

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PENHALE INFANT SCHOOL**

Fratton, Portsmouth

LEA area: Portsmouth

Unique reference number: 116210

Headteacher: Mrs. A Larcombe

Reporting inspector: Mr C Whitburn  
25456

Dates of inspection: 14 – 17 February 2000

Inspection number: 116210

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant, Nursery and Hearing Impaired Unit

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Penhale Infant School  
Penhale Road  
Fratton  
Portsmouth  
Hampshire  
Postcode: PO1 5EF

Telephone number: 01705 821016

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Peter Brokenshaw

Date of previous inspection: 3 March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Clive Whitburn	Registered inspector	English	1 What sort of school is it?
		Art	2.1 The school's results and pupils' achievement
		Music	7 How well is the school led and managed?
			8 What should the school do to improve further?
Sam Lye	Lay inspector		5 How well does the school care for its pupils?
			6 How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
			Equal opportunities
Christine Jones	Team inspector	Science	2.2 Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		Information technology	7 Efficiency aspects of leadership and management
Christa Kadir	Team inspector	Mathematics	3 How well are pupils taught?
		Religious education	
		Design technology	
		Under fives	
Keith Remnant	Team inspector	Geography	4 How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		History	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs and English as an additional language	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Penhale is a mixed infant school for pupils aged 3 to 7, with a nursery for 50 part time pupils and a specialist unit for children who are hearing impaired in the South East Hampshire area. As in the rest of the Portsmouth area, the roll has fallen in the past year, and there are currently 238 pupils. Most pupils are white, with just 5% of pupils coming from other ethnic groups. A small number have English as an additional language and just under one in 8 are eligible for free school meals which is broadly in line with the national average. Almost a quarter of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and this is above the national average. There are 4 pupils in the Hearing Impaired Unit who are fully integrated into the school and spend most of their time working alongside the rest of the children. Class sizes are small, ranging from 22 to 26 in a class. Baseline assessment shows that attainment on entry to the Reception Classes is close to average.

The school views itself as very much a community school. It serves a diverse social intake with some deprivation. There is a mixture of home ownership, council, housing association and private rented accommodation. It is a popular school and a number of pupils come from outside its immediate catchment area. There is an increasing mobility, with families moving into and out of the area. In the last year there has been a comparatively high rate of teachers being replaced. There are legitimate reasons for this.

The accommodation is in two Victorian buildings which have been considerably redecorated and improved in recent years. The top floor of one of the buildings is currently occupied temporarily by the neighbouring secondary school.

The school aims to develop social skills as well as the important areas of English, mathematics and other subjects. Recent priorities have been literacy, mathematics, art and whole staff training on spirituality and collective worship. The school has been involved with the "Portsmouth Counts" scheme to raise awareness and achievement in mathematics.

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

Penhale is a successful school. Pupils are well looked after, happy and secure. Standards are generally satisfactory and better in a number of areas. The school benefits from effective leadership and good quality teaching. The overall effectiveness of education is good and the school provides good value for money.

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

- Provides a very good start to pupils education and the Nursery and Reception pupils make good progress.
- Standards are above average in, art, design technology, history, music and religious education.
- Higher attainers achieve very good standards in writing and results for these pupils were well above average in 1999 tests.
- Provision for pupils with Special Educational needs and including those in the Hearing Impaired Unit is very good and these pupils make good progress.
- Relationships across the school are very good.
- Pupils respond very well and the school is a very well integrated community.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team provide very effective strategic leadership.
- Pupils receive very good support and guidance which helps them in their learning and development.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.

- Support staff make a very good contribution to children's education.

**What could be improved**

- Results in reading tests are not high enough.
- Pupils' knowledge of the sounds made by letters and groups of letters and their skills in using this to help them with reading and writing are under developed.
- Strategic leadership and monitoring of the work of the school by the Governing Body is under developed.
- Subject managers are insufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.

*There are more strengths than weaknesses. 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 March 1997. Since then the school has made satisfactory improvement overall, with significant improvement in some important areas. The quality of teaching has improved and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is good, or better, in almost eight out of every ten lessons. All lessons have clear aims and teachers use an increased variety of teaching methods. Very good progress has been made in art, where standards have risen from being below average to above average and the quality of teaching and learning in art is now good. The overall effectiveness of the management of the school has improved. However the monitoring of the work of the school by governors and of teaching and learning by subject managers still requires further development. Sound progress has been made in improving the development of pupils' spiritual awareness and this area of the school's work is now satisfactory. Good progress has been made with improving resources for mathematics and religious education. There has been some improvement in the provision of resources for information technology, but still more is needed. Funding has been set aside to increase the provision of computer hardware and software at the same time as the school receives network cabling, in the coming year, as part of the National Grid for Learning initiative. Standards have improved in art, design technology, history, music and religious education.

**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	C	D	D	D
Writing	C	C	C	C
Mathematics	B	D	C	C

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

Results in writing are average compared to schools nationally and with similar schools, and have improved at faster than the national average rate over the last three years. Reading results are below average and have improved at a rate similar to that nationally over the last three years. The main weakness in reading is that too many pupils have insecure skills in using letter sounds to decipher unknown or difficult words. The school is aware of this

and improving these important skills is its main focus for improvement. Higher attainers perform better with the proportion attaining higher levels in the 1999 tests being broadly average in reading and well above average in writing. Mathematics results had declined over the period 1996 to 1998, but improved to be average in 1999. Inspection evidence suggests that this improvement has been sustained and work seen during inspection in mathematics is average with a significant proportion of pupils achieving higher levels of attainment. The school has set itself challenging targets for improvement.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are positive and pupils treat each other with respect.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils respond very well to the school and it is a very well integrated community. Children settle quickly into the school and are happy and secure.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	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.*

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and in almost 8 in every 10 lessons teaching is good or better. In almost 3 out of 10 lessons teaching is very good or excellent. Pupils are productive and work at a good pace. The quality of learning is much enhanced by consistently good pupil behaviour, well developed listening skills and a readiness to apply themselves to their tasks. All staff have responded well to national initiatives in teaching English and mathematics. Teaching is satisfactory in English and good in mathematics. A more systematic approach to teaching letter sounds is needed in English. Teachers are well prepared for lessons and careful planning, with clear and precise objectives which are made explicit to the pupils, helps to make teaching and learning effective. The quality of pupil management is particularly good and this helps pupils to put effort into their work and sustain concentration. Staff are well aware of the needs of pupils of varying attainment and of those of different backgrounds and teach to the needs of these pupils effectively.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and gives an appropriate emphasis to the teaching and learning of the basic skills of English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special needs including those in the hearing impaired unit is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated into the school and receive good support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision for personal and cultural development is good, and for pupils' social development it is very good. Spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Staff know and support pupils well.

The school has a very good partnership with parents and this has a beneficial effect on the academic and personal development of pupils. The quality of information for parents and the support that parents give to the school are very good. The curriculum is well planned and meets statutory requirements. A greater emphasis on the teaching and learning of letter sounds is required. Provision for the moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in the life and work of the school is a strength. All pupils are equally valued. Their academic and personal progress is well recorded and pupils receive good support, guidance and encouragement. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very well developed and effective and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team give a very clear direction for the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors give good pastoral support to the school but their monitoring procedures lack rigour and they do not fully fulfil their role as critical friend or hold the school sufficiently to account.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's analysis of its own strengths and weaknesses is accurate and results in appropriate priorities and action plans to raise standards.
The strategic use of	Financial planning is good.

resources	
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The school is generously staffed and has spacious accommodation. The overall quality of leadership and management is good, although there is room to develop the strategic impact of the governing body and the monitoring role of subject managers beyond English and mathematics. The school applies the principles of best value to its use of resources.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Behaviour is good</li><li>• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best</li><li>• Their children like school</li><li>• The school is approachable</li><li>• The school helps children to mature and become responsible</li><li>• Teaching is good</li><li>• The school is well led</li><li>• The school works closely with parents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities outside lessons</li></ul>

The positive comments above were supported by over 9 out of every 10 parents or carers who returned the survey. Inspectors agree with these positive views. Parents are justifiably happy with the school. The range of activities outside lessons available to pupils is good in year two. There is little offered for younger pupils in the way of extra activities but this is not unusual for children of this age

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

1. Inspection findings broadly reflect those in the 1999 tests. Overall, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment are average, and pupils' achievement in relation to their prior learning is satisfactory. Within this overall picture there are particular areas of strength and some areas for improvement. Pupils make particularly good progress in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who are hearing impaired, make good progress. Similarly, in some subjects, notably writing and to a lesser extent mathematics, the proportions of pupils achieving higher levels is good. In 1999 tests, boys results were slightly higher than girls in reading, writing and mathematics. There were no significant differences in standards achieved by boys and girls noted during the inspection.
2. Standards in English are average by the end of Key Stage 1. In 1999 tests, writing results were average but reading results were below average compared to the national picture and to similar schools. In the period 1996 to 1999 writing results improved at faster than the nationally average rate, and reading results improved at a rate similar to the national average, remaining below the national average each year. Higher attainers performed better, and the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in reading was broadly in line with the average. The proportion reaching higher levels in writing was well above average and was in the top 25% nationally. This was achieved by a deliberate concentration on teaching higher level skills. Standards of spelling are broadly in line with national expectations. Within the majority of pupils who attained the nationally expected level 2 in writing, an above average proportion only just reached the required level. Findings during inspection confirm this picture. Too many pupils, by the end of Year 2, still have insecure knowledge of the sounds that letters and groups of letters make and this is the main reason behind the below average reading results. The same lack of knowledge also prevents more pupils from spelling confidently, and reaching the expected level 2 in writing more securely. The approach to the teaching of letter sounds and the structures within words is not systematic enough. The school is aware of this and has recently started to make to implement changes. Standards in handwriting and speaking and listening are good.
3. From 1996 to 1998 end of Key Stage results in mathematics declined whereas nationally results rose. However, in 1999 results improved at slightly more than the national rate. In the 1999 tests mathematics results were broadly in line with the average nationally and for similar schools. Lesson observation and scrutiny of work suggests that attainment is at least average with a significant proportion reaching higher levels of attainment. In Year 1, pupils count to 100 and can do simple addition and subtraction calculations. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils know basic number facts including doubles and are able to use these in mental calculations. Many can count in fives. Pupils collect and collate their own information using tally charts and graphs and are able to simply interpret the data from the graphs they have produced. They are able to measure in a variety of ways and most make sensible estimates of measurements. They use correct mathematical vocabulary.
4. Standards in science are average by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils are able to explain what they think might happen in experiments and make appropriate

observations and measurements. Standards for Experimental and Investigative Science and Life Processes and living Things are higher than in the other aspects of the subject. There are no significant differences between the standards achieved by boys or girls.

5. Standards in religious education, art, design technology, history and music are all above expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Attainment in these subjects has improved since the last inspection. In religious education, pupils have good knowledge and understanding and are able to reflect about faiths. They can relate religious stories to their own lives. There is good skill development in art and pupils are given the opportunity to use these skills in a variety of ways and produce work of a good standard. In design and technology, standards of work seen are also good, although there was limited evidence of work available from Year 2. The majority of pupils achieve national expectations in history, and a significant number achieve above that standard. Pupils develop a good sense of chronology and sequence of events and represent this in different ways. In music, pupils develop a good sense of pulse and rhythm and sing well.
6. Standards in all other subjects are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils are enthusiastic about information technology. They use word processing and using other software appropriately across the curriculum. They develop good keyboard and mouse control skills at an early age. In geography, pupils are able to compare their local environment with different locations. They acquire good mapping skills. In physical education, pupils work safely. They make appropriate gymnastic sequences and in games they throw, catch and control balls with their feet and with hockey sticks.
7. Pupils under five make good progress. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, but by the time pupils enter reception, attainment is average. By the time children are five they are well prepared for the national curriculum and attainment meets the Desirable Learning Outcomes. They develop good speaking and listening skills and use language well. They develop early reading skills and most can recognise simple words. They are developing word attack skills and knowledge of letter sounds. They acquire good understanding and skills in mathematics and knowledge of the world. They handle appropriate tools with confidence. Creative skills are developed well, particularly art and singing. Personal development for the under fives is very good. Partly due to changes in staffing, and lack of time, this good rate of progress for the under fives has not yet had the chance to fully transfer through to Years 1 and 2 and impact significantly on attainment. Responding to the considerable potential that these children have, and ensuring that they continue to make good progress through the rest of the school, aiming for above average attainment by the end of Key Stage 1, is a significant challenge.

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

8. Overall, pupils respond well to the school and it is a very well integrated community. Children who are under five settle in quickly at school and are very happy. They soon become confident learners able to relate well to other children and adults. They are able to share resources and play well together, helping each other out when the need arises and frequently offering advice. Many children show a positive ability to concentrate and persevere at their work and are proud of what they can do. They work co-operatively when clearing up or playing with the outdoor equipment. They understand the need to take turns, for example when using the

computer. Their social skills are well developed and make a positive contribution to the rate of their learning.

9. Pupils show considerable enthusiasm for school. They are familiar with the school routines and know what to do. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very positive. They are interested in the work provided for them and take care to listen to instructions and explanations. Their powers of concentration are good and they respond well to challenge. They are able to study on their own and to work well collaboratively. They gain satisfaction from their successes and are keen to discuss their work with others.
10. Pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school. The quality of the learning environment and the pupils' positive attitude to their work are supported by the schools' policy for behaviour management which is consistently applied. Pupils are responsible enough to be able to work unsupervised and remain on task. There have been no exclusions in the last year. In the occasional lesson where the pace of teaching slows, pupils sometimes lose interest and their attention wanders. Too much talking is also sometimes evident in whole school assemblies.
11. Pupils are very considerate of each other and bullying is not a problem in the school. Pupils have very good relationships with the staff and with their peers. They are polite and courteous and show respect for each other's feelings and beliefs. Mutually supportive group work is good in many subjects and pupils' learning is enhanced through these collaborative efforts.
12. The quality of the pupils' personal development is good. They are trustworthy, respect the school premises and environment as well as each others' belongings. Pupils show sensitivity during lessons and have a respect for the diversity of culture. This is reflected in the displays around the school.
13. Pupils respond well to opportunities to reflect on and discuss personal issues and relationships during lessons and 'circle time'. There has been a good improvement in this since the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to develop as independent learners and gain in confidence as a result. Younger pupils show their independence by making use of the increased choice in activities.
14. Attendance is satisfactory but the figures have shown a decline over the last three years. This is mainly attributable to an increasing number of parents taking their children on holiday during term time. This was a weakness at the time of the previous inspection and the school is now actively seeking to discourage parents from taking holidays during school terms whenever possible through an undertaking in the home school agreement. The rate of unauthorised absence is good. Pupils are keen to attend school and punctuality is very good.

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

15. The quality of teaching is good overall. In almost four-fifths of lessons, teaching is good or better and in approximately one-third of lessons it is very good or excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a considerable improvement from the last inspection when teaching was found to be predominantly satisfactory with some weaknesses in Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching has improved throughout the school. Teachers now use a wider range of teaching styles meeting the aims of lessons much more effectively. This helps keep pupils motivated and interested.

The many strengths in teaching help pupils throughout the school learn well. Good examples of effective teaching and learning were seen in every class. This improvement in teaching has not yet fully impacted on standards at the end of Key Stage 1, although attainment is above average in several subjects. The considerable changes in teaching staff may partly account for this. In addition, the need to further improve phonic skills is an important factor.

16. The teaching of under-fives is a particular strength and is good or better in 9 out of every 10 lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers show very good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of young children. They use engaging and interactive methods that enable all children to learn effectively and encourage independence. Nursery and reception teachers manage children very well. They insist on high standards of work and behaviour at all times and this sets an expectation to which the children respond and results in good behaviour and positive relationships and attitudes. Time, support staff and learning resources are all used efficiently, enhancing children's learning and making it effective. Teachers assess children's work thoroughly and make effective use of the information for the planning of future activities so that work is at the appropriate level to extend pupils of all abilities. Effective links with parents ensure that what is learned in school can be reinforced and extended at home.
17. In English, the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has improved the lesson focus and widened the range of teaching styles in use. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching of text and sentence level work is good or better in the majority of literacy lessons and pupils learn appropriately. This helps develop all pupils' understanding and higher attaining pupils in particular to succeed well. However, insufficient systematic daily teaching of phonics and not enough regular direct teaching of strategies to help pupils with reading and writing unknown words, impede the development of better reading and writing for many pupils. This is a significant issue for improvement. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to practise, apply and consolidate their literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum. Information technology is used effectively to support learning in English.
18. The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers are secure in their understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. They plan effectively and ensure that pupils can engage with the different parts of every lesson. Occasionally the demand for recording of practical activities can get in the way of extending pupils' mathematical understanding, which is not in keeping with the national numeracy strategy. Teachers put an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' ability to calculate mentally and plan activities that build well on former learning. This is improving pupils' learning and acquisition of basic skills and their capacity for mental calculation in particular. Teachers put a suitable focus on pupils practising and using their numeracy skills in real life problem solving activities. This helps them to be able to make practical use of their mathematical skills and knowledge. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The use of information technology in mathematics is limited; only occasionally is it used to enhance learning in this subject.
19. The teaching of science is satisfactory and can be very good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, and they have high expectations of pupils' ability to achieve. In most instances this leads to a good pace of learning. However occasionally work is too demanding for pupils because it is not matched effectively enough to their level of understanding. Overall teachers make suitable use of investigation and this

aspect of science work seen during the inspection is good.

20. The teaching of art, geography, history, music and religious education is good. The teaching of physical education and information technology is satisfactory. The teaching of design and technology skills for under-fives is good. No lesson observation took place in Key Stage 1 in this subject, but work seen would indicate that teaching in design and technology is satisfactory or better.
21. Teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subjects of the curriculum is mainly good. Planning usually has clear objectives which are often, but not always, made explicit to the children at the start of lesson. When objectives are shared, it helps pupils to know exactly what they are learning and what to concentrate on. This results in pupils developing a greater sense of purpose. Teachers manage pupils very well. They have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and standards of achievement in their work. They set challenging problems that encourage pupils to think for themselves. All this helps to create a purposeful working atmosphere in the classroom and pupils respond by putting much effort into their work. They show interest, sustain concentration and mostly think and learn for themselves well. Pupils are productive and usually work at a good pace. Occasionally parts of lessons lack the same pace so that pupils are allowed to slacken their efforts, resulting in slower learning. Teachers are good at matching the methods they use to the purpose of the lesson. They give clear explanations and skilfully question pupils to help them recall earlier learning, understand and explain what they are doing, evaluate their own work and know how to improve. Teachers' daily planning shows clear targets for pupils learning, but on occasions teachers are not rigorous enough to ensure every part of the plan is taught, thus missing valuable opportunities to consolidate and extend learning. Teachers generally focus well on assessing gains in pupils' learning and gaps in their knowledge in their day-to-day work with pupils. Marking is usually good and gives useful advice which helps pupils to see what they need to do to improve. However, there are examples in some books, in Year 2, of too much uncompleted work. Good use is made of resources and the deployment of support staff is a strength. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend what is learned in school.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, in the hearing impaired unit and those with English as an additional language is good. These pupils are very well supported and make good progress.

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

### **Learning Opportunities.**

23. The school's curriculum provision is good. It meets the statutory requirements, including those for children under five and also takes account of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. The programme for under-fives in the nursery and reception classes includes all six areas of learning. The balance of the curriculum favours the teaching and learning of basic skills and additional time is therefore available for English and mathematics. The breadth of the curriculum is maintained appropriately and all other national curriculum subjects, as well as religious education and personal, social and health education, are included in the teaching programme.

24. Curriculum documentation is strong and helpful, ensuring that teachers are well supported and know what they are doing. The long term curriculum framework shows the broad areas of each subject that will be taught in each year group, the topics under which they will be addressed and the overall time per year for each subject. Teachers' medium and short term planning is very thorough and identifies clearly the main learning objectives and activities with assessment opportunities that will be included within lessons. The schemes of work for each subject and medium term planning ensure that there is progression, so that lessons build on what is already known and what can already be achieved. The issue of continuity and progression in art and religious education being insecure at the time of the last inspection has been addressed.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, including the pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit is very good. All pupils on stage two and above have effective individual education plans that include sensible and achievable targets that are regularly monitored and assessed by very able Learning Support Assistants. Class teachers write these plans with support from the learning assistants and either the special needs coordinator or the Head of the Hearing Impaired Unit. The annual review process, for pupils with statements of special educational needs is very thorough and parents are fully involved. New targets are agreed and usually arise directly from the assessment of targets in the previous individual education plan.
26. For the majority of time, pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons and all teachers and learning assistants provide good support in whole-class, group or one-to-one situations. Very occasionally a group of pupils, including those with a hearing impairment or special educational needs, may work in the Hearing Impaired Unit when this is a more appropriate setting for the task being followed. Once a week, some pupils work individually with a learning support assistant on a specific multi-sensory programme; "Screening and Intervention for Dyslexia Noted in Early Years" (SIDNEY).
27. The school has adopted the strategies proposed in the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy. In general the strategies used are effective and in particular for numeracy. The teaching of phonics, however, is inconsistent across the school and this directly impacts on standards of attainment in reading and for some pupils in writing as well.
28. The school has a sound policy for equal opportunities that is clearly working in practice. Although there is no co-ordinator, all staff adhere to, and informally monitor, the policy because they believe it is right. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and those from the Hearing Impaired Unit are fully integrated into all aspects of school life.
29. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular opportunities for Year 2 pupils and these are well attended. Indeed the Art and Gardening Club has too many pupils wishing to take part and a half-term rotation system operates. As in most other schools there are no extra-curricular activities for younger pupils.
30. The school has good links with people and organisations from within the community that help improve the quality of learning opportunities for pupils. There are specific links with organisations for the deaf and also opportunities for parents to become more involved with the school. Links with the partner junior school are positive and visits both ways are a regular feature.

## **Personal Development**

31. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has worked hard on these aspects and overall has shown good improvement since the previous inspection.
32. Pupils' spiritual development is sound. A number of good opportunities are planned for and provided in religious education, worship and in other subjects. In assemblies and some classes a candle is used effectively as a focus for engaging pupils' reflection. A particularly good example of spiritual development was seen in an art lesson in Year 2, where pupils were observing and drawing plants. Pupils' attention and thoughts were drawn to the fact that plants are alive and need care. In the wider areas of the school pupils are encouraged to think about their role in caring for the environment. Although opportunities were noted in many subjects, some opportunities were also missed, for example, in history lessons.
33. There is a good moral ethos in the school. The behaviour policy emphasising positive discipline is supported by a Code of Behaviour which is known, understood and practised by all pupils. There are good opportunities in lessons and in projects for developing pupils' understanding of moral issues, for example, writing letters, "Dear Greenpeace...", in English and treating the environment with care and sensitivity in science, the art and gardening club and the recycling project.
34. The school's provision for pupils' social development is very good. Circle time is used very effectively in a number of classes. Pupils work together effectively in groups, or in pairs and produce quality collaborative work, for example in design technology, art and English. They share equipment and resources well and take turns appropriately. They listen carefully to one another in class discussions and in music. When opportunities arise they take responsibility well with routines such as taking registers to the office, collecting milk and giving out resources.
35. Provision for the development of pupils' cultural knowledge and appreciation is good. In lessons they have opportunities for learning about their own cultural heritage and the traditions of others through poetry, music, art and stories. In displays and pupils work there is evidence of pupils making Divali puppets, learning about and celebrating the Chinese New Year and learning of life in Victorian times by working with a visiting theatre company. During the inspection, music from South Africa was played while pupils prepared for assemblies. Pupils from the school take part in the Portsmouth music festival and live musicians visit the school. The library has good resources covering "Ourselves – Similarities and Differences" and books about art, music and other cultures.

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

36. The school cares for its pupils well. Security is good and teachers are careful when handing pupils over to their parents at the end of the day. Parents are happy with the care given to all pupils and say there is an emphasis on kindness.
37. All staff know the pupils well. They are aware of any health or social problems they might have and ensure that appropriate provision for support and guidance is made. All pupils are equally valued and are encouraged to care and value one another. Pupils with hearing impairment or who require learning or language support are well supported by staff and visiting specialists. Extra help has also been brought in to

help pupils whose reading skills need improvement and this is proving beneficial. The quality of support for all pupils is very good. Children are sensitively introduced to school life. Staff conduct home visits to get to know the children in familiar surroundings.

38. Assessment is good with pupils being given targets which are subject to regular review. Learning support assistants keep ongoing records of progress towards individual targets for pupils with special educational needs and good records are kept of all pupils' progress and personal development. Since the previous inspection a marking policy has been introduced which gives teachers good guidelines on how to mark work to ensure consistency throughout the school. As a result, marking is usually good and gives helpful advice to encourage pupils to improve their work. Assessment is used well to inform planning and build on previous learning.
39. Welfare provision is good. Pupils with known medical conditions are made known to all staff by photo identification so that they can be assured of correct treatment. There are a few minor health and safety issues which have been notified to the school.
40. Procedures for child protection are good. All staff have the appropriate information and copies of the local guidelines are easily accessible. The headteacher is trained in aspects of child protection and shares responsibility with another member of staff who is due to receive training shortly when the new guidelines are published.
41. Attendance is well monitored. Records are kept on computer and class teachers are provided with a weekly printout. Concerns about absence are brought to the attention of the headteacher to pursue. The school is aware of declining attendance figures and is now actively discouraging parents from taking their children on holiday during term time wherever possible. The educational welfare officer is a regular visitor to the school. She has issued leaflets to new parents to help them understand what constitutes authorised or unauthorised absence. Certificates have been introduced for pupils with one hundred percent or over ninety percent attendance over the year.
42. The school promotes discipline very well. There is a good discipline policy which clearly sets out the system for reward and sanctions. This is included in the prospectus so that parents can reinforce the school's ideals at home. Staff are also given good guidance on how to maintain positive behaviour and there is a consistency across the school which has a good effect on the pupils. Parents are impressed by the good behaviour of the pupils in school. Bullying is not tolerated and the school has secure guidelines on dealing with incidents should they arise. The school is, however, only just beginning to formally monitor incidents.

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

43. The school has a very good partnership with parents and this has a beneficial effect on the academic and personal development of the pupils. Parents are very supportive of the school and its work. They comment on the welcoming attitude of the school and the approachability of the teachers. The school is committed to the involvement of parents and sees their importance in the life of the school and development of their children. Strategies are in place to obtain parents' views, for example, a questionnaire was sent to parents with the draft home school agreement and suggestions were then incorporated in the final product. The home school agreement is a clear and concise document. Reading diaries are also intended to be used as two way communication books and this is the case with the younger

pupils and those with special educational needs; however, they are less used by parents as pupils get older. Some older pupils have little evidence of parental involvement in their reading at home.

44. Parents say they are happy to approach the school with any problems and those at the meeting said that any possible concerns are quickly and appropriately addressed. There are formal meetings each term for parents to meet their child's teacher and appointments for working parents can be made at other times if necessary. Parents can also talk to teachers at the start or end of the day.
45. The format of pupils' annual progress reports is intended to maximise pupils' involvement. They write briefly about what they enjoy and what they find difficult. Targets for pupils are set by their teachers and included in their reports. Parents have the opportunity to comment on the report on its receipt slip and discuss it with the teacher at a formal meeting. Liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents at the meeting praised the homework policy which they find helpful.
46. Workshops have been held for parents dealing with behaviour management and literacy. Also eight parents of Year One pupils have been encouraged to complete a local numeracy course in order that they might support their children's mathematics.
47. There are at least twenty parents who help regularly in classrooms and this has a positive impact on learning. A parent governor also helps to run the library and teaches library skills. Parents of pupils with hearing impairment help regularly in the school. A timetable is posted outside the Nursery class enlisting help from parents for half a day. Those who help in school say they are well prepared and feel valued. Meetings for parent helpers have recently been set up to show how they can best help pupils and to ensure a consistency of approach. Parents at the meeting showed a good appreciation of school methods, for example they are aware of 'planning time', when pupils in early years are able to choose from a variety of activities, and how it encourages independence in learning. Parents are also aware that pupils' reading skills need to be improved.
48. Parents are happy with behaviour in the school. They are given a copy of the school's discipline policy and know how the reward and sanctions systems work. They are keen to emphasise how well the pupils are encouraged to look after and value one another.

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

49. The leadership and management of the school have improved since the last inspection. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team give a very clear direction for the work and development of the school. They have a genuine commitment to school self-evaluation and improvement. (The headteacher is currently attending the Ofsted accredited course in school self-evaluation). Their analysis of performance data and the quality of pupils' work is rigorous and as a result the school identifies appropriate priorities to raise standards and action plans accordingly. In this way the school is generally successful in overcoming its weaknesses. Two examples of this are the very good progress made by the school since the last inspection in art, and the improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor the quality of teaching and learning and set targets for improvement. Together with other

members of the senior management team and subject managers they provided the necessary strategic planning and facilitated training to address weaknesses. As a result, the quality of teaching across the school and art are now strengths. A further example, yet to impact on standards, is the recent if belated, recognition that there needs to be a far greater emphasis placed on the systematic teaching of phonics.

50. Staff work well together and share the leaderships' commitment to raising standards. There is a good sense of teamwork. They are professional in their approach and are open to change. There is a good mixture of age and experience and staff are well qualified and knowledgeable. There is a strong, shared commitment to fostering good relationships and equality of opportunity. There are well developed systems for the induction of new staff, although on occasions this does not happen quickly enough and needs to take place in the first few weeks of a new appointment.
51. Subject managers give good leadership overall and generally manage their subjects well. In the last year English and mathematics have been given priority, in keeping with government strategy, and the managers for these two subjects have monitored the quality of teaching and learning, led inservice training and given demonstration lessons. All subject managers monitor planning and most have a good overview of their subject and plan well for future development. However subject managers in subjects other than English and mathematics have not been given the time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and this limits opportunities for sharing good practice. This weaker aspect of their work was also noted in the last inspection.
52. The Governing Body give good pastoral support to the school and some governors are generous with their time, working voluntarily within the school in classes and with extra curricular activities. The Governing Body agrees performance targets for the headteacher and deputy headteacher, although the absence of a job description for the headteacher makes this task more difficult. Success criteria are not always rigorous and are difficult to measure objectively. Governors discuss performance data and agree targets for improvement. However this process is not sufficiently demanding and their procedures for receiving information and monitoring the work of the school are not well enough developed or systematic. They rely too heavily on the headteacher and senior management team, or on individual governors. The curriculum committee has been effective but other committees meet infrequently and minutes are often brief and lack sufficient information to ensure that all governors are adequately informed. There is no record of searching questions being asked to test important policies and inform decision making. As a result, the Governing Body do not fully fulfil their role of critical friend or hold the school sufficiently to account.
53. Financial planning is good and the school makes good use of its delegated budget. The school's spending decisions are linked to targets and priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The school has a budget surplus.
54. Financial control is good. The budget is carefully managed and monitored by the administrative officer and the headteacher. The Chair of the finance committee is kept regularly informed but the committee itself meets infrequently. The strategic role of the Finance Committee needs to be further developed in order to ensure that the overall financial decisions relating to the School Development Plan are appropriately securing value for money. The school has complied with a recent

Auditors' report in most major aspects except that the governors have not yet drawn up a job description for the headteacher.

55. The systems for financial administration are efficient and effective and the school runs smoothly. Subject managers have their own budgets and make annual bids linked to the priorities in the School Development Plan.
56. The school is making good use of new technologies both in the classroom and in the administration systems, within the constraints of the present level of resources. There is an action plan in place to develop ICT resources in line with the introduction of the National Grid for Learning into the school in 2000/2001.
57. The school applies the principles of best value to its use of resources. Standards and costs are regularly compared with those of other schools and the school always looks for the best use of resources for educational activities. Formal tenders are always invited from contractors for major projects. The school consults formally with staff and governors and informally with parents on the implications of initiatives in the School Development Plan.
58. Taking account of the good overall effectiveness of the school and its contextual factors as well as the average unit costs, the school provides good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

59. In order to raise standards further, and in particular in reading, the school should now:

- 1 Improve pupils' ability to use phonic skills in reading and writing by;
  - providing inservice training for teachers along the lines of the National Literacy Strategy "Progression in Phonics" guidance (paragraphs 2,17,86);
  - adopting a systematic plan for phonics teaching which ensures planned skill development (paragraphs 2,17,27,83,86);
  - ensuring that word level work takes place systematically and regularly (paragraphs 2,17,27,83,86);
  - ensuring that all pupils become proficient in using well developed and secure knowledge of the sounds that letters and groups of letters make, particularly within words, to assist their reading and writing (paragraphs 2,15,17,81,83).
- 2 Improve the strategic effectiveness of the Governing Body by ensuring that it gathers information, monitors and critically evaluates the work of the school by;
  - receiving regular information from subject managers (paragraph 52);
  - having planned and structured visits to the school with an agreed agenda (paragraph 52);
  - improving the system for reporting back to subcommittees and the whole Governing Body (paragraphs 52, 54);
  - using this information to ask critical questions and inform decision making (paragraph

52).

3 Improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by subject managers so that it:

- includes lesson observation and scrutiny of work with a clear focus (paragraphs 51, 102, 115, 121, 133, 138, 142);
- identifies what teachers do well to promote successful learning (paragraphs 51, 102, 108, 115, 121, 126, 133, 138, 142);
- identifies where improvements are needed to make learning more effective (paragraphs 51, 102, 108, 115, 121, 126, 133, 138, 142);
- provides teachers, individually and collectively, with guidance for further improvement (paragraphs 51, 102, 108, 115, 121, 126, 133, 138, 142);
- ensures that work and skill development builds systematically on what has gone before (paragraphs 51, 102, 115, 121, 126, 133, 138, 142).

60. In addition to the main issues above, governors should consider the following more minor issues for inclusion in its action plan:

- A. Plan opportunities for teachers to share expertise and good practice, including teachers observing and working alongside each other to ensure that where pupils make particularly good progress, this is built on and continues as they move through the school (paragraphs 16, 138);
- B. Improve and develop resources for information and communications technology to ensure effective implementation of the National Grid for Learning initiative (paragraphs 56, 126, 128);
- C. Address the minor health and safety issues notified to the school (paragraph 39)
- D. Consider using part of the expected financial under-spend to support this action plan (paragraph 53).

### **The work of the Hearing Impaired Unit**

61. The Hearing Impaired Unit is well managed and provides very good teaching and learning opportunities for the pupils. They are very well cared for and the successful social inclusion policy means that they are fully integrated into the life of the school. They receive good support in whole-class, group and individual teaching situations and they make good progress.
62. The two teachers attached to the unit have good qualifications and are very experienced in teaching pupils with hearing impairment. The learning support assistant is also very experienced and provides excellent support for both teachers and pupils. From the documentation the unit appears to be over-staffed for the current numbers of pupils but as the teachers each spend two days a week working outside the school this is not the case. The head of unit works in partner schools and the second teacher with the local authority advisory service. This teacher is also the special needs coordinator and another half-day of her time is used for managing this aspect of the school's work. Each member of the team is allocated specific times during the week with each pupil. Most of this time is used to provide support within class based lesson but when it is more appropriate some individual work takes place in the unit. This organisational strategy is very effective.
63. Within the unit, staff aim to provide each pupil with oral skills so that they can be fully integrated in lessons, the wider areas of school life as well as at home, and in

the community. From the evidence during the inspection their work is very successful. The beginning and end of day routines are used effectively. Pupils arrive early and come directly to the unit. The time is used efficiently to check hearing aids and microphones are essential for pupils during lessons. Pupils also have programmes of work to complete. The teachers and the learning support assistant interact with each pupil and the session provides good opportunities for language development and for promoting responsibility and independence. Relationships between the pupils and staff in the unit are excellent. At the end of the day pupils return to the unit before they go home. There is a check that they have got everything they need and microphones are returned. These routines also provide opportunities for staff to make contact with parents.

64. The support and care for these pupils are very good and are seen as the collective responsibility of all staff in the school. Relationships between the pupils and staff are positive. Annual reviews are organised and led by the head of unit who also writes the individual education plans for each pupil. Targets from these plans are recorded on the back of the pupil's target card that is kept in each classroom. Shorter timed targets are identified and recorded on the front of this card. These are designed as steps to help meet the IEP targets. Parents are fully involved in each stage of review and through the pupil contact book can liaise with the unit on a daily basis if they wish. Progress towards individual targets is carefully monitored and recorded by the learning support assistant.
65. The unit's accommodation is very pleasant and well furnished. There are very good resources and these are used well to promote learning. Links with the community are very good and sponsorship has enabled the room to be pleasingly decorated and some specialist resources such as the sensory wall to be purchased. One valuable link with industry provides money so that all the pupils and their parents can enjoy an outing each year. There are also good links with pre-school groups for the deaf and with the partner schools to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 2.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	22	50	22			

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y[R ] – Y[2 ]
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	213
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y[R ] – Y[2 ]
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	65

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.5
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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 pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	43	35	78

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33 (29)	37 (34)	39 (34)
	Girls	26 (31)	30 (34)	30 (30)
	Total	59 (60)	67 (68)	69 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (71)	86 (84)	88 (78)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36 (30)	39 (31)	41 (34)
	Girls	26 (34)	26 (31)	30 (34)
	Total	62 (64)	65 (62)	71 (68)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (80)	83 (77)	91 (85)
	National	82	86	87

Figures in brackets refer to the previous year (1998) results.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	1
White	155
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y[R] – Y[2]**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	26

#### **Education support staff: Y[N] – Y[2 ]**

Total number of education support staff	12.9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	277

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	3.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998-1999
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	£
Total income	583346
Total expenditure	575834
Expenditure per pupil	2007
Balance brought forward from previous year	23530
Balance carried forward to next year	31042

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	269
Number of questionnaires returned	107

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	32	4		1
My child is making good progress in school.	54	41	5		2
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	42	1		3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	48	12		3
The teaching is good.	55	41	2		
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	42	14	3	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	3		1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	35	2		1
The school works closely with parents.	41	50	9	1	
The school is well led and managed.	51	42	2		5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	43	2		2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	28	25	6	26

*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding*

## **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**

66. The school makes good provision for children under-five in the nursery and reception classes. The provision is equally good in all areas of learning. The school has managed well the considerable demands made upon it by national and local initiatives, such as the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the Early Excellence in Learning project. The school is to be congratulated upon its skilful management in the organisation of the early years' curriculum, resources, space, support staff and effective budget management to achieve early years provision of a high standard which has a significant impact on children's learning.
67. The level of deprivation on entry to the nursery is above the local average. Children under five make good progress and the impact of the nursery education lifts attainment on entry to the main school. Baseline Assessment shows that attainment on entry to the reception classes in school is close to the average expected for the age, and it is slightly higher than the local average for the last two reporting years. The Baseline Assessment results for 1999 show that attainment in English is very close to the average and for mathematics slightly higher than the average expected for the age. Standards of attainment have been improved upon since the last inspection and they are good or better in the majority of lessons seen. Children are on course to reach the Desirable Learning Objectives and are well prepared for the National Curriculum by the time they are five.

### **Personal and Social development**

68. The personal and social development of children in the nursery and reception classes is very good. Teachers and support staff focus on this area of development throughout every lesson during each school day. This results in children being confident about everything in which they engage. Teachers always praise what children have to offer and help them to evaluate their achievements. Circle time is special focus on children's personal and social development, an opportunity to talk about family, friends, feelings, to listen and take turns. The relationships between staff and children as well as between the children are very good at all times.

### **Language and literacy**

69. Almost all children have good listening skills. They respond to questioning with appropriate answers and are able to enter into quite lengthy discussions about their work. An example of this occurs during a group evaluation of the boats children have built, as part of their science/design and technology topic. Children say "my boat is a magician's boat, the person goes in this cupboard and disappears", or "I would make the bottom bigger so it would float" and "I would make the flag stick shorter, so it won't sink". They are able to talk about their own experiences in the nursery and the activities they undertake as well as experiences with their families and at home. They use language freely and creatively while playing in the role-play area pretending to be explorers in the jungle and finding different exotic animals. They use relevant vocabulary such as binoculars, explorer and compass. Children listen attentively and join in with reading big book stories from the nursery onwards.

They are able to identify rhyming words. All children understand the importance of books and handle them with care. They understand that print carries meaning and are able to interpret pictures in a book. Average attainers recognise simple words and are beginning to make use of letter sounds and word attack skills. More able children read fluently and do not need to point to the text while reading. They read simple passages with understanding and accuracy and express an opinion about characters and story. Reception children engage in daily handwriting practice and they apply their writing skills in other areas of learning such as writing numbers and their names and recording work in science and design and technology.

## **Mathematics**

70. Many children show a good understanding of mathematical language. They can make comparisons of size between big and small objects, short and tall sticks. They understand the terms “more than” and “less than” a given number. Some work on single digit numbers and higher attainers can do the same tasks using two digit numbers. Children use “Percy Penguin” to help them order numbers on a number line. They recognise and name 1,2,5,10,20 pence coins, “I can see the number it says 20”. Higher attainers are beginning to develop the concept of coin value and know that twenty 1p coins has the same value as one 20p coin. Children develop good mental strategies during group sessions on creating their own teddy and dinosaur number stories. They know how to count on from a given number in order to add two sets of objects and can explain how they do it; such as, “I put 5 in my brain box and count 6,7,8, so  $5 + 3$  is 8”. Some pupils are able to count and record in two digit numbers. Children are able to count on and back from a given number and are beginning to understand the concept of subtraction. They know words such as “take away, subtraction, less and leaves”. All pupils are confident about their number skills both in recorded and oral work. The majority of children attain at average levels and a significant minority reaches above average levels for their age.

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

71. Children are able to talk about where they live, their families, brothers and sisters and features of their school and classrooms. They know how their different classrooms in the school work. They know that on different days they are engaged in different activities in either the blue, red or yellow rooms. Within the classroom they are able to consult an activity grid that tells them where they are working next. Children know the meaning of day, date, year and season in the context of doing the daily weather chart. Children explore and select appropriate materials to make boats, using skills such as cutting, joining and building for a purpose. They use these boats for their floating and sinking experiment and are able to successfully evaluate their boat designs and suggest improvements to stop them from sinking next time. They also show an appreciation of the boats made by peers. Children successfully use technology to support their learning, such as the drawing function to create the picture of a teddy and Triceratops.

## **Physical Development**

72. Nursery and reception children handle tools and objects with confidence. They successfully cut out shapes, thread laces and hold pencils and brushes with increasing control. In physical education they skip, jump, hop and run with an awareness of personal space and others. During an outside physical education lesson they handle balls, hoops and bean-bags with increasing skill; they are able to

bounce, throw and catch with considerable accuracy. At other times nursery and reception children have access to outdoor activities using apparatus and wheeled toys to enhance the development of large motor skills and personal social learning.

### **Creative Development**

73. Children show very good skills in art, collage and modelling. They make lively pictures to their own designs and are capable of fairly accurate representations of close observational drawings. The drawings of most children show good levels of maturity. Children compose their own music, creating notation by placing pictures on a grid. The “conductor” points to the pictures and the children clap the rhythm for “Little bear” or “Jackson”. They begin to develop an understanding about pictorial notation, rhythm, time and the importance of silence in a phrase. They use their imagination while making peg-dollies they discuss the different clothes they have made for their dolls; “mine is going to a party, that’s why she’s got a shiny party dress”. They enjoy singing and the role-play of “there was a princess long ago”.
74. Teachers are very keen to develop children’s independence and as a result children are able to work on group activities with or without an adult and concentrate for a considerable length of time. Children work very well as individuals, together in pairs, groups or as a whole class. They know how to share resources.
75. The quality of teaching is nearly always good or better and never less than satisfactory. Teaching is warm and lively and this helps children to feel happy, secure and involved. Teaching and support staff are enthusiastic and have high expectations of children’s ability to achieve as well as for their behaviour. As a result, children show curiosity and are interested to learn. They pick up on the infectious enthusiasm of teachers and respond well to the guidance they receive from them and from support staff and other adults. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the needs of different groups of children in their class. Planning and lesson organisation are good and meet the needs of different groups of children and individuals. Good support is given to children with special educational needs, while higher attaining children are being sufficiently challenged through teachers’ skilful questioning and open-ended activities. Nursery nurses and learning support assistants contribute significantly to children’s learning, classroom organisation and management. They question children appropriately, guide and use praise effectively to promote learning.
76. The curriculum in the nursery and reception classes is based on the appropriate areas of learning and enables children to progress towards and beyond the “Desirable Outcomes” for learning. It links in well with the National Curriculum. Baseline Assessment is successfully used to identify areas for development of groups and individual children. These assessment results are used to construct individual education plans for children with special needs and to set learning targets for all children in each class.
77. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed. She monitors the work of her colleagues effectively through looking at planning and informal discussions. She has identified appropriate areas for development and priorities. These include the development of an early years’ planning framework based on the early learning goals.
78. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children’s learning and are frequently

seen in classrooms as volunteer helpers. The nursery has an excellent home visiting programme in place, which ensures a calm and happy start to the children's school life. Parents and other family members are clearly made to feel welcome. Parents are seen as partners in the education of their children.

## ENGLISH

79. Standards in English are average, and have been sustained since the last inspection. However within that overall picture there are specific strengths and also areas for further development.
80. Standards in writing in the 1999 tests were average when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. Within this, the proportion reaching higher than the expected level was well above average and well into the top 25% nationally. Last year the school deliberately concentrated on achieving higher levels in writing and consciously placed emphasis on teaching the skills necessary for this. The results suggest that this was a successful strategy. Results in writing have improved at faster than the average rate nationally over the last three years. The proportion of pupils who reached the expected level two was average although an above average proportion of those only just reached this standard.
81. During the inspection the same pattern of standards in writing was evident. Overall standards are average and a significant proportion of pupils achieves high standards in writing. The quality of handwriting is generally good and pupils usually take care to write neatly and present their work well. Standards in spelling are broadly average and again higher attainers spell well. There is a good concentration on learning to spell the key lists of words from the national literacy strategy framework. Some pupils have difficulty in using their knowledge of letter sounds confidently and this inhibits more pupils from more securely attaining the expected level in writing. There is a clear link here with what is said below concerning pupils' knowledge and skills with letter sounds and reading.
82. In 1999 tests for reading, overall results were below the average nationally and for similar schools. Results for higher attainers were broadly in line with the average for higher attaining pupils, but the proportions of pupils reaching the nationally expected level were below the national average, and well below the average for similar schools. This pattern of results was also born out during the inspection. Higher attainers read confidently and fluently at an appropriately high level. They can explain what they read, and give reasons for what happens in the story. They are able to use references books to find information. However, a significant proportion of pupils in year two currently read at just below the expected level two and therefore will need to make good progress if the school is to improve significantly on last year's results.
83. The main weakness in these pupils' reading is that too many have insecure awareness of the sounds that letters and groups of letters make, particularly within words (phonemic awareness) and their skills in using this are limited. They therefore rely too heavily on context, picture and a weak knowledge of only initial letter sound clues when faced with new or difficult words. This therefore hinders their fluency and confidence, particularly when reading previously unseen texts. It is this area of skill development which most needs to improve. The school does not concentrate sufficiently on the development of skills in a systematic, planned and structured way

so that the recognition of sounds made by letters, and groups of letters, is developed securely by all pupils. The school has recently recognised this and is just beginning to address the issue. They have identified about one third of Year 2 pupils to receive extra help with reading strategies. These pupils are beginning to focus more closely on the range of strategies they can use to decipher unknown words. The staff have also been concerned to improve the level of pupils' understanding when reading, particularly inference and deduction. There has been some success with this. Literacy hours have a good concentration on whole text and sentence level work and there is an appropriate concentration on pupils' understanding what they read. Most pupils are able to discuss what they read and retell stories showing an appropriate level of understanding.

84. Throughout the school standards of speaking and listening are good. There are many opportunities for pupils to discuss and give their point of view in whole class, group and paired situations. These opportunities, which occur in literacy hours and also in other subjects, give pupils the confidence to speak out and the chance to extend the quality and precision of the language they use. For example, in an art lesson in Year 2, pupils discuss with great interest the detail they can see in the plants they are about to draw. Through skilled questioning the teacher elicits more and more careful description and detail. Similarly, a child in reception describes the eyes of a teddy he is looking at as "bright, white and shining."
85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and is often good and can be excellent. The strongest teaching takes place with under fives. Throughout the school, lessons are well planned and have precise objectives which reflect the objectives in the National Literacy Strategy Framework. There is often very good teaching of text and sentence level work and this helps to give pupils the understanding of text necessary to reach higher levels of attainment. Teachers use effective questioning techniques directed to the whole class, groups and individuals and this helps keep pupils involved and extends their learning. For example, in a Year 2 class, pupils are asked to explain how parts of a poem should be read aloud and why. This results in far greater expression when the class read it aloud for a second time. Teachers give precise guidance to pupils so that they understand exactly what they have to do. Clear and explicit links are made between learning spellings and the usefulness of this in writing. For example, pupils are encouraged to identify words from list 1 or 2 in whole class texts. This helps develop a purpose for their learning. Pupils with special needs, including those with impaired hearing, are supported well by classroom assistants and support teachers. The management of pupils is good and this results in consistently good behaviour. On occasions greater use could be made of children's responses. For example, a reception child was confused between the sounds made by the letter "V" and "F" and this was missed as an opportunity to reinforce this learning for the whole class. There are also times when teaching could have more pace so that more is achieved. Marking is generally helpful and work is corrected well, although sometimes, in Year 2, there is too much unfinished work which has not been followed up. The quality of assessment and record keeping is good and this results in well targeted group work and lessons which extend pupils of all abilities. Homework, particularly in the form of taking reading books home or learning spellings is used appropriately to reinforce learning.
86. There is much too little daily teaching of word level work in literacy hours. Word level work is often taught appropriately in the group work part of the hour to lower attaining pupils, but frequently it receives too little or no attention in the first half an hour whole class part. This is a significant missed opportunity and is directly linked

to the low level of skills which many pupils display in this area of their work. It is this aspect of teaching that prevents the overall judgement for English teaching from being good.

87. Pupils respond well to literacy hours. They are used to the structure and are able to sustain concentration well and stay on task. They are enthusiastic, relationships are positive and they are able to show independence and to collaborate and work well together.
88. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their English skills across the curriculum. In particular they write in subjects such as history, science and topic work. Pupils write for a variety of purposes and with an increasing awareness of audience. For example they write letters, diaries, imaginative stories, storyboards and information. There are some lessons where pupils are given longer time for extended writing. The quality of teaching and learning in these sessions, although satisfactory, is not usually as effective as in literacy hours where more direct teaching takes place and work has a greater pace and clearer objectives.
89. The subject has benefited from effective leadership and management. Pupils work and the quality of teaching and learning has been regularly monitored. The school is aware of its own strengths and weaknesses and plans for improvement. There is currently a new manager for the subject who joined the school a few weeks before the inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

90. Results in mathematics for the three years up to 1998 declined, whereas nationally there was slight improvement over the same period. However, in 1999 there was a slightly greater improvement in the school's results than the improvement made nationally in the subject, and results were average compared to schools nationally and similar schools. Early indications are that the downward trend detected from the school's data and national comparisons has been reversed and standards at the school are rising. Lesson observation during the inspection and a scrutiny of work undertaken during the current school year indicate that attainment for the majority of the current cohort of Year 2 pupils is average. Most pupils are on course to attain standards broadly equivalent, and possibly higher for a significant minority, to those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1 in mathematics.
91. Most pupils in Year 1, are able to count to 100, identify the 5's and 10's and develop their understanding of subtraction as "the difference between" two numbers. They understand "bigger/smaller than" and the more able can provide two digit numbers which are "bigger/smaller than" a given number. The majority of pupils are beginning to understand mathematical symbols for "plus, minus and equal" and read mathematical sentences such as  $22-2=20$ . Some pupils in Year 1 understand odd and even numbers and how to check if they are unsure; other pupils need more practice to develop their understanding of this concept. The majority of pupils in Year 2 know "doubles" and are able to work out "near doubles" by adding or taking one away. They are able to collect and collate their own information making a tally chart to construct a block graph. They make use of information technology to present the results of a survey on recycling more effectively. Lower attaining pupils use the class data to produce simple bar graphs of their homework survey. Pupils of all ability groups are able to interpret the data from the different graphs they have constructed. They engage successfully in measuring tasks, they are able to suggest

suitable units for measuring different parts of the body and the majority make sensible estimates of measurements. They use the correct vocabulary in relation to what is being measured. For example when measuring height, pupils know the correct term is “tall” rather than “big”. Pupils know basic number facts and recognise the operations needed to solving different problems in a variety of practical tasks, such as using money to buy toys in the class toy shop.

92. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good or better in three quarters of all lessons and is never less than satisfactory. Planning takes good account of the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines. Teachers have high expectations and structure tasks well to enable all ability groups to be engaged at an appropriate level. This ensures that pupils are sufficiently challenged and remain motivated to learn. Most lessons maintain a brisk pace and pupils are managed well, resulting in a positive working atmosphere and a good work rate from well behaved pupils. Attitudes and behaviour in mathematics lessons is at least satisfactory and is good in the majority of classes. All pupils enjoy their mathematics work, especially mental, oral and practical work such as measuring and using real money to buy toys. They are encouraged to work collaboratively and independently and therefore pupils work effectively in groups or on their own, concentrating on their tasks without the need for constant teacher intervention.
93. In the best lessons, teachers ensure all pupils are paying appropriate attention and use correct mathematical vocabulary and terminology; they provide good opportunities for pupils to explain their methods and practise what they know. This helps to reinforce learning and gives pupils the opportunity to share methods and learn from each other. Although no unsatisfactory teaching was observed, in a small number of lessons there were missed opportunities to move learning on sufficiently and in line with pupils’ capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs are very well catered for, in particular pupils with impaired hearing who are exceptionally well integrated in all parts of the daily mathematics lesson.
94. The school has implemented the Numeracy Strategy enthusiastically and effectively. At the time of the inspection, the school was one and a half terms into the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. In keeping with this there is a significant emphasis placed on the development of mental calculation skills as well a wide range of work in all areas of mathematics. Pupils undertake a variety of work on shape, space and measures and tackle a range of problems involving handling data and mathematical investigations. Pupils make use of their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas such as clapping out beats in music, calculating class numbers during registration, writing the date on the weather chart and giving dates before and after the date being recorded.
95. The co-ordinator has undergone the appropriate training and is a skilled practitioner in her own class. She has provided training for staff, who have clearly benefited from her expertise. This has been recognised by the Local Education Authority, and she also provides training for other teachers in the Authority. The co-ordinator has ensured a good pace for the development of the subject; she monitors teaching and learning through classroom observation and provides demonstration lessons to develop teachers’ skills and confidence. Funding has been appropriately allocated to purchase additional resources to support the numeracy strategy. The subject now has good resources.

## **SCIENCE**

96. In 1999 tests, attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 was broadly in line both with the national average and average from similar schools. Boys and girls achieved similar standards. Teacher assessments for 1999 show that standards in Experimental and Investigative Science and Life Processes and Living things are above those in the other attainment targets.
97. Inspection evidence reflects this picture, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils can explain that sound gets fainter with distance from the source and that there are many different sources and kinds of sounds. Pupils are starting to explain what they think might happen in experimental work and make relevant observations and measurements.
98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and there are some examples of very good practice. In the best lessons enthusiastic presentation and good use of questioning maintains the pace of the lesson and keeps the pupils on task. Clear explanations make the science interesting and relevant to the pupils. Teachers are flexible in responding to the inputs made by the pupils and this encourages the pupils to take responsibility for their learning. Activities are well planned to give the pupils a range of experiences but are sometimes pitched at a level that is too high for their ability. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and the purpose of activities is now shared regularly with the pupils so that they understand more clearly what they are learning.
99. Where the level of work is appropriate to the pupils, they work at a good pace and their skills develop through the activities. For example, in a lesson on measurement, numeracy skills are developed in a scientific context. Pupils are keen to show their work to other pupils and can discuss what they have found out. Pupils behave well in science sessions. Their positive attitude to the lessons, obvious enjoyment and good humour creates a good working atmosphere. They work well together and support less able or inexperienced members of the group. There is only a small amount of unfocussed activity where pupils do not engage with their work.
100. The organisation of the science curriculum and schemes of work ensures progression across the school. Science makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils are taught to treat living things and the environment with care and sensitivity. This is particularly encouraged by the development of the school grounds as a learning environment. Here, pupils gain first hand experience of looking after their own plants and an understanding of the importance of caring for the local area.
101. A science portfolio of pupil's work is being developed to provide comparative samples of work against which teachers compare their own assessments. These developments will further improve the accuracy of teacher assessments and its use to inform lesson planning.
102. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for science and is making a positive impact. Subject development planning gives a clear direction to take the subject forward. Monitoring procedures are not yet fully in place although the subject development plan indicates that this is a current priority. Resources for science are satisfactory and well matched to the needs of the curriculum.

## **ART**

103. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in art were below expected levels. There was insufficient skill development and coverage of the national curriculum programmes of study for art. The school responded very positively to this and has made very good progress in improving provision for art. As a result, standards in art are now above the expected level.
104. The art curriculum is well planned so that skills are developed progressively, building on what pupils already know and can do. The quality of work across the school is of a good standard. In Reception, children explore different techniques of mark making and then, looking closely at toys, they apply these techniques to draw carefully with chalks. They pay very good attention to line and shading. In Year 1, pupils design and build alien puppets using paper and paste lamination which they then decorate in individual, colourful and effective ways. They then make landscapes for their models so that they can reinforce and build on the techniques and skills they have developed. By Year 2, pupils can make good quality close observational drawings of the parts of plants. They describe what they see and build on their drawing skills to produce high quality end products.
105. Pupils work in a wide range of media, for example using pencil, water colour painting, collage, print making, weaving, oil pastels and clay. They explore warm and cold colour themes. They work in sketch books so that they can experiment with techniques and look back to see how particular effects are achieved, and to make choices. There is often a purpose to their work, for example when making a colourful tapestry for the Millennium Dome.
106. Pupils enjoy their art. They are enthusiastic and behave well in lessons. They have well-established working habits and a good work rate. They have good relationships and show respect for each others' feelings. They collaborate well with one another and are confident in what they do. Pupils of all abilities are fully involved in art.
107. Teaching is good and can be excellent. Planning has clear objectives and resources are always well chosen and readily to hand. Teachers questioning and demonstrations lead to enhanced learning. There is a good emphasis on the development of skills. Teachers have good subject knowledge and expectations are high and this in turn encourages pupils to have high standards for themselves. For example, a reception child, who is already drawing with a high level of skill for his age, is encouraged by a teacher to achieve still better results using a charcoal pencil on top of a white chalk drawing to capture the light he has noticed in a teddy bear's eye. The result is a much enhanced end product. Classroom assistants and volunteer parents are used effectively and give good support, whilst not hindering pupils' independence. This makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved.
108. The subject manager for art is knowledgeable and committed. Staff have worked well collectively to produce updated long term plans so that art takes place in taught, blocked units, and skill development is carefully planned. Teachers' planning is monitored and teachers receive feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of this, which helps to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Inservice training has been provided to support areas for development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

109. Only two design and technology lessons were observed, both lessons in reception classes. However, from the work that was on display, scrutiny of pupils' books and

discussions with pupils, teachers and the subject co-ordinator, there is evidence that pupils achieve good standards in reception and Year 1. The school could not provide evidence of design planning in Year 2 and only very limited photographic evidence of design and technology work in this year group has been kept. The overall standard of work seen is good. From the evidence gathered during observations and scrutiny of pupils' work in reception and Year 1, standards in planning and evaluating have improved since the last inspection. Staff are aware that it would be sensible to ensure that more evidence of designing, making and evaluating is kept, particularly in Year 2.

110. In Year 1, pupils draw design plans for "a robot that brings the cows into the shed", "a cow machine - the milk comes from the machine to the bucket", "a wool machine - the sheep puts his head in the machine and a machine comes up and cuts off the wool". A display of "Aliens" made from papier mache and other recyclable materials and objects are attractive examples of pupils' ability to shape, assemble and rearrange materials, objects and components. A discussion with pupils revealed their ability to evaluate the artefacts they had made and how they would change things to make them look differently or ensure components would be fastened more securely. During the autumn term, pupils work with clay and model "Divas" for the celebration of the Hindu festival of "Divali". They make "Rama" and "Sita" stick puppets.
111. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the lessons seen was good. Pupils are interested and respond well to teachers' questions and directions. They offer their own ideas and make appropriate suggestions on how to improve on their design suggestions. They evaluate their completed designs with confidence, explaining how they made the house for "Polly Pig" and how they would improve upon it by making it bigger and more comfortable for "Polly". Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make effective use of resources and support staff and provide clear explanations which pupils can understand. They maintain a brisk pace ensuring all groups in the class have an opportunity to engage in the activities. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and this results in good standards of both. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported to ensure they fulfil their potential and experience a successful outcome.
112. Leadership in the subject is sound. There is a policy and an interim scheme of work in place for the subject that ensures steady development in key skills. The co-ordinator plans to review the current scheme of work and incorporate new curriculum developments more fully. Teachers assess pupils' learning at the end of a teaching block and keep a record of skills taught and learned. The co-ordinator has identified appropriate areas for development, in particular food technology. This aspect cannot be taught at present because the school lacks the appropriate space to enable lessons to take place hygienically and safely. A second priority will be the development of a portfolio of pupils' work in design and technology, with examples of pupils' work in planning, designing, making and evaluating. With the exception of food technology, there is a good range of resources for the subject, which is well organised and stored.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

113. During the period of the inspection it was only possible to observe two lessons, both in Year 1. The judgements made are based on evidence from these two lessons, from talking to the subject manager, other teachers and pupils and from looking at

teachers' planning documents as well as at pupils' work. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are in line with national expectations. This level of attainment is similar to that recorded in the last inspection report. Pupils gain an understanding of themselves and their immediate environment by using the school, its grounds and the immediate area of Fratton. They collaborate to produce good quality three dimensional model maps. They begin to make comparisons and contrasts between where they live and other places. They have a good understanding of the rain forests and the importance of caring for the environment. They acquire good mapping skills and when drawing maps they all know that different features can be represented by symbols. Many also produce a key that explains their chosen symbols to the reader.

114. In the observed lessons, the quality of teaching and learning was either good or very good. The purpose of the lesson, as well as the expectations for the pupils, is clearly explained so that all pupils know and understand what they are about to learn and what they have to do. This helps to give a purpose to their learning and to focus their attention. The pace is brisk and the pupils respond positively to the challenge in the tasks by producing good quality work. Overall the relationship of the pupils with one another is good and they work co-operatively together. Relationships between pupils and adults are also good. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons and the quality of support they receive from both teachers and learning support staff is very good. From looking at teachers planning it is judged that all lessons are prepared thoroughly and have clear learning intentions. There is evidence of good resources being used and that teachers produce some high quality visual learning aids themselves, to support learning. Good use is made of the school and its grounds, the immediate area of Fratton and visits to places in the region to provide field work opportunities and first hand experience for the pupils.
115. Teachers use the nationally produced scheme of work for geography effectively and have successfully adapted it to meet the demands of the school's overall topic plan. The subject manager has sound knowledge and experience of teaching geography at this key stage and effectively provides support for colleagues with planning and resources. At present her expertise is not used sufficiently to monitor teaching and learning to ensure that there is a steady and progressive development of, in particular, enquiry skills and thereby impact on raising the standards of attainment, for each cohort of pupils. Effective use is made of displays in both classrooms and in the public areas of school to celebrate pupils' achievements in geography and to enhance learning of current themes.
116. Overall the school has sufficient resources of good quality for teaching the subject, except in the area of information technology software. The co-ordinator is aware of this fact and plans to deal with it as the programme for developing this throughout the school is implemented.

## **HISTORY**

117. At the end of Key Stage 1 the standards of attainment for the majority of pupils is in line with the national expectation for their age. However there is a large number for whom attainment is above the expected level and therefore overall attainment is above average. This is an improvement from the last inspection.
118. Pupils develop an understanding of time through simple sequencing of events and

from noting changes in their own life. They listen to stories of people and events from the past and then use their understanding of chronology to place objects or photographs in a sequence they can justify. By using an increasing number of sources of evidence pupils learn about life, for example, in Victorian Times. Most can identify different ways of representing the same event and some understand that there can be different interpretations of events.

119. The teaching and learning is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. All lessons are well planned, have clear learning objectives and are well resourced which helps bring the subject to life. Where teaching and learning is most successful teachers have sound knowledge of the subject, the learning objectives are shared with the pupils who know what they are expected to do, the pace is brisk and activities are designed to challenge pupils who respond appropriately by producing good quality work. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils look at photographs and pose questions that are then recorded. After listening to two accounts of the life of Florence Nightingale, pupils are able to answer their questions with good understanding. Where teaching is less successful, although the learning objective is shared tasks are not adequately explained so that pupils are unsure of what is expected of them. The pace is slower and at times not all pupils are involved. Some tasks either do not provide sufficient challenge or go on for too long with the result that some pupils lose concentration and drift off-task.
120. Pupils' attitudes to learning in history are very good. They are interested in the subject and respond positively to the enthusiasm of their teachers and the learning support staff. Relationships with one another and with adults are very good. They work collaboratively to produce good quality results and share resources well. Behaviour is good overall. All pupils have equal access to the learning objectives and teachers use sound strategies, such as additional support or amending tasks and the amount of resources, to help those pupils with special educational needs, including the most able and those from the hearing impaired unit.
121. The subject manager has sound knowledge and experience of teaching history at this key stage. Her enthusiasm for the subject has been influential in the improvements made since the last inspection. She provides effective support for colleagues in the areas of planning and resources. At present her expertise is not used sufficiently in monitor teaching and learning in history. She is beginning to keep an assessment file that has samples of pupils' work. However this is not systematic enough to ensure the steady and systematic development of skills by each cohort of pupils. Very effective use is made of displays in both classrooms and in the public areas of school to celebrate pupils' achievements in history and to enhance learning of current themes.
122. Overall, the school has sufficient good quality resources for teaching the subject, except in the area of computer software. The co-ordinator is aware of this fact and plans are in place to tackle this as the programme for developing information and communication technology throughout the school is implemented. Quality artefacts are regularly borrowed from the local authority's history centre to enhance learning. Good use is made of visitors to the school, such as the recent visit from a theatre group, and of visits to places in Portsmouth and the region. This provides opportunities for pupils to engage with first hand sources of historical evidence, and helps to bring the subject alive.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

123. Observation of pupils working on computers, discussions with pupils, teacher's planning and pupils' past work indicates that overall, the attainment of the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with that expected nationally. There has been satisfactory improvement in information technology since the last inspection.
124. Pupils develop good keyboard skills and mouse control at an early age. They are able to use the computer independently in a range of activities. For example, they develop numeracy skills through number recognition programmes. Children in the reception classes are able to create drawings on the screen using an appropriate drawing package. By Year 2, pupils type in text confidently and use the computer as an important tool in the development of reading and phonic skills during literacy activities. They are also able to produce and use bar graphs to display data that they have gathered themselves.
125. Teaching of information technology is satisfactory. The use of information technology is well integrated into daily planning and this ensures equality of access for the pupils. As a result, pupils throughout the school are enthusiastic about using computers. Their attitudes are positive and they are well motivated and use the computers confidently. The activities are planned to support work in other areas of the curriculum and make an effective contribution to developing skills areas such as literacy. Some subjects, such as history, geography and mathematics would benefit from more software. Teachers have a good understanding of the pupils' levels of expertise and use that to ensure the use of the computer is appropriate to the pupil. Pupils are equally focused on the work when in pairs or working alone. Teaching has improved since the last inspection as the purpose of the activities are now shared with the pupils and work is now effectively followed up when groups move to other activities.
126. The subject managers for information technology give a good lead to development of the subject across the school. An audit has been carried out of the available software and hardware as well as the individual teacher's training needs. Results of this audit have contributed to the subject development planning and the school is working towards implementation of the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) in 2000/2001. At present there is no monitoring and support for teaching and curriculum development in this subject. The subject development plan indicates that this is a priority for this year it will and will focus on learning objectives for information and communications technology in a range of subject areas.
127. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work covers the requirements of the curriculum and ensures progression in development of information technology skills across the school. The scheme of work makes appropriate links with the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and the school is planning to assemble a portfolio of pupils' work illustrating the appropriate levels.
128. There is too little use of information technology systems to sense physical data or to use this to control events. At the time of the inspection, the school ratio of computers to pupils remains below the national average. However, significant developments are planned for the near future and it is intended that these will be in place by the time the school joins the National Grid for Learning.

## **MUSIC**

129. Standards in music have improved since the last inspection and are now above national expectations by the end of the Key Stage.
130. The standard of singing is good. Pupils sing a good range of unison songs well. They show an increasing awareness of tone and expression. Most singing is in tune and they pay attention to dynamics, singing loudly and softly. This is an aspect which could usefully be developed even further. Pupils have a very well developed sense of pulse and rhythm. They are encouraged to show this by body movements and “feel” the pulse in what they are listening to or singing.
131. From an early age pupils develop good listening habits. They identify instruments by sound and learn to copy the rhythms they hear. Pupils in Year 1 compose and perform a music score to accompany a story. They follow symbols on this score, written in the previous lesson, and play instruments only at the allotted times and in the way intended. They pay attention choosing the right instruments for a given effect, and pay some attention to changes in dynamic. Composition work has improved since the last inspection. However, too little attention is paid, in this type of work, to the quality of the sound produced and developing an appreciation for the magical or spiritual and emotional quality of sounds and music. All areas of the music curriculum are covered although there is still less emphasis given to listening appraising than the other areas. More overt links between listening and appraising and composing could be made, so that pupils learn to recognise techniques or effects in a piece and then apply them in their own compositions.
132. Overall the quality of music teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, build on previous work and this helps develop skills systematically. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use the correct names for instruments and have a confident delivery. In particular the energetic and enthusiastic teaching of singing, with a strong emphasis on pulse, is a key factor in the standards attained. However, the policy of large year group sessions for singing does not allow for engaging pupils in discussion about the quality of their work and how it might be improved. The curriculum is enhanced by visits from live musicians, participation in the local music festival and the choir and recorder clubs. Usually teachers’ management of pupils is effective, and pupils generally behave well in music and have good attitudes. However, in whole school hymn practice there is too high a level of off task chatter, which is not corrected and gets in the way of improving the quality of performance. This is closely linked with the teaching, as at no time were the pupils clearly and unambiguously told to stop talking and listen. A similar comment was noted in the previous inspection report and is this is therefore an issue which has not been sufficiently addressed.
133. The subject manager for music is very committed and hard working. She has been successful in keeping up the profile of music. Several teachers have attended inservice training in music this year. There has been little opportunity for monitoring music lessons.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

134. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is average and most pupils in Year 2 work at a standard that meets end of Key Stage National Curriculum requirements. There are a few pupils who achieve below this level and a number who are working at a higher level. Standards are also sound in Year 1. This level of attainment is similar to that recorded in the last inspection report.

135. Children are able to move in a variety of ways knowing and using various parts of their bodies. The catch and throw with increasing accuracy. They move in different ways with increasing confidence they can perform simple gymnastic sequences and improve their performance by practice. In games they learn to control a ball with increasing confidence by using either their feet or a hockey stick. All pupils know and understand basic health and safety when handling apparatus and equipment.
136. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. All teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and use resources well. Learning objectives are clearly identified and generally teachers' knowledge is sound. Where teaching is best, the pupils understand the learning objectives and know what is expected of them at each stage within the lesson. The pace of the lesson and the balance between tasks is good. For example, in reception gymnastics pupils are kept working constantly, first on the floor and then on the apparatus. Some activities demand high levels of physical exertion while others give time for rest, thoughts about movements and how they might be improved. Effective use is also made of links with other subjects such as speaking and listening and opportunities for pupils to use their understanding of numbers. In such lessons, pupils respond well and produce high quality work. Where teaching is less successful, pupils tend to be working for too long on tasks which lack enough physical challenge or are insufficiently encouraged to produce high quality in their movements and actions.
137. Pupils are generally interested and well motivated in physical education lessons. Relationships between one another and with all adults are positive. They generally behave well and the only examples of off-task behaviour observed were when the pace of the lesson was slow or the level of challenge either from the task or from the teacher was insufficiently undemanding for them to remain focused. All pupils are included effectively and where necessary learning support assistants join the session and the support for individual pupils is good. In some lessons the support assistants work with groups of pupils most effectively and this has an impact on raising attainment.
138. The documentation for the subject is thorough and helpful to teachers. The scheme of work is a useful aid for both medium and short term planning. The areas of gymnastics, games and dance mean the national curriculum requirements for the key stage is fully met. The time allocation of one hour per week is barely enough for Key Stage 1 pupils and the various ways the time is used is inconsistent across the school. The subject manager has sound knowledge and experience of teaching physical education at this key stage and provides effective support for colleagues with planning and resources. At present her expertise is not used sufficiently to monitor teaching and learning to ensure that there is systematic skill development for each cohort of pupils and this affects standards of attainment. The current reception year show a high level of skill development, it will be important that activities in the future are pitched at an appropriate level to ensure they are stretched and challenged.
139. Overall the school has good quality and sufficient resources for teaching the subject. The rolling programme of replacing floor mats is sensible. The gymnastic tables are also old and heavy for infant age pupils. The co-ordinator is aware of this fact and plans to include it as an aspect of the subject development plan. Good use is made of the school hall and the playground to support the teaching programme.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

140. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment are good. Learning meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus well. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding about the things they have learned. They are quick to reflect on their current learning about Ramadan and Eid. They discuss fasting and their own responses to this. Pupils understand that there are different religions and religious practices. They are able to pick out specific Muslim facts from the story of the "Hundredth Name". They know that Alla means God and understand about the symbolisms related to the Muslim religion such as the use of the prayer mat. Pupils' understanding is above average for their age. They explain how the characters in the story might feel through the use of prayer: "I think he will feel closer to God". They suggest suitable places for prayer and can explain why this might be a good place. For example, "I think he likes to pray by the lake and moonlight, because it is peaceful and quiet". They listen attentively to the Vicar enthusiastically telling the Old Testament story of Joseph and the theme of jealousy within the family. They reflect on the story and relate it to their own experiences with brothers and sisters. Younger pupils explore feelings of loss and joy after listening to the story of "Dogger". They discuss the feelings of characters in the story and relate this successfully to their own life experiences, "I have Polly and Dolly, if I lose one I still have the other one, but if I lost both I would be very sad". Pupils have a sense of rules and values. These are discussed as part of their experiences during circle time, assemblies and story times and are consistently reinforced in a positive manner.
141. The quality of teaching is good in nearly all lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge to teach the content of the scheme of work with a confidence and enthusiasm that encourages pupils to learn. Teachers successfully challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their knowledge and understanding through questioning and discussion. This results in good standards of attainment and understanding. Pupils respond very positively. They are sensitive to the feelings of others and identify with the joy and sadness experienced by characters in stories. They express a sense of awe and wonder while watching the flame of a candle during reflection time. Teaching of religious education has improved considerably since the last inspection.
142. The co-ordinator is new to the post but has rapidly come to terms with the school's strengths and weaknesses. The leadership given by the co-ordinator is good. She has reviewed the school policy that is based on the new local syllabus and arranged for the training of teaching and support staff. Strategies for assessment of attainment in the subject are identified in the scheme but are not as yet applied with enough rigour. The co-ordinator monitors the work of her colleagues through looking at planning and informal discussion. New resources have been purchased to support the work in the classroom and the co-ordinator makes a bid for additional resources each year. The co-ordinator has identified appropriate action points and priorities for future development. These are to include monitoring through classroom observation and the development of a school portfolio for religious education.