, which will be focused on improving children's achievements within a framework of support from the group of schools. As the EAZ has only recently been established, it is too early to judge its impact on standards in the school.
- 49 Almost all of the children move on to the junior school, which is also based on the same site. The two schools co-operate very closely and try to integrate their work so that the transfer of children from one school to the other is as smooth as possible. This works extremely well.
- 50 The school does well to keep parents informed about events at school and has shown them how they can help their children's progress. Parents learn how numeracy is taught in the school and the Better Reading Partnership directly involves parents in their children's learning at home. Home school agreements are well established and describe the partnership that exists between parents and the school. These are strongly supported by parents.
- 51 The school prospectus is bright, cheery, easy to read and in a style which is also used for the annual governors' report. Information about children's progress is given to parents regularly and they meet teachers to hear how well their children are doing.

This reporting system works well. Parents of children with SEN are regularly informed of their children's progress. They are invited to contribute to individual education plans, so that appropriate targets for personal and social development can be included with academic targets.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 52 The headteacher and senior staff lead the school very well and manage it effectively. There is a strongly shared commitment by all staff, teaching and non-teaching, to make sure the climate for learning in the school leads to positive attitudes towards learning, the raising of children's self-esteem, high expectations of what children can achieve and very good behaviour. The strong sense of teamwork between all who work in the school, paid and voluntarily, a strength of the last inspection, continues to the considerable benefit of the children and their achievements.
- 53 The school aims explicitly to raise the self-esteem of children and of the community the school serves so that standards, particularly in literacy, can improve. It also aims to give a very high priority to all children's personal development and to establishing and maintaining excellent relationships between all in the school. The successful achievement of these aims is the foundation for children's good progress. The vision and very good leadership of the headteacher has been instrumental in putting these aims into practice.
- 54 The time committed by the headteacher and senior staff to establishing this climate for learning in the school and the community, latterly as part of the development of the Education Action Zone of which the school is a part, has been considerable. As a consequence, whilst a systematic programme of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching has been successfully undertaken, more needs to be done. The generally good teaching across the school needs to be sustained and, in those parts of the curriculum where teachers' knowledge, methods or organisation are weak, improved. All staff in the school need to be led to make better use of the data available to set realistic aspirations for all children and to plan how these standards can be gradually achieved in the work the children do. Subject managers take an appropriately delegated lead for their subjects but the deputy head has insufficient time to undertake her school-wide responsibilities. The governing body have recognised this and has funded more time from September 2000. As a result of work associated with the introduction of the EAZ the school has made appropriate recent reallocation of subject leadership.
- 55 Children with SEN are well taught by the special needs co-ordinator who supports her colleagues with practical advice, leads the team of special needs assistants and monitors their work.
- 56 The school has well-set and appropriate priorities for what needs to be done next and has taken action to achieve them. For example, the development of independent learning and the raising of self-esteem are seen as pivotal to the work of supporting children with SEN. However, the school improvement plan would be a more useful tool for organising improvements if it contained a scheme which enabled staff and governors to evaluate the successful achievement of targets. In this way all in the school would have a clearer idea of how children were doing and what more needed to be done.
- 57 The governing body is well led and very strongly committed to the school and its

leadership. The chair of governors and the headteacher work well in partnership together. Since the last inspection, the membership of the governing body has almost completely changed. As a consequence, the effectiveness of the governing body in holding the school to account for children's progress and achievements, and for knowing the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school has not improved sufficiently. However, as a result of undertaking self-evaluation following on from training provided by the LEA, the governing body has set a good plan for its own development and for rapidly improving its effectiveness. It is now well organised into an efficient committee structure, has reviewed and endorsed a wide range of clearly expressed policies which form the basis of the school's work and continues to keep closely in touch with parents and the community.

- 58 Financial management is good and the use of surplus funds and specific grants, prudent and effective. For example, using funds available last year to enhance library provision contributed effectively to the support for improving standards in reading. In this, very good bookkeeping and financial monitoring procedures support the school as the administrative officers are well supported by the LEA and make sound use of IT. More needs to be done to improve the strategic understanding of the administrative officers so that more of this work can in time be delegated to them from the headteacher.
- 59 The number of teachers is sufficient and well qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum. These staff are complemented by the generous provision of support staff. All work very well together as a team to the benefit of children's learning. The school has very good accommodation and grounds to meet the needs of the curriculum. Unfortunately, the frequent vandalism from which the school site suffers, reported by the headteacher to be among the worst in the county, is a drain on the time and the finances of the school and its staff. The governing body has made representations to the LEA about improving this aspect of the site's security and has made sensible and persistent attempts to secure the site and buildings against such damage. All involved with the school, especially the caretaking staff, make considerable efforts to prevent this regular damage from adversely affecting the education of the children.
- 60 Learning resources are adequate for the curriculum and arrangements for the induction of new staff are satisfactory. The school has started to apply the principles of best value in the management and use of resources. For example, the school chose to alter its arrangements for teaching music as a result of such an analysis. However, the relative lack of experience in the school and in the governing body in using and interpreting data has hindered the application of these principles more widely, but the chair of governors recognises this as a next step in the improved effectiveness of the governing body.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the school further, the governors, headteacher and staff should continue to work together to:

- Raise the standards of attainment in English, particularly in reading and in speaking and listening by:
 - the provision of personal targets for children, outlining the next steps they should take to improve;
 - using the school's strategy for literacy flexibly to make sure the needs of all groups of children in each class are consistently addressed.

(paragraphs: 1, 2, 8, 71, 73, 74, 78, 80)
- Raise the standards of attainment in art of children in Key Stage 1 by:
 - building on the skills and knowledge children have developed in their early years in the school;
 - using the published guidance to set higher levels of expectation for what children can achieve.

(paragraphs: 97, 98)
- Improve the progress made by children who arrive in school with average attainment, by:
 - improving teachers' understanding of how children make progress in learning;
 - improving the pace of work and the demands made of these children;
 - using the information the school holds to set personal targets for children to achieve small steps in progression and to judge how much progress has been achieved;
 - using the time of senior staff to focus on and improve the weaker areas of teaching and the attainment of groups of children where expectations should be higher.

(paragraphs: 23, 54, 80, 88)
- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by:
 - improving the use made by the governing body and the school of the data on performance it already has so that it can hold the school to account for the achievement of its aims;
 - making sure that all plans contain some measures by which successful performance can be judged;
 - making sure the whole governing body is aware of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school so that a clear strategic direction can be set for the use of the school's resources.

(paragraphs: 56, 57, 60)
- Improve the safety of pedestrians using the car park by:
 - implementing the plans to create a barrier to separate vehicles and foot traffic coming into school.

(paragraph: 40)

In addition the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve the use made of information technology (IT) in children's learning in literacy and numeracy by:
 - planning to use these resources as part of a more flexible approach to the group work activities within the literacy and numeracy strategies.
(paragraphs: 75, 87)

- Take further steps to secure the site against vandalism by:
 - maintaining the positive approach to quick maintenance and repair;
 - persisting with plans for the fencing of the site;
 - continuing to work with partner schools, the community and with the LEA to reduce the cause of the damage.
(paragraph: 59)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and children	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	39	24	24	6	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 children

Children on the school's roll	Y R – Y 6
Number of children on the school's roll (FTE for part-time children)	177
Number of full-time children eligible for free school meals	73

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y R – Y 6
Number of children with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of children on the school's special educational needs register	108

English as an additional language	No of children
Number of children with English as an additional language	0

Children's mobility in the last school year	No of children
Children who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Children who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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

Number of registered children in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	38	27	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of children at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	28	29
	Girls	16	20	18
	Total	40	48	47
Percentage of children at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (70)	74 (84)	72 (71)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of children at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	31
	Girls	18	17	21
	Total	43	44	52
Percentage of children at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (77)	68 (68)	80 (81)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of children

	No of children
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	119
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to children 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 children of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of children excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y R – Y 2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.8
Number of children per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: Y R – Y 2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	167

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	403,433
Total expenditure	400,995
Expenditure per child	2,057
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,094
Balance carried forward to next year	26,532

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	177
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	67	29	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	44	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	43	15	0	0
The teaching is good.	76	20	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	35	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	12	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	80	18	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	69	27	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	84	14	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	24	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	33	4	0	0

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were very strongly supportive of the school and of the leadership of the headteacher.

Parents underlined the openness and approachability of the school.

Parents praised the way the school dealt with individual issues and took parents' concerns seriously.

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

- 61 All the children who are under five are taught in the school's two reception classes. When they begin school the standards they achieve are generally well below the county average. In their language skills girls' standards are very low and worse than the boys'. In mathematics, boys' standards on entry are lower than the girls'. By the time they are five, the majority of children are making very good progress and are meeting the national expectations for many of the areas of children's learning as described within the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's 'Desirable Learning Outcomes' for children under five. The exception to this is in language and literacy, where standards for the majority are still below average. There is a significant minority of children who will still need to develop skills in many areas of learning before they are in line with the national expectations. At the time of the inspection there were fifteen children who were still under five.
- 62 A strength of the Early Years curriculum is the school's work on personal and social development. This aspect drives much of the work within the reception classes. Children enter school confidently in the morning and settle to reading and sharing books. They have excellent relationships with their teachers and they are learning to work as part of a group. They can usually select activities independently, share equipment and take turns. They have regular Family Time, where they are encouraged to think and talk about ways to learn how to function as a community, for example, to use each others' names, to make eye contact, to keep promises and to play fairly. This makes an excellent contribution to their personal and social development.
- 63 Most are making good progress in language and literacy. They are starting to listen attentively and are developing a vocabulary that will help them to express their thoughts. Some talk with confidence. However, because of the low standards on entry, for many this is still below the standard expected at this age. They listen and respond to stories, enjoy books and handle them carefully. Most recognise their own names and some familiar words. A few children have made very good progress with their reading and are reading simple texts with confidence. They are starting to recognise letters by their names and sounds and to use them in early attempts at writing.
- 64 The standards in number work are rising to the expected levels. Most children can count accurately to twenty and sometimes higher. Through the development of mental and oral work, they are becoming familiar with developing strategies to solve mathematical puzzles, for example identifying a hidden number on the number square. Practical activities are well matched to the needs of the children, catering for the range of ability in each class. Some children find the recording of work difficult, although they are well supported in this by all the adults who work in the classes.
- 65 The children are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of the world. Their confidence and skill in using information technology (IT) are very well developed. They use the mouse and keyboard with confidence, if not always with accuracy. They are generally competent at controlling the programmable robots and work co-operatively to support those who are less sure. They have examined natural objects in detail and can form ideas about why some things float and others sink.

- 66 Many children have well-developed physical skills. They develop their smaller muscles by using the mouse, scissors, construction equipment and paintbrushes. They are allowed to plan many of their own activities and take responsibility for their work. The planning of opportunities to develop these small motor skills is well organised and builds on a good progression of skills. The children also have good control of larger muscles. They have access to a safe and well-resourced outside play area with big ride-on toys and a variety of other equipment to develop co-ordination. They use this area as part of their lesson time as well as at breaks.
- 67 The children's imaginative and creative skills are developed through drawing, painting, singing and playing musical instruments. They have looked carefully at Van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' and used paint to produce their own versions. They have also used computer programs to create illustrations of the growth of plants. They sing with enthusiasm and learn words from memory. They are developing a sense of rhythm and can perform short patterns by ear.
- 68 The quality of teaching in the reception classes is very good overall; some is excellent. The teachers have worked hard to establish a plan for the Early Years curriculum which supports the identification of the small steps of progress that young children make. Activities are well chosen to develop these skills and teachers use appropriate vocabulary to support the learning. There is a good balance of directed learning and opportunities for exploration and investigation.
- 69 Assessment of the progress children make is recorded formally and informally through discussion with the children and observation of them at work. All the adults in the reception classes make a very good contribution to the children's learning. They know the children very well and are tireless in their efforts to support them and help them to make progress. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the areas of planning and in the breadth and balance of the curriculum.

ENGLISH

- 70 The evidence of this inspection shows that overall, by the time they are seven, children make good progress in English, although standards are still below the national average. Children with special educational needs (SEN) also make good progress in English.
- 71 Children's attainment in English over the last few years has fluctuated but generally remained well below average. In 1999, the number of children reaching the level expected of them was well below average when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools using national benchmarks, writing was above average but reading was still below average. The number reaching the higher level in reading was well below the national average and in writing was below average. However, when compared with children in similar schools, those attaining higher standards in both reading and writing were in line with the average.
- 72 Standards for girls in 1999 were lower than for boys, reversing the national trend for higher attainment by girls aged seven. However, as the school's baseline assessment shows that standards on entry for girls were lower than for boys, their progress was good. The last inspection identified boys' literacy as an area for improvement. This has been successfully addressed, but the school must ensure that there continues to be equality of access and provision for both girls and boys, based on a better

analysis of the needs of different groups of children within classes.

- 73 Standards in speaking and listening are generally low. Children enter school with low levels of language development. They are not confident to speak in front of others, often being inaudible and insecure in their grammatical constructions. Their vocabulary is limited. The school has appropriately identified this as an area for future development.
- 74 Standards in reading are still low, but they are improving through a variety of strategies the school has put in place. Every morning children enter the classroom and find a wide selection of books on their desks. There follows an extended period of quiet reading, where all children settle well to reading, sharing and enjoying books. Reading is one of the key improvements in the school's improvement plan. They have also introduced Jolly Phonics in the reception classes, the Better Reading Partnership, Reading is Fundamental, poetry and book weeks, visiting authors and family literacy sessions. All of these strategies are having a good impact on raising the standards of reading across the school.
- 75 There was little evidence of children writing at any length during the inspection. Samples of work showed that children are able to produce work of a satisfactory standard, writing for a range of purposes and different audiences. Standards of handwriting are generally below average. Children use a cursive script on entry to school, but many find it difficult to develop a clear and flowing style. Standards of spelling are generally satisfactory. There is no evidence of children using word processors for their writing and IT is insufficiently used in the teaching of English.
- 76 The school has an effective policy for drama but there was no evidence of drama being used in the classrooms during the inspection.
- 77 Standards in English are not yet high enough in the school. However, the results for the end-of-Key Stage 1 tests in 2000, yet to be validated, show early indications that the numbers of children reaching the standards expected of them at seven have improved in reading and in writing. More are also attaining higher standards in these subjects. Inspection evidence shows that standards are rising across the school and should continue to rise. The school has set targets in collaboration with the Education Action Zone. Because these targets are aggregated across all schools in the EAZ, they are not sufficiently challenging for the school, particularly in writing. The school, however, has set its own targets for writing in 2001, based on the prior attainment of the year group. Actions to achieve these targets are outlined in the school's improvement plan and are appropriate.
- 78 The quality of teaching is good overall and very good or better in a third of lessons. There was only one unsatisfactory lesson. In the better lessons, the teachers' good subject knowledge and effective planning support the quality of children's learning. Challenging questions are matched to the different needs and abilities of the children. Children show high levels of interest and involvement. The improvement in this subject has been supported by the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, which has been well implemented. The teaching of basic skills, such as phonics, is good.
- 79 Attitudes to the subject are very good. Children enjoy reading in the morning when they enter school. They read willingly to other adults and enjoy the activities that support the development of their literacy skills. The management of behaviour is

consistently very good.

- 80 There is a range of satisfactory assessment and record keeping procedures in place. The recently introduced tracking system is a good start to ensuring that the progress children make is appropriately recorded. Attention now needs to be paid to ensure that children have small targets, which map out the next steps in their learning and encourage them to be involved in the progress they make.
- 81 The subject manager is an experienced teacher, but she has only had responsibility for the subject for a very short time. Her monitoring of the subject has largely concentrated on the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and some moderation in standards of work across the school. The manager has contributed to the School Improvement Plan and she has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to support improvement in her subject. There is appropriate emphasis on raising standards in reading. There needs to be closer analysis of the data over time to discover what factors affect and support progress. There are too few opportunities outlined in this plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies.
- 82 The school has a well-stocked and attractive library to support the teaching of literacy. There is a computerised system in place to monitor the use of the library stock. Resources for English are generally good. The stock of group reading and big books is increasing, and has been usefully supplemented by a big book written by some of the teaching staff about their own childhood in Leigh Park in the 1940's. This is an excellent resource that has fascinated the children and provides a good example of the effectiveness of a cross-curricular approach within the Literacy Strategy.
- 83 Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, given a number of changing factors since 1996. The standards of attainment on entry have declined and there has been considerable turbulence within the school, with significant numbers of children leaving and joining. Although there has been a decline in the intervening years, standards are now improving.

MATHEMATICS

- 84 In 1999, the number of children reaching the standards expected of them or better in mathematics was well below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools using national benchmarks. The number reaching the higher level was above average when compared with those in similar schools. Results in 2000, yet to be validated, show an improvement on these figures, and continue the trend shown over the last three years of incremental improvement year on year. Work seen in the school confirms the 2000 test results and shows that progress across the school is satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has also been satisfactory. Targets have been set by the school for 7-year-old children in 2001, and although they lack challenge compared with this year's results, they relate to the performance of that year group of children, based on their standards of attainment on entry.
- 85 Most mathematics lessons observed during the inspection focused on number work. The National Numeracy Strategy has encouraged the school to have a close focus on children's number skills and they are making satisfactory progress. They have quick recall of number facts to 20; they can count in 2s, 5s and 10s. They can recognise odd and even numbers, understand the concepts of more and less and can extend simple number sequences. Older children can relate this knowledge to their work on

money. All children are encouraged to explain how they have arrived at an answer and strategies are shared.

- 86 Higher-attaining children work in hundreds, tens and units with ease. They make satisfactory progress, although the pitch of the lesson is not always appropriate to extend their learning sufficiently. Children of average attainment could also be extended further. Those children with SEN make good progress. They are well supported by appropriate activities and by experienced and effective support staff.
- 87 Teaching in mathematics is good overall. There was one unsatisfactory lesson, but more than half of the lessons seen were good or better. When the teaching is most successful, teachers have good subject knowledge, they manage and encourage children well and they use support staff and resources effectively. Homework makes a valuable contribution to the subject, with class work being reinforced by activities to be taken home. Teachers know the children well and make good use of challenging questions, directed appropriately at children with different abilities. There was no IT seen in use to support mathematics.
- 88 Day-to-day assessment is used to modify learning objectives to meet the needs of the children. This now needs to be improved to ensure that the pitch of each lesson is appropriate for all children. Tracking records show the progress that children are expected to make. These need to be supported through the use of targets for children so that they understand what the next steps in their learning are.
- 89 There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection. Although standards in the intervening years have declined, in recent years they have been making steady improvement. Most children have very positive attitudes to mathematics and behaviour is consistently good.
- 90 The subject manager has monitored the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy through classroom observations, checking planning and scrutinising children's work. Lesson planning for the subject is effective, and follows the national strategy closely. Sometimes this impedes the accurate pitch of the lesson for all abilities and work needs to be done on identifying the correct level of work for all children. Raising standards of achievement in mathematics is a key objective for improvement in the school's improvement plan. There needs to be close evaluation of the success of the activities in the plan to ensure that they have an impact on the improvement of standards within mathematics.

SCIENCE

- 91 Teacher assessment in 1999 indicates that the number of children attaining the standards expected of them or better was well below the national average. However, the percentage of children attaining the higher level was in line with the national average. This trend has been maintained over the previous four years. When compared with the standards attained by children in similar schools, however, the number of children achieving the level expected is average and those attaining higher levels, above average. The inspection confirms that standards are broadly in line with the national average and teacher assessments are accurate.
- 92 By the end of the key stage most children have a sound understanding of the processes involved in conducting a scientific investigation. They have learned to ask appropriate questions, predict possible answers, conduct a fair test, and record and

evaluate their results. For example, they can conduct a fair test to investigate soluble properties of different substances and the absorption properties of different types of materials. Higher-attaining children conduct their own investigations where they predict, test, record and successfully evaluate the different outcomes. When questioned they offer suggestions of why materials react in different ways.

- 93 Children throughout the school, including those with SEN, make good progress in developing their scientific language and understanding and in improving their investigational skills. For example, younger children understand how seeds germinate and grow and what they need to survive. Children's work-books indicate a good rate of progress in each strand of science. They acquire and consolidate their subject knowledge better than expected. This is due to very good-quality teaching of a recently revised scheme of work.
- 94 All children have very positive attitudes to science, and in particular they enjoy investigative work. Children listen attentively, work conscientiously, and share resources effectively. Relationships are very good and they work well together in both collaborative and co-operative activities. Children are aware of health and safety issues in science.
- 95 The quality of teaching in science is very good. Teachers are very secure in their subject knowledge. There is a good scheme of work that provides detailed guidance to assist teachers' planning. The work set is challenging with well-planned tasks and investigations to match the needs and abilities of all children, which includes the higher-attaining as well as those with SEN. Special needs support is well co-ordinated and skilfully delivered. Expectations of all children are high, and the methods of organisation and management of children are excellent. Effective questioning opens children's minds and extends their learning. Procedures and practices for teachers' assessment of children's abilities are good. Appropriate use is made of assessment to inform the future planning of children's work.
- 96 The subject is well co-ordinated. A new scheme of work is having a positive effect on raising children's standards in science. Resources are satisfactory. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the quality of the curriculum and the level of challenge for higher-attaining children.

ART

- 97 Only one art lesson was seen during the inspection and therefore no overall teaching judgement is possible. Evidence from the scrutiny of children's work in their folders and from the displays around the school indicates that the standards achieved by children by the time they are seven are below average, although the standards achieved by the youngest children are in line with those expected at that age. Children use a range of media to mix colours and the examples seen of work using pastels done by children in the reception year were of a higher standard than that achieved by older children. The standard of clay work, particularly that seen in Year 1, was of average and sometimes good standard. Given the level of attainment on entry to the school, older children make unsatisfactory progress and children in the reception classes make good, sometimes very good progress.
- 98 Since the last inspection, the school has made improvements in the knowledge teachers and classroom assistants have of the art curriculum and the skills to be taught. However, because the planning is due for review from September, these

improvements have not yet had sufficient impact on the quality of children's work or the way art is taught. In particular, the expectations teachers have of the standards children can achieve need to be raised. The school has been sensible to plan this review of art into the next school year so that good use can be made of the guidelines published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

- 99 In the one lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory. Through their interest, attention and co-operation with each other, children made good progress in their understanding of colour mixing. Classroom assistants make a very valuable contribution to children's learning in art.
- 100 The subject manager has undertaken some monitoring of the subject which, consistent with the school's overall school improvement planning process, will contribute to the development of art next year. Her leadership of the art club and its contribution to the Havant Arts Festival have been good, with a good turn-out of children and many volunteer helpers testimony to the way the involvement of parents and the community broadens the curricular opportunities offered to children.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 101 Opportunities to observe design and technology (DT) during the inspection were limited. Planning and work seen indicate that children have a breadth of experience using a range of materials including construction kits and food. Standards overall are generally in line with those expected nationally. However, a significant minority achieves higher standards, particularly in lessons where teaching and learning are very good. For example, by the age of seven, children design and make good-quality masks, moving puppets and paper-cardboard vehicles with attached axles and pulleys. Most children are confident in their use of materials. They are able to measure and cut soft and harder materials carefully and accurately. They know how to make fixed and movable joints using appropriate techniques and resources. Higher-attaining older children evaluate the quality of their work and suggest how it could be improved, for example their own winding mechanisms. Younger children design and make theatres and movable puppets with hinge joints. These are used in English lessons to support their work in drama and story writing. Investigations in healthy eating contribute positively to projects in food technology where children design and make a healthy packed-lunch.
- 102 Throughout the school most children, including those with SEN, make good progress. This is because of the good quality of teaching and learning. For example, in the lessons observed, very good teacher questioning challenged children to think creatively in the design and making of their artefact. Very high expectations of children's attitudes, behaviour and relationships enabled all to work confidently and collaboratively on their tasks, and to share tools and resources sensibly and fairly. For example, even when using potentially messy glue the children worked very well together. The subject is well led and managed. There is a good scheme of work to ensure progression in the teaching of DT skills and in their use and application in appropriately challenging and practical contexts. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

- 103 Owing to the structure of the school curriculum, no geography teaching was observed during the inspection week. Judgements on children's attainment and progress are

limited to the scrutiny of their work, discussions with children about their work, and review of subject documentation, resources and classroom display.

- 104 Throughout the school, children make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are in line with the national expectation for their age. By the age of seven, children have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Leigh Park locality adjacent to the school. They are able to compare it to other localities that they visit, for example Old Portsmouth. Older children compare and contrast aspects of life on the Isle of Arran in Scotland and village life in India with how they live in Leigh Park. Younger children are aware of, and express their views on, some of the urban environmental issues within their locality having undertaken a traffic survey within it. Children's geographical skills are improved by their working in a thematic context or by studying a locality, and children's use of and ability to make maps are satisfactory.
- 105 No overall judgement about the quality of teaching is possible. However, a satisfactory range of learning opportunities is available for the children. These include enhancing the non-fiction component of literacy by studying traffic signs and signals. Well-prepared displays help to reinforce and extend the children's knowledge and understanding of their own locality and others'. The traffic survey undertaken in Year 1 gives children the opportunity to develop geographical enquiry skills, and to apply numeracy skills in the presentation of their findings. Subject curriculum planning is good, which is a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and the subject is well led.

HISTORY

- 106 Very little teaching of history was observed during the inspection. There were few examples of work seen in a scrutiny of work. What was seen indicates that by the age of seven, children achieve average standards in history. Children have the opportunity to handle artefacts and ask questions about the past. They use the local area as a focus to develop a sense of the past, to understand the development of the area and learn about aspects of everyday life before living memory. They have learned about the life of Florence Nightingale and about the Great Fire of London. Younger children have studied toys and homes in the past.
- 107 No judgement on the quality of teaching is possible. There was evidence of a historical source being very well used in a literacy lesson, and children being encouraged to ask questions about their teachers' experience in Leigh Park in the 1940's, linking with their history topic. This was a very successful lesson, based on a text written by some of the teaching staff and using their own experiences and eyewitness accounts. Artefacts of the period were also introduced to the class and children were encouraged to investigate their purpose. The teachers' very good subject knowledge and the personal nature of the material encouraged children's involvement and made an important contribution to the subject.
- 108 The school uses the QCA material for its planning and assessment material, making judgements of the children's attainment in line with national expectations.
- 109 The school has placed a justifiable emphasis on the core subjects and time for the foundation subjects is limited. As a result, much of the historical work lacks depth. The children are developing a sense of the past and chronological awareness, but not in a systematic way.

- 110 The subject manager is new to the post and has had little opportunity to monitor the subject. Resources owned by the school are unsatisfactory. Artefacts being used for the 1940's topic came from a museum or were the personal property of some of the teachers. There were few other historical resources of quality in the school to support the teaching of history.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- 111 Although standards are improving throughout the school, those that are currently achieved by the age of seven are below the national expectation and have fallen since the last inspection. A recently revised scheme of work has not yet had time to impact fully on the standards achieved by the time children leave the school. Children's progress is therefore limited and currently there is insufficient evidence in children's workbooks and portfolios of their use of IT in other subjects. However, within lessons observed when aspects of IT are taught, children achieve a standard that is at least in line with the national expectation for their ages. Older children reach a basic standard in communicating information through a word processor and a painting program. Through their use of different simulation programs they learn how messages are transmitted using computer control. With the help of an able parent-governor children access the internet to research a topic, for example to find information about the work of artists Van Gogh and Monet.
- 112 The recent progress children make in IT is at least satisfactory and often good in relation to their prior attainment. For example, children with SEN work well independently or with minimum adult support when using a computer-aided learning program that is designed to meet their specific learning needs in literacy. Children of all abilities enjoy using the computer and work with concentration individually and in pairs. There are very good opportunities at the start of each day for children to work independently or with their parents in their use of IT.
- 113 IT is a key priority for development in the school improvement plan. This has enabled children to make recent progress in the subject. The school has increased the number of computers and it is now close to the national average. They have also improved the range of software to support children's learning in subjects across the National Curriculum. Subject planning has recently improved. It ensures progression in the teaching of IT skills and their integration into themes across a wide range of subjects. All teachers have received in-service training to improve their subject knowledge and confidence in teaching IT. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching overall is good. It is never less than satisfactory and occasionally it is excellent. A knowledgeable subject leader is in post and the subject is well led and managed. Although standards have fallen since the last inspection the school's capacity to improve is very good. The school should ensure that children's acquisition and development of IT skills are monitored rigorously, and IT is used appropriately to enhance children's learning in curriculum subjects.

MUSIC

- 114 Two lessons were observed during the inspection. Other evidence was gained through the observations during assemblies. By the time children are seven the standard of work is broadly in line with expectations. Children listen to a variety of music with concentration and sing with enthusiasm. The quality of singing in collective worship is good. Children sing songs from memory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

- 115 The quality of teaching is very good. The school employs a peripatetic teacher for two afternoons a week to teach each class. The teacher's subject knowledge is excellent and she employs a wide range of strategies to involve the children in activities to develop their skills in singing and music making. The teacher has high expectations for the children and lessons have a good pace.
- 116 Songs from the 1940's were chosen to link to the history topic for Year 2 children. Clear demonstrations and explanations help children to sing or play different rhythms and understand duration. The specialist teacher plans all lessons and is supported during the lesson by the class teacher. There is little evidence that music is integrated into the curriculum in any way other than through these lessons. The school is aware of this weakness.
- 117 The children enjoy the lessons and participate with enthusiasm. They can follow simple tunes, clap rhythms and play simple percussion instruments. They are happy to perform in groups and to perform in front of an audience. The management of behaviour is good, especially in lively sessions requiring freedom of expression. A recorder club is run as an extra-curricular activity.
- 118 The subject is managed satisfactorily, in conjunction with the specialist music teacher. The music room is an excellent resource, providing a suitable environment for these lessons. There is a range of tuned and untuned instruments to support teaching and learning, although these could be enhanced through the purchase of instruments from a wider range of different cultures and some with deeper tones. There is little use of IT to support this subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 119 By the age of seven, standards overall in physical education (PE) are in line with those expected nationally. However, children achieve better standards in PE activities where both teaching and learning are good. For example, in gymnastics, Year 1 children are able to link different movements into simple sequences showing good control and balance in relation to their age. This is because they learn to observe and evaluate each other's work and improve their awareness of how success in gymnastics should be judged. Children acquire a good understanding of safe practice in their handling and use of gymnastics apparatus. With teacher-guidance they are able to warm-up and cool-down safely through an appropriate range of exercises at the beginning and end of lessons.
- 120 Progress is satisfactory overall for most children including those with SEN. In games activities children acquire and develop the basic skills of sending and receiving using a variety of balls, bats, rackets and hockey sticks. As they get older they learn how to use and apply these skills in a wide range of games activities. By the age of seven most children have developed the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding of PE to feel confident and to enjoy working with children from other schools in a range of sports events. For example, during the inspection week the school organised a morning festival of games activities for all Year 2 children and well over 400 Year 2 children from local schools. All children worked enthusiastically and energetically in co-operative group activities and in small competitive teams.
- 121 Throughout the school, children's attitudes to, and behaviour in, PE are very good and they are seen to enjoy their lessons. This is because of the very good care and

consideration teachers give in maintaining the self-esteem of all children and the development of their personal and social skills. Teachers are very skilful in their organisation and safe management of children. However, the quality of teaching overall is only satisfactory. There are inconsistencies in challenge and children's progress because often there is a lack of knowledge about the specific skills being taught. Although the subject is well led and managed, there has been little opportunity for the monitoring and evaluation of children's progress. Within the reduced time currently available for PE, because of national priorities in other subjects, the children are given a balanced, broad and relevant programme in this activity. However, the current scheme of work is in need of review to comply fully with the revised requirements of the National Curriculum from September 2000. Accommodation for PE is very good and resources are satisfactory. Although the school's priorities are in literacy and numeracy there has been satisfactory improvement in PE since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 122 As only one lesson in religious education (RE) was seen during the inspection an overall judgement on the quality of teaching is not possible. However, from discussions with children, scrutiny of the work in children's books and art work on display there is evidence that by the time they are seven children attain the standards expected of them in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. They make satisfactory progress. The youngest children learn very well. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Children are developing an understanding of Bible stories and have an understanding of, and some knowledge about, other faiths. Older children can recall facts about the festival of Divali and the outline of the story of Krishna. The youngest children can recall the story of Noah and are learning how the moral of this story relates to their own personal and social development. This is achieved through the skilful way in which the subject is taught and the high level of expectations set for these youngest children, which they succeed in reaching.
- 123 All children have a very good attitude to their learning in RE. In discussion, the older children are interested in the ideas and stories they have been taught, in class or through the acts of collective worship in assemblies. They respect each other's work and even the youngest are learning to respect the ideas of others and their right to express an opinion. In this, RE contributes to the children's growing spiritual development.
- 124 Teaching in the one lesson seen was very good. This was because of the way in which children's attention was captured and held through good story telling and the way in which the task, involving trust, co-operation and independence as well as active listening, challenged the personal and social development of these children. Planning for the lesson was based on the draft scheme of work recently completed by the headteacher who is the subject manager. The scheme meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This scheme is a good basis for planning to improve teaching in RE. In particular, more needs to be done to use the framework for assessing children's attainment in this subject, as proposed in the scheme of work and to use it throughout the school.
- 125 Children's knowledge and understanding of RE is added to through the voluntary after-school club connected to the local church and by visits to local places of worship.