

INSPECTION REPORT

WOOTEY JUNIOR SCHOOL

Wooteys Way, Alton, Hampshire

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116037

Headteacher: Mrs Jennifer Knapp

**Reporting inspector: Catherine Stokes
18173**

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th June 2001

Inspection number: 192317

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wooteys Way Alton Hampshire
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Appropriate authority:	Hampshire
Name of chair of governors:	Mr James Mckell
Date of previous inspection:	03/03/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11227	John Moles	Team inspector	English, Information Technology, Equal Opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
30932	Rob Ratcliff	Team inspector	History, Music, Physical Education, Special Educational Needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
13164	Pauline Allen	Team inspector	Science, Design & Technology, Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wootey Junior School is on the outskirts of the small Hampshire town of Alton. It caters for children from estates of both local authority and mixed renter/owner occupied houses and flats. The school is medium sized, with 225 boys and girls 7 – 11 years old and two classes in each year group. Most of the pupils also attended the infant school that is on the same site. When they moved to the junior school they were reading and writing at a level typical of that found nationally but were below average in mathematics. 1999 was exceptional, as in that year, the attainment of pupils as they entered the junior school was above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. A higher than average proportion, 56 pupils, have special educational needs, none has a statement of their needs. Very few children come from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language. The proportion entitled to free school meals, about a tenth of the children, is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Wootey Junior School is highly effective. The very good teaching ensures that by the age of 11, pupils have achieved well and many of them reach better than expected standards. The systematically planned curriculum gives richness and depth. Staff and governors are fully committed to meeting the needs of all pupils and successfully ensure that all have the opportunity to learn. The headteacher, deputy and staff have a rigorous approach to improvement: leadership by the headteacher is outstanding.

What the school does well

- The very effective partnership between the head and deputy has concentrated on raising standards.
- The very high standard of teaching leads to high achievement by the pupils.
- Teachers provide rich learning experiences that children enjoy.
- The school knows its pupils very well and enables them all to achieve.
- The school continually tries to improve.
- It values and involves the infant school and the local community.

What could be improved

- Writing standards, by giving pupils the confidence and skills to evaluate and improve their own work.
- Coverage of the National Curriculum in information and communications technology (ICT).

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 1997. It focused on raising standards with a very thorough, strategic development plan and has improved very rapidly. Teaching has improved and the programmes of study have been revised to ensure pupils make progress from year to year. Standards have risen: in mathematics, where in 1997 very few pupils achieved higher than average standards, by 2000 the proportion was well above the national average.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	B	B	B
mathematics	C	A	A	A
science	B	A	B	A

Key

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

These results show that the school has successfully improved its results over the last three years, particularly in mathematics where children enter the school below the expected standards and, by 11, achieve well above average standards. The improvement trend for English, mathematics and science together, was broadly in line with the national trend over the last five years. The school sets challenging targets and is on course to meet them: it met its targets last year. In the work seen during inspection, reading standards were good and those in writing satisfactory. In mathematics and science standards were well above average. In design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education, pupils achieve well. In other subjects they have satisfactory achievements except in the control and monitoring aspects of ICT where they lack experience.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children are very enthusiastic, enjoy school life and are eager to learn. There is scope for them to be more involved in planning, organising, evaluating and improving their own work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well, creating a calm atmosphere in the school. They have contributed to the school's work in preventing bullying.
Personal development and relationships	Children get on well together. They show initiative and can be trusted to take on responsibility: some act as monitors and others represent their class at the School Council.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Some children miss school when their families take annual holidays during term time.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations teachers have for their behaviour. The very secure relationships pupils have with staff and with other children, mean that in group work they are able to co-operate and concentrate with no time wasted.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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.

Teachers provide demanding activities that stretch pupils successfully. Because they know their pupils well, the work is pitched at just the right level, meeting the needs of them all. Teachers also know their subjects well and use this expertise to question pupils skilfully, leading them to deepen their understanding and skills. The teaching in English and in mathematics is very good. The school has recently been awarded a Quality Mark for its very systematic work in teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy: this initiative was led by the deputy headteacher. During the inspection, no teaching was less than satisfactory, half the lessons were good and another quarter were very good: one lesson was excellently taught.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is carefully planned to cover all aspects of learning in an interesting way to meet the stage of development of every pupil. The demands made on pupils increase progressively from year to year.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Targets set for pupils are closely matched to their needs and their progress is monitored effectively. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school supports its bilingual pupils well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal development is of a high standard. It is systematically planned and there is a positive emphasis on praise and raising pupils' self-esteem.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school looks after its pupils very well. Teachers have very good knowledge of their pupils and work hard to support them.

The school has good relationships with its parents who are particularly supportive of the school when their own children are involved. Parents receive very good quality information, particularly about their children's progress, because the school has very systematic procedures for checking and recording what pupils have been learning and their personal and social development. Teachers use this information to report to parents, to adjust the programmes of study and to take action if children need additional help with their work. The school knows its pupils very well and works hard to include them all. The school is not yet covering the full programme of study for ICT.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The excellent welcoming, organised, hardworking and rewarding ethos created by the management team and supported by the whole school community, strongly supports learning. All teachers are involved in the very effective management teams as they work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors support the headteacher's vision for the school and work well in providing support to achieve it. They have a very clear picture of the strength and weaknesses of the school and the plans for its further improvement. They attend training and some governors are in school every week, establishing friendly, working relationships with staff, and gaining a clear picture of how things are going.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has established a rigorous programme of self-evaluation. It analyses test data thoroughly and observes teaching regularly. The ambitious monitoring programme involves all staff in taking responsibility for identifying and carrying through improvements.
The strategic use of resources	There is good financial control and money is targeted on the priority areas.

Money has been spent wisely to achieve the best value. The spacious buildings and grounds are maintained in good repair and the school is well staffed and equipped. The many strengths in leadership and management include; setting a clear educational direction, strategically planning how to get there, and creating a school where the aims are fostered throughout its work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress children make. • The good teaching. • They feel comfortable about asking the school questions or discussing problems with them. • That the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • That the school helps children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • Closer working with parents. • The range of extra-curricular activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with all the positive comments made by parents. The inspection team found that the amount of homework set by the school is appropriate to the needs of the pupils, is suitably adjusted for individual children's circumstances and that it matches the national guidelines. The range of activities outside lessons is very good; the school looks at pupils' interests and aptitudes when planning extra-curricular activities. It has an open door policy and does all it can to improve its partnership with parents. Some parents report that they have difficulty in finding the time to respond and work with the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of the 2000 national tests for 11 year olds in English show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was above the national average and above the standard attained by schools in a similar context. In mathematics it was well above both the national average and the standard attained by schools in a similar context. In science it was above the national average and well above that attained by schools in a similar context. The proportion of pupils reaching higher than expected levels was close to the average in English and well above the average in mathematics and science.

2. Results in the national tests over the last three years, based upon analysis of the average levels reached by pupils, show that attainment in all three subjects exceeded the national average. Over the same period boys have outperformed girls in mathematics and science, in English their performance has been broadly equal. The school has set realistic and challenging targets for improvement in English and mathematics and is addressing the different performance of girls in science. The school is making good progress towards achieving these targets. Over the last five years there has been a steadily rising trend in national averages, the school's results over this time have matched that rising trend.

3. The pupils enter the school with broadly average standards, except in mathematics where they are below average. As a result of very good teaching they make rapid progress. Pupils leave the school with above average standards in most subjects. Inspection evidence indicates that the proportion of pupils in Year 6 attaining standards expected for their age is above average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science. Standards in literacy and numeracy are also above average. The standards achieved by 11 year olds in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education are above those typically expected for age. In all other subjects they are as expected except in two programmes of study in information and communication technology where they are below.

4. In English, 11 year olds attain above nationally expected standards in speaking and listening, and reading; standards are in line with expectations in writing. Higher attaining pupils are able to design well thought out questionnaires and use a wide range of vocabulary to question speakers. All pupils are willing to engage in discussion and debate and listen attentively, enabling them to respond appropriately to questions and take in what they are taught. A significant element of pupils' speaking is their ability to draw on information they have learned previously and make links between the topic currently under discussion and that previous knowledge. Standards in reading are above average. The majority of pupils read competently and with understanding and they access information quickly using classification systems. Although the oldest pupils attain above average standards overall, in writing, their ability to draft work and make decisions about how written work may best be set out, are underdeveloped. This contributes to the only average proportion of pupils

attaining higher levels in national English tests when compared with the above average attainment at the expected level.

5. In mathematics, 11 year old pupils work competently with large numbers and can compute accurately. They are confident in applying their mathematical knowledge to real-life problems. They are quick to convert from fractions to decimals to percentages, can measure accurately, and are skilled at using and interpreting charts and diagrams.

6. In science, pupils attainment is well above average by the time they leave the school. A particular strength is their understanding of how to set up and conduct scientific investigation. The high standards attained throughout the school result from the high level of teachers' knowledge; teachers are able to challenge pupils' understanding very well. Teachers make very good use of resources to enable pupils to carry out well-structured investigations to secure the understanding of concepts being taught.

7. Pupils make good progress in their literacy skills and very good progress in numeracy skills during their time in the school. The progress they make in individual lessons is often good and sometimes very good. Opportunities to practise what they have been taught in literacy and numeracy in other subjects of the curriculum are satisfactory. Given the confident, competent nature of the pupils in these areas, these opportunities could be developed further. All teachers provide pupils with frequent opportunities for challenging discussions that contribute well to their progress in speaking and listening. These skills are then used well to develop interview techniques, engage in debates and demonstrate understanding of a story through drama. For example acting out the significant features of a story in religious education. Pupils are now ready to apply their considerable knowledge of mathematics and writing in other areas of the curriculum more consistently.

8. By the time they leave the school, pupils standards in most programmes of study in information and communication technology are in line with those expected for this age group. In control and monitoring technology they are below expectation because too little time is given to control technology and none to monitoring; a weakness in the overall standards. Teachers have adequate expertise and confidence in the programmes of study that are offered. Pupils make sufficient progress in their manipulation of computers and keyboard skills in English but their use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is not sufficiently well developed. Good use is made of this technology to support pupils with special educational needs.

9. In religious education 11 year olds attain standards above those expected for their age in the locally agreed syllabus. A strength is the range of methods used to teach the agreed syllabus. Interviews, drama, story telling, note taking and analysis of religious texts all form part of the rich pattern of learning. This rich diet is well supported by a good range of resources and a very well structured scheme of work and resource packs to match each aspect to be covered. The development of pupils' respect for the beliefs and values of others is a great strength in the attitudes the school promotes.

10. In art and design, pupils reach the expected standards. They have a good grasp of techniques, are able to observe well and show maturity in evaluating their work. In geography, pupils make good progress in their understanding of the use and drawing, of maps. Teachers offer a depth and breadth of content within topics that make them relevant to the pupils and result in good learning. Pupils develop historical skills well as they move through the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and this encourages them to recall facts well. Teachers encourage debate and discussion and pupils talk knowledgeably about whether there is evidence for a statement made or whether it is opinion. This results in above average attainment by the age of 11. Standards overall in music are in line with those expected. Strengths are in instrumental work and pupils' ability to compose and perform pieces. This is particularly evident amongst older pupils. In physical education, standards are above those expected for pupils of this age and progress through the school is good. This is the result of good leadership and management of the subject. The scheme of work for dance focuses on the careful and sequential development of skills. Dance is a particular strength of the school.

11. In other subjects, pupils make very good progress in science and good progress in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education. In all other subjects they make satisfactory progress. Pupils build well on their skills as they move through the school.

12. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the school's well planned and managed provision. Their individual education plans are very detailed and used effectively by teachers and support staff. The most able pupils achieve well and make the progress they should, because teachers plan challenging work for them in class and the school provides extra opportunities for them to work with pupils from other classes and schools.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are enthusiastic and enjoy school life. Parents support the attitudes and values that school promotes and say their children enjoy coming to school.

14. Enjoyment and enthusiasm were a feature of many lessons and extra-curricular activities; for example, with Year 3 pupils absorbed in a music lesson, when Year 4 pupils were engaged with mental maths work, in a dance lesson about volcanoes for Year 5, a local area study in Year 6 and a girls' football club at lunchtime.

15. Pupils settle quickly during registration sessions and lessons begin promptly. Their interest and involvement in activities is very good and most lessons were challenging for all pupils. In science, Year 6 pupils showed high levels of perseverance, excitement and interest when carrying out an investigation in the school grounds. In a Year 4 assembly, the pupils were deeply involved in their presentation, while a design and technology lesson for the same year group challenged and interested pupils through well-structured opportunities for independent learning.

16. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons, around school and in the playing area. They get on well together and there was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour of any kind. The active school council has made a thoughtful contribution to the anti-bullying policy and has drawn up guidelines for behaviour at lunchtimes that support the school's behaviour policy. Children were seen playing sensibly and peacefully at break times, and even the odd minor dispute over the ownership of marbles was rapidly resolved! Relationships are very good and pupils are courteous and polite to all school staff and visitors. Teaching assistants are shown the same respect as class teachers and there were many examples of a positive response to visitors from all pupils. Prompts for promoting positive behaviour are displayed in classrooms and teachers generally use these effectively both to praise good behaviour and as a reference when, occasionally, children do not listen carefully. There have been no exclusions.

17. Pupils work well together and willingly take on responsibility. The school council representatives take their duties seriously and act within a written constitution that they have helped to formulate. They meet regularly and lead discussions with their peers, who have democratically elected them. Monitors set out equipment and resources safely and sensibly at the beginning of physical education lessons. Some help out at lunchtimes with the distribution of packed lunch boxes.

18. Pupils take a leading role in presenting and delivering their class assemblies, demonstrating both responsibility and pride in their achievements. They co-operate well in lessons, helping each other in group work and sharing and extending ideas. Peer support by the most able pupils was a very successful aspect of a Year 6 science lesson. In a Year 4 religious education lesson on the story of the transfiguration, paired discussions helped children to clarify their thoughts. Collaborative drama activities and group projects in Year 6 provide significant opportunities for pupils to take account of each others' feelings and opinions.

19. The level of attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absences are low, showing that parents understand the need to inform the school of the reason for their child's absence. A number of pupils miss some schooling because their parents take them away for holidays during the school term.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The highly inclusive and very high quality teaching is the main reason that pupils make rapid progress in their junior years and successfully achieve standards that are well above those in similar schools in mathematics and science, and good in most subjects. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. The staff enjoy teaching and plan experiences to make learning challenging and exciting. The pupils respond to this with enthusiasm and their willingness to work hard is evident in all classes.

21. Underpinning this high quality of teaching is the teachers' acceptance of a rigorous culture of self-evaluation where they examine their own and each other's work; identify training needs and work to hone their techniques. Questioning skills was one area teachers worked on and, throughout the school, teachers are very good questioners. They use speculative questions to draw pupils into discussion or questions that check whether pupils have understood. When pupils in Year 6 were looking at photographs of Alton the teacher questioned pupils to encourage closer

observation and increase the quality of reasoning as they puzzled over changes in the town. Teachers target their questions to include all pupils so they learn to concentrate and think throughout the lesson.

22. Teachers successfully convey their own enthusiasms and personal responses to encourage pupils' interest, imagination and empathy. One teacher, recalling his emotions as he missed his family and friends when travelling for a year, skilfully led pupils to understand the disciples' feelings of loss when Jesus ascended into heaven and the strength they gained from the Holy Spirit. Others enthuse children about science so that, for many pupils, science is a favourite subject. Teachers welcome the involvement of the wider community, from parents who run clubs, occasional visitors with specialised information or expertise to share, to volunteers who read regularly with the children. The pupils are deeply influenced by this support and recognise that the visitors and teachers work hard on their behalf.

23. Pupils are proud of their achievements and what they have learned. They want to try hard for their personal satisfaction and because the teachers help demonstrate the relevance of learning to their adult lives. Encouragement for accuracy in spelling led some Year 5 pupils to write to an author pointing out errors in a novel; others, inspired by a science topic, have encouraged recycling and arranged for collection bins in the school grounds. Pupils have a good knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses and value discussions with their teachers to identify how to improve what they do. They are ready to extend their confidence by taking increased responsibility for checking the progress of their own learning, setting their targets and for redrafting to sharpen their writing.

24. The strengths in teaching are reinforced by teachers' secure subject knowledge across the curriculum so that all can teach well. In information technology, training is underway and teachers' confidence is improving. An exception is in music where an additional part-time teacher is to be employed to support class teachers. Some teachers' have particular expertise, for example, in English, mathematics, science, physical education and religious education: the strength of the arrangements for planning and subject co-ordination increases the impact they have. The newly qualified teacher is well-supported by the team approach and throughout the school, teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly by identifying precise learning objectives, grouping the pupils carefully, varying the activities and deciding how to assess pupils. Their careful assessments ensure that they pitch lessons at the correct level for all pupils, stretching those who need it and giving additional support to others.

25. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and are well-structured to sustain the pupils' interest, though, even in the very good lessons some opportunities were missed at the end of lessons to discuss with pupils what they had learned. Teachers have a positive attitude to discipline that is consistent in each class so pupils know what is expected of them. A common factor in the otherwise satisfactory lessons, was an occasional slowness in strategies to manage the class that affected pupils' enthusiasm and their quality of work.

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

26. The school provides a curriculum that is very good in its range and quality of learning opportunities for all of its pupils. The emphasis placed on the teaching of skills and the development of an enquiring mind in all subjects is very good. The provision for information and communication technology is not, however, as well developed as in the other subjects. There has been much improvement in curriculum planning since the last inspection. This is due to the efficient way that the teachers plan in teams to ensure that there is no longer overlap or duplication of activities. Wherever there are activities based on real links between subjects these are developed successfully. For example, in a history topic links were made with design and technology and art. Pupils constructed banners and employed appliqué techniques to create Tudor Rose symbols. The aims of lessons are clear and appropriate activities support the learning very well. The school's overall programme of themes and topics brings a richness and depth to the planned provision and gives pupils the opportunities to develop their interests and skills to the best of their abilities. The curriculum is carefully planned to cover all aspects, including personal, social and health education in an interesting and appropriate way to meet the stage of development of every pupil.

27. Since the last inspection the step by step development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills has been improved by the effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and good use of national schemes of work for other subjects. The locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education is followed and assemblies meet statutory requirements impressively. Progress across each year and throughout the whole key stage is closely planned and monitored in all subjects and teachers have a clear picture of each pupil's aptitude and development. The pupils know what they have achieved, but as yet, they are not clear as to how they can move forward in their learning.

28. A range of visits and visitors extends the pupils' experiences and these have a positive impact on teaching and learning. There are, for example, frequent outdoor activities within the school grounds and in the locality, to give pupils first hand scientific observation of their environment and to recognise and name the local plants and animals. They study the local facilities and historical changes that have occurred overtime in the area, using maps, photographs and by talking to people. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good and the liaison and support is much valued by everyone. Pupils visit other locations and, through discussion with experts and by using secondary sources, are able to gain a knowledge and understanding of a diverse society.

29. The provision for personal, social and health education, including sex and drugs education is good and suitably integrated into the curriculum. Personal and social education are allocated specific sessions on the timetable. The fire service and police support the learning of health and safety issues very effectively.

30. The provision for extra-curricular activities, including peripatetic music tuition is very good. Pupils are offered opportunities to participate in a wide range of clubs which appeal to their particular interests and abilities, for example a boys' dance club, and a girls' football club. Some clubs are based on an assessment of the pupils talents and aptitudes or positively discriminate in order to give equality of access and opportunity to all pupils. The W.W. Club, an activity club based on the Christian Faith, is particularly successful in raising self-esteem and developing trust between

individuals. The latest initiative, the SHARE project, a Year 3 parent-pupil partnership club, continuing from work started in the infant school, appears to be working well.

31. Provision for special educational needs is good. Pupils have full access to an appropriately balanced curriculum plan. Individual Educational Plans are clear and effectively matched to pupils' abilities. The use of Phonographix reading activities with small groups of pupils, led by well-trained support staff, has enabled the pupils to make significant progress. The systematic analysis of individual pupils has increased teacher's awareness of the aptitudes of the more able pupils and the level of challenge in the planned curriculum meets their needs appropriately.

32. The school cultivates pupils' personal development very well. The provision is systematically planned across the school and embedded successfully within the planned curriculum. Consequently the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. The change in attitudes of the pupils, due to the positive culture of praise and the raising of their self-esteem, has resulted in a significant improvement since the last inspection.

33. Assemblies make a significant contribution to spiritual development, emphasising, for example, the need for support in emotional times. 'Circle times' and prayer are used well in classrooms. Further opportunities are provided for pupils to consider how the values and beliefs of others and themselves affect their lives, within the school's religious education curriculum.

34. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to respect and to co-operate with one another. They are involved with collecting for a number of charities and are actively engaged in environmental projects. There are many opportunities to participate in team games and in club activities. The pupils benefit from the contribution of the W.W. Club by raising self-esteem. This reflects the ethos of the school. Pupils who participate in the School Council develop a keen sense of responsibility and citizenship. They take a strong lead in ensuring that pupils' rights are respected and that rules for recreation time promote a 'no bullying' policy. The school is actively developing systems to promote social skills through co-operative games during lunchtime. National and local initiatives such as a national recycling project and the regional science and technology fair encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own actions.

35. The school has an active approach to enabling pupils to appreciate their own traditions and the diverse richness of other cultures through the planned themes and topics and by using opportunities that arise across the curriculum. Examples are numerous and include pupils recreating Greek pottery in design and technology, singing songs from around the world and finding the places of origin on a map, hearing Hindu stories and writing letters to Friends of the Earth about environmental issues concerning the tropical rainforests.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school has very good procedures to ensure pupils' health, safety and welfare. The school's assessment and monitoring procedures, for all aspects of pupils' development, are very good and effective in supporting and encouraging pupils' learning. The good provision identified in the previous report has been built

on and is now a strength of the school. Teachers know their pupils very well and are fully aware of their strengths and where they need more support. This is evident in the very good reports written annually for parents.

37. The school takes very good care of its pupils. Its arrangements for both child protection and for supporting pupils with specific social needs are very good. There are good links with the relevant outside agencies. The health, safety and welfare of the pupils is well safeguarded through a series of good, thorough policies and procedures, including those for pupils who may require emergency treatment during the school day. Pupils are very well supervised throughout the school day, including by trained supervisors at lunchtime.

38. The school's behaviour policy was drawn up as a result of discussions between staff in an effort to seek consistency and to place more emphasis on the positive. As a result of staff involvement, the policy is good, and successful in raising the standard of behaviour within the school. It is used consistently, with teachers setting high expectations of behaviour. The system of positive reinforcement, including notes sent home, is effective. The pupils are reminded of the school's rules at the start of the year, when they help to draw up classroom rules with their teacher. The school takes a tough line on unacceptable behaviour and has agreed procedures to deal with it. The school council, after undertaking some research, has recently drawn up a supportive anti-bullying leaflet to help everyone deal with this problem, should it arise.

39. The school has very good policies and procedures to assess both pupils' academic performance and their personal development. This shows an improvement since the previous report. The school's policy and procedures have been refined this year with a consistent system in place across the whole school as well as in subjects. There are ongoing progress sheets that identify, in English, mathematics and science, the learning outcomes for each subject. In other subjects assessment is against statements directly related to planning. In both cases it is very easy for teachers to highlight those areas that individual pupils have learnt and what remains to be done. The use of different colours, to highlight comments for each year, enables teachers and the school to identify progress and capability. These assessment records are monitored termly and the information gained is discussed with teachers. Assessment is built into the planning process in all subjects; the results of these assessments are very well used, for example, to re-group pupils within the class, as well as to identify any gaps in learning. The school makes very good use of a full range of standardised national tests in English and mathematics; these include those relating to the school's inclusion in the national literacy pilot scheme. These results are very well analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses within these subjects and for developing plans to address the resultant issues. All assessment results are used well to identify pupils who need extra support. This includes those who are more able, and require provision to extend their learning. Success in all areas of school life is celebrated during assemblies.

40. The school sets targets for pupils in English, mathematics, science and in personal and social education. It is still looking for the best way to use these as it recognises that they are not yet used sufficiently to focus pupils' learning. Currently, pupils know they have targets set for them, but they are not always sure as to what they are. The use of targets by pupils to help them improve is not yet normal practice

within lessons. Targets are not negotiated with the teacher, but they are reviewed by the teacher and pupil together. Although parents are asked to comment on their children's targets and efforts made to achieve them, this has not yet become an activity in which parents are fully involved. The school is aware of the current difficulties regarding targets and intends to review the process of setting and recording them.

41. Attendance is well monitored and promoted. The number of unauthorised absences is low, due to good monitoring by the administrative officer who ascertains the reason for a pupil's absence. There are good procedures for recording the amount of holiday being taken by individual pupils. The school, on written request, will authorise holidays during the term, although this is not encouraged. Any amount over ten days is marked as unauthorised, except in very unusual circumstances.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school works very hard to foster and maintain good relationships with parents. The positive position at the time of the previous inspection has been built on successfully. The very good relationships that exist between this school and the infant school with which it shares a site, ensure that pupils and their parents have a very smooth transition from one to the other; this helps parents to feel confident and well involved from an early stage.

43. The views of the parents, expressed through the questionnaire and the meeting prior to the inspection, are generally positive. Parents positively agree with nearly all the aspects on which their views were sought. However, they raised concerns about the amount of homework set for their children and the range of activities outside the classroom. The amount of homework set is in line with national recommendations and is appropriate to the needs of the pupils. The range of activities outside lessons is very good. Furthermore, the school looks carefully at the talents, interests and needs of the pupils when planning what clubs and activities to offer. A small number of parents consider that the school does not work closely with them; the school runs an open door policy and is willing always to discuss any concerns or problems with parents. They are welcome to discuss their children at regular informal meetings; parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to discuss progress with the special educational needs co-ordinator each term.

44. The information that parents receive is very good. Regular informative letters are sent, by year group, to parents, keeping them up to date with the topics their children are covering and the requirements for homework. Parents receive an annual progress report on their children each year; this is of very good quality. The details contained within these reports show teachers have a very good knowledge of their pupils' strengths, both in their academic learning and in their development as people. The very good recording of assessments, made by teachers, enables them to give very clear details of exactly what pupils are able to do and where there is room for improvement. For the first time, reports were sent out during the spring term; this is to enable the targets set to be tackled and reviewed with the same teacher.

45. The school offers parents a number of occasions at which they can meet staff informally. This includes an invitation to tea and biscuits after the assembly taken on

a rota basis by a different class each week. During the inspection, the impressive presentation put on by one of the Year 4 classes was very well attended by parents. Other opportunities include before and after school when the head makes strenuous efforts to deal with any problems. Individual circumstances dictate that many parents have difficulty in finding time to respond to and work with the school. However, there are several parents who do come in and help. During the inspection, a father's assistance with a group of pupils working on the computer was greatly appreciated by the teacher involved. The school is very well supported by the Parents at Wootey School (PAWS); this association organises both fun and fund raising events that are enjoyed by all. A recent successful innovation to involve parents more in the education of their children is the SHARE project in Year 3; a small group of parents is involved in homework with their children. Many parents provide good support for their children through homework.

46. Parents views are sought in a number of ways that help to keep them informed about the schools plans and gives them an avenue by which they can make comment. The results of these consultations have resulted in some new initiatives such as the establishment of the very well used home schoolbook and the introduction of a termly newsletter. The school has also introduced target books in which pupils note their targets and parents are asked to respond to them. These have not been altogether successful, but the school is seeking ways to improve on this helpful initiative.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher and deputy, with the support of governors, staff and the wider community, have created a purposeful ethos that strongly supports learning. The aim of fostering the highest standards is reflected in the school's everyday life: in the setting of ambitious targets for pupils' attainment; in pupils' positive approach to their work; and in teachers' commitment to improving their teaching skills.

48. There is a very rigorous approach to improvement, that is started by examining the school's performance, comparing it to that of other schools and then setting out the steps to improve it further in a comprehensive development plan. A key aspect has been informing and involving all staff and governors and making sure that they know what is expected of them and how to do it. Teachers work in teams to improve the curriculum, sharing the expertise of the more experienced and establishing a unity of purpose that has led to a rich and highly inclusive curriculum in all year groups. Curriculum leaders report directly to a committee of the governing body and each teacher is also paired with a governor who tries to get to know their work and class. In this way, all governors have the opportunity to find out for themselves how the school is doing. There is a very open approach amongst staff: the senior management team and co-ordinators have an intensive schedule for monitoring teaching and many of the points that arise are shared with the whole teaching team, so all can work on the areas identified. Useful training and discussion help teachers as they trial different strategies; for example, all teachers have guidance about ways to help children who have difficulty in maintaining their attention. Staff and governors have formed a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are able to support the headteacher and deputy well. The effectiveness of the approach can be seen in the high quality of teaching and the rapid rise in standards so that pupils attain well in almost all subjects.

49. The headteacher aims to build a 'learning community', ensuring that all have the opportunity to develop. All pupils have the opportunity to excel, achieved in part by the varied curriculum both inside and outside school and in part by the close partnership with the infant school that is directed towards providing continuity and security for children and to making the most effective use of funding. For example, the two schools are building an outdoor classroom together and have a joint research project aimed at improving children's writing. The school is now planning how best to help pupils take more responsibility for their own learning. Teachers are also encouraged to take initiatives and succeed. The newly qualified teacher settled into the school quickly and felt well supported by her induction programme, and the deputy headteacher, as part of his induction, led a major drive to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills that resulted in the school achieving a Quality Mark award from the Basic Skills Agency.

50. Spending is tightly controlled and directed towards the priority of raising standards, particularly in providing teaching that is targeted to small groups. For example, the 'catch-up' literacy teaching, by skilled support assistants, and the classes to extend the more able mathematicians. The additional sessions that involve withdrawal from class are carefully scheduled and teachers ensure that pupils are kept fully involved in the work of the whole class. The school does not always meet the statutory requirement for an Act of Collective Worship as occasionally, some pupils are withdrawn for activities, for example, meetings of the School Council or additional teaching.

51. Resources for most subjects are good and this supports learning. An illustration of this was a science lesson where children decided for themselves how to separate polystyrene, sand and sugar from water: they chose their own equipment and there was sufficient for all groups to filter, strain and evaporate. In mathematics the equipment helps teachers give clear demonstrations, for example, teaching the use of a calculator with one that can be seen by the whole class on an overhead projector. In ICT there is a shortage of equipment to teach pupils how to control and monitor events so some aspects of the statutory curriculum are not fully covered. The range of books in the non-fiction library needs expanding.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) Improve writing standards by giving pupils the confidence and skills to evaluate and improve their own work.
Paragraphs: 4, 23, and 56.
- (2) Ensure all the National Curriculum programmes of study for information and communication technology are taught.
Paragraphs: 7, 51, 93, and 96.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	25	46	27	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		225
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		56

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	5.0	School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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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 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	37	26	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	34	35
	Girls	21	19	21
	Total	53	53	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (87)	84 (85)	89 (94)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	33	34
	Girls	21	20	22
	Total	52	53	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (89)	84 (91)	89 (96)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	221
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.1
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	103

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	402,108
Total expenditure	406,190
Expenditure per pupil	1,847
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,103
Balance carried forward to next year	10,021

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

195

Number of questionnaires returned

108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	36	55	7	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	54	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	66	5	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	56	19	4	1
The teaching is good.	44	51	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	63	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	40	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	44	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	30	57	11	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	39	55	2	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	60	3	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	55	16	1	9

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

ENGLISH

52. Analysis of the school's 2000 national test results for 11 year olds shows that, compared with all schools including similar schools, standards are above average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels is in line with the national average and matches the performance of similar schools. Taken over the period 1997-2000 the school has consistently raised its standards. Over the period 1998-2000, there has been no significant variation in the performance of girls and boys.

53. The findings of this inspection are that the proportion of pupils in the present Year 6 attaining the national expectation for age is above average. The proportion of those pupils attaining a higher level, is in line with that expected nationally. The school has maintained its standards since last year's national tests and improved its overall standards since the previous inspection. The school is realistic in its target for 84 per cent of the Year 6 pupils to attain the national expectation for age, in the 2001 national tests. There are a high number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6. This year group entered the school with below average standards in writing and have progressed well in their time in school, achieving standards that are above those expected for this age group. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the good quality and range of support they receive.

54. In speaking and listening, standards at the end of Year 6 are above expectations. This represents an improvement in speaking skills since the previous inspection. Pupils are keen to express opinions and they respond to questions with well structured answers that show they have been listening carefully to the discussion. They use a wide range of vocabulary to express their ideas. On many occasions they relate what they have to say to facts previously learned and this extends their learning of what is being covered in the lesson, well. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils made sharp distinctions between two texts written by the same author. They unpicked the significant differences and put forward well thought out suggestions as to why these differences made the stories interesting and therefore each story worth reading for its own particular content. This high level of debate and mature discussion aided pupils' learning well and lead on to some well structured written analysis.

55. The school devotes a considerable amount of time to reading. The vast majority of 11 year old pupils demonstrate reading and comprehension skills above that expected for their age. Throughout the school the majority of pupils read fluently and with good expression. They describe the plot of a story clearly, comment on characters well and make good predictions about how the story will develop. Teachers work hard to maintain pupils' skills in this area through, for example, the type of debate and discussion outlined above which also occurs in other areas of the curriculum such as religious education, science, geography and physical education. Throughout the school, pupils are competent in using the classification system in the library to locate reference material. They use the contents and index sections of

books accurately to find specific information. They are competent at using CD ROMs, to access information using a computer, and many access further information for homework via the Internet.

56. The proportion of pupils, achieving writing standards that are in line with the national expectation for their age, is above average. The school has maintained its standards since the previous inspection. This is an area the school has identified for improvement. By the age of 11, pupils use grammatical structures and punctuation correctly. Their vocabulary is frequently imaginative and they write sentences that develop themes consistently; however, only a limited amount of work is redrafted. These soundly embedded skills could be developed further by giving pupils the confidence and skills to improve their own work and bring standards in writing up to those of speaking, listening and reading. Handwriting is satisfactory, most pupils use a fluent joined style and their presentation is appropriate to the context. Some pieces of writing work for display or for topic books are presented to a high standard.

57. Overall the quality of teaching is very good and learning is good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Throughout the school good teaching is characterised by challenging work, accurately matched to pupils' prior attainment, especially those with high prior attainment and by good relationships between the teacher and pupils. Where the teaching is good, teachers engage in lively debate with the pupils often openly discussing their own feelings or reactions to situations. This encourages pupils to be open and discuss and write about things in a personal way, using vocabulary that indicates their pleasure in, for example, a bright patch of poppies beneath a tree or conversely clearly explaining some difficult time in their lives. A significant feature in some good lessons was the link made by teachers between work in other subjects and the work in the literacy lesson. This is a way of working that could be extended to enable pupils to develop their understanding of the links between curriculum areas. For example, one teacher, on return from a nature walk in science, drew on the writings of an Edwardian diarist to help pupils describe the various flowers and creatures they had seen in a lively and interesting way, that might catch the imagination of a reader. In one lesson observed the teacher encouraged the pupils to use their own initiative in deciding how to set out their work and what should be included. This example indicates an improvement since the previous inspection and needs extending throughout the school. Use of homework is very good and is supported well by the use of home to school notebooks. Different homework is set for different groups of pupils, depending on their ability to carry out the work at home. This means that although the work is rightly demanding the pupils can, with appropriate effort, complete it and increase their understanding of what is being taught in school.

58. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. In some classes they are very good. Linked with overall good teaching this has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning in most classes. Mature attitudes displayed by most pupils means that teachers can enter into debate and discussion about the things being taught, which greatly enhances pupils understanding of what they are learning. They can set them to work on tasks, free from their direct control, secure in the knowledge that pupils will complete the work expected in the time allocated. Pupils are ready to be given increased responsibility for the setting out, quality and content of their work, and so enable them to expand their competence in English to

the higher levels of the national curriculum that require a greater independence of style and working.

59. The subject curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a good grounding in the use of English. The implementation of the national literacy strategy has been good. Pupils now have a secure grounding in the conventions of writing. The use of writing to support work in other subjects is satisfactory, but could be extended to allow pupils to practise what they have been taught in literacy through other areas of the curriculum. In addition this would encourage pupils to develop their understanding of concepts being taught over longer periods of time and through extending strategies of redrafting taught in literacy to work in, for example, preparing a report on a character, such as Henry VIII in history or writing up a design and technology project. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory. Word processing is used frequently to present work being covered in class, for example, pupils' autobiographies, and in some classes to aid pupils to gain confidence in writing succinctly and at speed. It is used appropriately to set tasks such as joining prefixes to words to change their meaning and by learning support assistants to engage pupils with special educational needs in reading and writing. These various initiatives have been largely successful and need now to be drawn together into a whole school programme that sequentially develops pupils' skills to the point that the majority of them are producing writing that is as sophisticated as their ability to debate and discuss issues in lessons.

60. There is a satisfactory range and quantity of resources to support classroom teaching. The library contains books of good quality and of an appropriately broad range to cater for all ages, but the non-fiction stock needs to be extended to provide an adequate stock to enable research across the wide range of subjects the pupils are increasingly, and rightly, being encouraged to explore. Additional literacy support is used successfully to raise the standards of pupils in Years 3 and 4 and similar strategies are used in older classes to maintain the impetus started in these younger ones. The school is good at identifying pupils who have a particular need and matching support to this need. The provision for all those pupils who have special educational needs is good because their work is well planned and they receive well targeted support. The support assistants are knowledgeable and work closely with teachers to provide flexible programmes of work. 'Booster classes' are organised to help pupils in Year 6 to attain the expected standards for age by the time they leave the school. The school supports its bilingual pupils well and it makes good provision for pupils who show much higher attainment than is expected for their age. For example arranging for them to attend sessions with high attaining pupils from other schools, where they are encouraged to extend their skills of writing, speaking and listening.

61. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides sound support to colleagues. She is new to the role and, as yet, has not had an opportunity to make a significant impact on provision but has been enthusiastically encouraging innovation, both within the curriculum and in extra-curricular provision, by such means as setting up a writing competition. The contribution of the subject to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils strive to describe nature in a manner that conveys their wonder at what they have seen. They wrote poems about the dilemma of Anne Boleyn's executioner on the night before her execution, charged with a task and struggling with the moral

and practical implications of it. They work very well in groups and think deeply about social issues, such as the impact of building development on an area. They read from a wide range of texts and stories from all round the world. Reports are good and accurately reflect achievement by pupils and identify clearly what could be improved. Teachers use these to set targets for individual pupils. These are recorded in books but pupils do not frequently refer to these books and few know, off hand, what their targets are, making this considerable work of limited use. Assessment procedures are very good and are used to target support where it is needed and to ensure work is matched to pupils' needs in both class work and homework. Storytellers and authors visit the school, widening pupils' understanding of literacy in the outside world: a book fair was much enjoyed by all. Links with the infant school are very good and are used to extend activities and learning opportunities for pupils in both schools. For example, pupils in Year 3 work with pupils from the infant school on shared reading activities and older pupils work with infant pupils on writing stories in partnership. Such activities extend the breadth of the curriculum and aid learning for pupils in both schools: older pupils extend their understanding through explaining to younger pupils and they in turn learn from concentrated one to one writing and reading sessions.

MATHEMATICS

62. Over the last five years standards in mathematics have been improving quicker than the national trend and, by the age of 11, a higher than average proportion of the school's pupils are attaining the standards expected in all aspects of mathematics (numeracy, space, shape and measure, and data handling). Pupils are quick to convert fractions to decimals or percentages without using pen or paper, though a few are not so confident when using their tables to help with division. They can measure accurately and are skilled at using and interpreting diagrams and charts as teachers have provided a wide range of opportunities, particularly in science and geography, for them to put their skills into practice by collecting and organising data, and putting it into graphs and diagrams. Year 6 pupils were analysing information collected for a geographical survey and successfully started to draw some statistical conclusions from the data about the opinions of people in Alton. Throughout the school pupils check their results, make sensible estimations and are confident in applying their mathematical knowledge to real-life problems.

63. These standards represent very high achievement for pupils, as they enter the junior school with below average standards and then learn rapidly: a result of the high quality teaching and the hard work and concentration pupils put into lessons. The teachers' expectations of the pupils' achievements are high and they set demanding work for them. The work is pitched at just the right level for each pupil, as teachers make careful and regular assessments of what pupils have learned so they can plan the next steps for them. Planning is very thorough. Teachers are confident with the National Numeracy Strategy and use that, together with the 'Progression of skills' school guidance, to plan work. They plan in year groups, ensuring that all pupils in the same year group cover the same ground. The activities are interesting and are often related to everyday life to show a purpose for learning. For example, pupils in

Year 6 discussed 3-D pie charts in a newspaper survey of opinion about the Euro before immediately applying this understanding to their own survey. A major strength of teachers is their skill in asking questions that encourage pupils to think more deeply or to clarify their ideas. This happens in all classes, for example in a Year 4 lesson, when a pupil struggling to add two digit numbers was led step by step to see the pattern and in an extension group for Year 4 higher attainers, where the teacher's speculations sparked the curiosity of children and led them to explore factors and square numbers.

64. Teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and expect pupils to use this correct terminology as they discuss their work. In the mental and oral section pupils are encouraged to solve problems in their own way and then explain how they arrived at their answer. In the main teaching activity, occasionally teachers give more support than pupils need so that opportunities are missed, for example, for pupils to try different approaches or work out their own recording method.

65. The school has a rigorous approach to improvement and has set ambitious targets for the Year 6 national tests: evidence of pupils' work during the year shows that these are realistic. A careful check is kept of pupils' progress and teaching is adjusted to meet the needs of them all. For example, lessons are planned to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils and some are offered different homework or additional lessons. The success of this approach is shown in the school's results at the higher levels, which are above the national average and improving more quickly than the LEA trend. The school's current priority is to raise the attainment of the lower achievers and it is working systematically to support them, for example, through the initiative for attaining the Basic Skills Quality Mark for Primary Schools.

66. The approach to co-ordination, where a curriculum team supports the subject leader, ensures that staff are completely involved and committed to improvement work. The team systematically monitor planning, teaching and standards to ensure that what has been agreed is implemented and effective. For example, this year the focus has been on investigative work and the team has carefully checked to see what is being planned and taught. Pupils are now undertaking mathematical investigations though the youngest need more help in developing a systematic approach to tackling them.

67. The school has made exceptional improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. Standards, particularly those of the more able have risen, and the quality of education provided is now very good.

SCIENCE

68. Analysis of the school's 2001 tests, at the end of Key Stage 2, shows that the standards are well above average nationally and in comparison with similar schools. A higher proportion of pupils attained the higher level than that found nationally.

69. Over the period 1998 – 2001 there has been an impressive improvement. The figures indicate that last year girls did less well in science than boys. The planned provision, classroom organisation and teaching methods provide no evidence to suggest why this may be so. However, it may be related to the fact that last year,

exceptionally, boys out-performed girls in mathematics, and the interrogation of tables and graphs forms a major part of the national science tests.

70. The pupils do well in science because they have been taught to use the scientific processes and skills very effectively. They investigate and think as scientists across all areas of science and develop sound knowledge and understanding through first-hand experiences and observations. For example, pupils learn how to use a filter to make dirty water clear, to predict which plant fertiliser is the best, then test them to find out, and to find the best way to keep an ice cube from melting. Homework is used to support and extend learning for example, by making parachutes at home, researching the life of Isaac Newton, or by finding further information on plants and animals in the rain forest.

71. The most significant change since the last inspection is the systematic and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Assessment sheets, based on knowledge and understanding taught each year, are used effectively to inform teachers of individual pupil's progress and future targets for learning. A progress sheet, designed to indicate process skills throughout the key stage, provides an accurate picture for teachers of the developing skills and targets for each pupil. The use of targets by pupils throughout the key stage would give them more control over their learning and raise awareness of progress made and challenges to meet.

72. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good and pupils' learn well: it is never less than sound. The teachers introduce and explain the correct scientific vocabulary and their subject knowledge is secure. Pupils are enthusiastic about their science and are able to discuss what they have achieved, using the correct terms, and giving clear explanations of scientific ideas such as gravity, reversible and irreversible changes and why plants grow better in some areas than in others. The teachers encourage pupils to question and to think hard before suggesting reasons based on previous scientific knowledge. The pupils are encouraged to use all observation skills when classifying and identifying plants. The expectation of pupils is high and the challenges appropriate for all capabilities. The taught skill, of creating and using keys for the identification of trees, using the correct terms for leaf shapes, results in pupils achieving high levels of attainment. The very good use of open ended questions to challenge the more able is an improvement on the previous inspection.

73. The very good use of scientific vocabulary and of planning formats for carrying out fair test investigations, and the skill of raising questions, contributes well to the literacy skills of the pupils. The accurate use of real and relevant tables, charts and graphs when recording scientific tests, and the interrogation of the data contributes to the pupils' competence in numeracy. Information and communications technology is used well for research purposes, such as finding out the life cycle of pond animals and woodlice, and the life story of famous scientists. It is, however, not yet used sufficiently to monitor and record changes using probes, or to put data into tables and graphs.

74. The quality of leadership and management is very good. Themes and topics provide contexts for the science curriculum, making it real and relevant for the pupils. The national scheme of work is matched closely to the themes and provides support for teachers. The scientific enquiry process is systematically planned and taught, to provide continuity and progression across the key stage, and forms the basis of the

practical work. This ensures that by the end of the key stage the pupils have a very good understanding of science, making a positive contribution to the standards.

ART AND DESIGN

75. The inspection was scheduled in a half-term immediately following an art focus, so only one art lesson was timetabled. The half-term block of work had culminated in a busy Arts week and pupils, who take a pride in their work, were enthusiastic to show it and explain how it had been achieved. These inspection judgements are based on evidence from talking to pupils about their understanding of art and design, considering the standards they achieve and by taking account of the teachers' planning.

76. By the age of 11, pupils achieve the standards expected for their age and have a good grasp of the techniques for creating moulding, joining and creating textural effects with clay. They are experienced in creating colours and have used different media to depict shades and tones, though they do not yet have a wide enough vocabulary to describe their work clearly. The school has arranged for practising artists to work with the pupils, explaining what inspired individual pieces and how to achieve particular effects. The impact of a recent visit is evident in a display of animal face drawings, where pupils successfully added a glint to the eyes and gave some depth to the faces, an improvement from earlier shading work. Through the effective teaching pupils have learned to observe well, to look closely and to notice important elements. They show considerable maturity in evaluating their own and other pupils' work though they have few opportunities to put this to good effect and develop their work further. Similarly, they know how to use a sketchbook to experiment and to collect ideas and images, but rarely have the opportunity to create a piece of work by selecting from their books, and choosing their own materials and techniques.

77. The co-ordinator has recently completed some very thorough planning that teachers have started to use. The programme of work for each class is laid out in detail, providing clear guidance about developing pupils' skills from year to year. The interesting activities it contains assumes pupils will have opportunities to use ICT and read and write purposefully: these activities have not yet been introduced. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained and this scheme of work rectifies an identified weakness.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

78. During the inspection it was not possible to observe much design and technology teaching. However, from the lessons seen, artefacts and design briefs shown, and from discussion with enthusiastic pupils in years 3 and 6 it is possible to make the judgement that standards are above expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are high because pupils have a clear understanding of the design process and use their planning well to evaluate and choose materials, to decide on tools and use skills needed, and to create artefacts that they are proud of. The work seen was neat, accurate and well finished. Pupils take care with their designs and products and are very good at analysing finished products, such as bread, sandwiches and drinks made to their own recipes.

79. The quality of learning is good. Pupils are able to recall artefacts that they had made in previous years in great detail and with much enthusiasm. Over time, the pupils are taught the skills and techniques to use a wide selection of tools and materials safely. These include: making decorated textile banners in a Tudor topic; wooden frames for a chassis; evaluating different pumps before constructing their own with construction kits; using clay for jingle pots, tiles and models; making shelters from a range of materials; puppet; papier mache masks; and burglar alarms using electrical circuits. Control technology is the only area that is weak and needs to be improved.

80. The quality of teaching is now good, an improvement on the last inspection. Skills, such as how to make moveable and fixed joins, are carefully taught and time is given for pupils to practise and understand how the mechanisms work. The design process forms the basis of many activities. Pupils are encouraged to explore the properties of materials before making decisions about which to use for making musical instruments. This leads to new and original ideas being formed and learning taking place. All pupils make appropriate progress. Challenges are demanding and the more able pupils know that they are expected to produce results that reflect their capability.

81. The dual management makes the subject leadership strong. The national scheme is used sensibly to support the cross curricular topics. The curriculum has a positive impact on teaching and learning, by providing good opportunities for real and relevant design technology challenges. The subject is systematically monitored and pupils' performance assessed annually. This gives the subject leaders a clear picture of the strength of the subject.

82. The design and technology tasks demand accurate measuring and spatial awareness, and provide real and relevant opportunities for using numerical skills. Information and communication technologies are occasionally used, for example using a computer art program when designing and making wallpaper.

GEOGRAPHY

83. The oldest pupils who will soon leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2 are achieving standards in geography that are above those expected. This is the result of good teaching based on sound curricular planning. Throughout the school all pupils are taught the skills of questioning and investigating people, places and environments within the contexts of their own locality and across other regions of the world, such as St Lucia, and areas of tropical rainforests. Progress in learning is now consistently good across the school, an improvement since the last inspection.

84. The younger juniors are beginning a study of the town, developing observation skills and fieldwork techniques to record and analyse the local amenities effectively. Older juniors use and extend their enquiry skills when studying their own settlement. They are able to give reasons for the changes that have occurred, based on evidence gathered from a walk around the streets, personal experience, and photographic evidence and from interviews with local residents. At present the pupils are using their geographical enquiry skills effectively to study maps and photographs to

appreciate the economic development of St Lucia. They have studied the environment of a tropical rainforest in great depth and debated ecological issues perceptively.

85. The teaching is good overall and, in the best lessons, teachers use well formulated and challenging questions effectively to encourage observation and increase reasoning in answers. The teachers skilfully raise awareness of geographical issues, praise responses and encourage pupils to offer suggestions and interact in discussion. Resources such as maps and photographs provide interesting and accurate information for pupils to analyse.

86. The planned curriculum is secure and has a positive impact on teaching and learning. All geographical activities are carefully planned within topics that interest the pupils and encourage them to want to find out more for themselves. The emphasis on teaching enquiry skills throughout the school, enables pupils to collect evidence, analyse and draw conclusions in all of the topics that they study. The planned development and use of skills enhances learning and is a strength of the subject. The curriculum is based on a nationally recognised scheme, matched to cross curricular topics, this allows for a richness and diversity within lessons. For example, in music, maps were used to find the African countries from which the songs came. In design and technology the influence of many cultures can be seen in the pots that had been made and decorated.

87. The pupils use persuasive writing well and write letters to companies on environmental issues, for example, the recycling department, resulting in a recycling bin being given to school. Numeracy skills are used effectively when creating and interrogating temperature charts and graphs. There is scope, however, for using information technology more extensively for research and recording. Homework is used very successfully to extend the learning for all and higher attaining pupils are expected to research and record facts at a more advanced level.

HISTORY

88. Standards of attainment and achievement in history are above expectations at the end of the key stage. Children's work is organised through topics, and these are carefully designed to cover the requirements of the curriculum and make good links with other subjects, including literacy, geography, art, design and technology, and ICT. Drama strategies very effectively stimulate children's interest and bring the subject alive.

89. The teaching is very good. In Year 3, the teacher used her good subject knowledge to enthuse the children to try hard with their writing about Viking raids. They had a good grasp of relevant facts and were beginning to consider different feelings and viewpoints about invaders and settlers. Looking through their Topic Books, the best work had come from writing at length and stimulating art activities. The teaching in Year 6 is of a very high standard and this results in very good learning by the pupils. They are extremely enthusiastic about their work and are able to recall facts, talk about evidence, evaluate sources of information and suggest reasons for different interpretations of historical events. In their work on a topic about Tudor times, they debated the benefits and drawbacks of Henry VIII's reign and produced some excellent design work, using appliqué techniques. Work on a local area study involved finding out about Alton, what had changed and what had brought

about the changes. Members of the local camera club, who brought some photographs for children to examine, made a very good contribution to the lesson. Led by the teacher, the children asked some very perceptive and productive questions to help identify local features in the past and how they have changed, before accurately sequencing photographs in chronological order.

90. An analysis of samples of work through the school shows that children make good progress and demonstrate a lively interest in past events. In Year 4, for example, their work on the Romans involves perceptive descriptions on the character and actions of Boudicca, of the stabbing of Caesar, advertisements for villas that employ persuasive writing skills and the co-operative production of Roman-style stuffed dates.

91. Resources include a good range of books and artefacts, which are located in a central area of the school for easy access. Children's experiences are enriched by planned visits to local sites and features of historical interest.

92. The co-ordination and management of history is good. The policy and schemes of work are kept under regular review; teachers' planning and children's work is frequently sampled to check consistency and curriculum coverage. The co-ordinator has produced a useful action plan as part of the school's strategic development. For the coming year, the priorities are to monitor lessons, give advice and support to colleagues and enrich resources where required.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

93. During the inspection, there was no direct teaching of information and communication technology. It is not possible, therefore, to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. Talking to pupils and looking at their work on display, in exercise books and in folders, shows that at the age of 11, standards are in line with those expected for that age in all programmes of study of the National Curriculum with the exception of control and monitoring technology. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its standards in the programmes of study covered. Limited use of technology to control and monitor events was reported by the previous inspection team. This has not improved. All pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the curriculum covered.

94. Younger pupils used a word processing package to change a report of the life of David Livingstone into a fictitious account. They worked directly on the screen, amending and adapting the content of the history to make it more interesting for the reader. They added details that might have formed part of his experience, drawing on their knowledge of African animals that he might have encountered on his journeys. By this means their keyboard skills increased and they became familiar with using a spell checker to scan their completed work. Such experience extends their sentence construction work in literacy and enables them to practise complex sentences, secure in the knowledge that they can rapidly and easily amend sentences or improve them further should they wish. Older pupils worked with a volunteer using a paint program and symmetry application to design wallpaper and wrapping paper for a design and technology activity. Pupils use word processing to produce booklets such as autobiographies, which are of a good standard.

95. Good use is made of relevant programs to support the work of pupils with special educational needs. They respond well to working on computers and find great reassurance from being able to correct their work easily, encouraging risk taking in both writing and, for example, matching prefixes to root words to change the meaning of a word such as 'understood' to 'misunderstood'. The school uses its assessments strategies well to identify pupils that would benefit from additional work in various areas of the curriculum. They have, for example, set up a programme with the infant school to give additional writing opportunities to older pupils, who by working with an infant pupil and taking their ideas for a story are word processing a book for infant use. This is a successful scheme benefiting both the literacy and word-processing skills of the junior pupil as well as expanding the imaginative experiences of the infant pupil.

96. Pupils use databases to produce graphs and pie charts, though there is limited evidence of its use to support investigations in science or surveys in geography or the recording of statistics in physical education. The cross-curricular use of information and communication technology is an area for expansion. The school has programs for control technology, with which pupils can create, test, improve sequences of instructions, for example, to a model traffic light or small floor robot, but pupils have insufficient experience of this to fulfil coverage of the required programme of study of the national curriculum. Similarly, whilst the school has sensors to measure temperature these are not used for pupils to monitor events such as the change in temperature of a liquid. These omissions and limitations on opportunity mean that the school does not provide a full curriculum: this is unsatisfactory.

97. The management of the short term aspects of the subject, by the teacher coordinator, is satisfactory. She has overseen the installation of some new computers, organised a timetable of use of computers and of in-service training of staff. Staff have gained in confidence in recent times and are now identifying more opportunities to use information and communication technology to support pupils learning. She has recently set up an appropriate system of assessment that is beginning to help teachers identify pupils who need support in the use of this technology. The number of computers for the number of pupils is just adequate for the programme of work being offered currently but will be insufficient when all programmes of study are being followed. The school has a good number of tape recorders that are used confidently and competently by pupils to listen to taped stories or information tapes. It has recently acquired some notebook style computers, for use in class, to improve the keyboard and basic computer skills, and to support pupils with special educational needs who have difficulty with writing.

MUSIC

98. Overall, at age 11, the standards of attainment and achievement in music are satisfactory. The teaching is satisfactory overall. There is some good teaching and there are good opportunities for pupils to participate in musical activities through visiting peripatetic specialists. However, a new scheme of work is not yet fully in place and some teachers lack confidence in the subject.

99. Children in the choir sing with great enthusiasm, pitching their voices well and demonstrating a good sense of musical expression. In assemblies, the singing

sometimes lacks volume. Teachers are aware of this and urge the children to ‘Sing up!’

100. Year 4 children are exploring music from Africa, developing their sense of pitch and response patterns in music. Their singing is in tune and they are able to follow two-part call and response patterns. They know the meaning of the term *ostinato*. Younger children use their voices to make different sounds in rap-style chants and have been introduced to the term *timbre*. They work enthusiastically with untuned percussion instruments, developing control and relating sounds to feelings. In discussing their work they talk about the desired effects and are able to make thoughtful improvements.

101. Year 6 children have been working on their own composition for tuned instruments, using a painting by Raoul Dufy as a stimulus. They employed symbols and notes to record their work and selected appropriate instruments to use for group performance. The results form part of a stimulating display in the well-organised music room, which contains a useful range of both tuned and untuned percussion instruments as well as a small number of guitars and keyboards.

102. A very well taught session of violin tuition for beginners enabled the children to make very good progress. They are able to evaluate their own and each others’ playing and are developing a good sense of rhythm. There are also lessons for guitar, keyboard, cello, bass and woodwind instruments, involving about 26 children. Pupils play their instruments during class assembly, as in the case of three Year 4 girls who played *Frere Jacques* on clarinets to a very high standard.

103. Pupils are given the opportunity to listen to a range of music during assemblies and to discuss their feelings and responses. Music also features in other subjects, including science and physical education. Music is an area for development in the school and there are plans to employ an additional, parttime teacher to support class music. Pupils’ attainment and progress is recorded systematically as part of the whole school system for assessment.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. Pupils attain standards above those expected for their age at 11, and the very good teaching of physical education makes a positive contribution to the school’s rich curriculum. Children work with enthusiasm and concentration and good links are made with other subjects, including literacy, science and music.

105. In gymnastics, Year 6 pupils are able to discuss the effects of exercise on their bodies and apply principles of safety to their work. During the introductory lesson to a topic on flight, they developed jumping and landing skills leading into fluent and controlled movements. Well targeted questioning by the teacher helped them to evaluate their own and each other’s work, leading to improving techniques and performance.

106. Dance is a strength of the subject. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils developed their dance skills very effectively, showing good body control, co-ordination and spatial awareness. Building on the interest stimulated by a well-chosen video on volcanoes, they produced fluent and flowing movements. The teacher skilfully used pupils to

demonstrate her teaching points. At first pupils worked individually, but then extended their ideas into small group performances. There was a very good standard of dance by the whole class during a Year 4 class assembly. The pupils showed great empathy with the music and good co-operative skills. Visiting dance groups have performed pieces from other cultures and added breadth to children's experiences.

107. Games lessons seek to develop children's skills through a good range of invasion, striking and fielding, and net activities. In a Year 3 lesson, children practised throwing and catching small balls, before moving on to improving their batting and fielding skills using Kwik Cricket equipment. Most children were able to keep their eyes on the ball and co-ordinate striking and catching, although the work of one group was hampered by some inattentive behaviour. Good teaching in Year 4 helped children improve the skills needed in rounders and cricket. They behaved well throughout the lesson and were able to organise themselves into small group games. No swimming lessons were observed but the co-ordinator reports that they meet water safety requirements and, by the time pupils finish the swimming block in Year 4, nearly all can swim a minimum of 25 metres and a small minority have achieved survival awards.

108. The good range of out-of-school activities including football, netball, rounders and boys' dance is chosen to match children's interests. A parent very ably runs a girls' football club at lunchtimes. The considerable enthusiasm of the children is expertly channelled into developing and refining their ball control, passing and moving skills. Along with other school teams, the girls take part in competitive school games and tournaments in the local area.

109. The subject is co-ordinated and managed well. There is a clear and coherent scheme of work for gymnastics and dance: the games scheme is not detailed enough to give teachers guidance about how pupils' skills should develop as they move through the school. The range of resources is good. The co-ordinator has a useful action plan showing a commitment to using video and digital cameras as aids to pupils' self-evaluation.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain standards that are above the requirements, of the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, for pupils of their age. Standards have improved since the last inspection. All pupils make good progress. This good progress occurs because the subject co-ordinator has translated the syllabus into a clear well structured scheme of work directly relevant to the school that enables pupils to develop their understanding sequentially and in depth as they move through the school.

111. Pupils asked very pertinent and searching questions when interviewing people who have volunteered to come into school to talk about their faith. They drew on their previous knowledge of the religion and demonstrated by the way they phrased and pursued questions that they have a sound understanding of, for example, stories in the bible. Other pupils studied the transfiguration and strove hard to understand the idea of a miracle. One class are studying Judaism. Having heard a story about Modicai they worked quickly together to put on a playlet about the confrontation between Modicai, the king and the prime minister who wanted to have him executed.

They learned that being a believer entails risks. They heard in the story how Ruth, the wife of the king, admitted that she was Jewish and that it was this that saved Modicai. The pupils tried hard to show this tension in their performances. They learned that Jewish children perform such plays each year to remind them of the poignancy of the story and this added a sense of cultural understanding and reality to their performances.

112. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The subject has a high profile in the school. Lessons are well planned and build on previous work. Teachers plan a variety of interesting ways of presenting lessons using interviews, drama, stories and note taking to maintain pupils interest as well as written accounts and analysis of religious texts or sacred books. By many of these means, good links are made with learning in literacy and pupils' skills, particularly in speaking and listening, are developed well. Relationships are very good and encourage open discussion and debate, aiding pupils' learning. Good links are made with themes covered in collective worship or assemblies and vice versa.

113. The quality of the curriculum is very good. The co-ordinator is astute, enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. She has worked closely with the local education authority advisory service and has developed a very strong scheme of work. This scheme includes visits to a synagogue as well as the study of Hinduism and the visit to a Hindu temple. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. She has raised the status of the subject in the school and has worked well with teachers, promoting in them an enthusiasm for the subject. The contribution to pupils' spiritual development is very good, pupils gain very good understanding of the spiritual reasons why people commit themselves to a particular faith. In moral development they explore the dilemmas faced by people both today and in the past and this is very good teaching. Social development is promoted very well by the respect engendered for other faiths. Their studies of other faiths, the beliefs and practices of these faiths contributes very well to pupils' cultural development. The co-ordinator is currently working on strategies to improve the accuracy of assessing whether pupils have understood the significant aspects of religious education being taught. She is also the co-ordinator for worship and whilst she enables staff to have very clear understanding of the separate place of collective worship in the school, she also aids teachers' understanding of links that may be made in both directions. Whilst the school is to be commended on its special educational needs provision, some pupils are withdrawn from collective worship for additional support, it is a lack of equal opportunities for pupils to miss these carefully thought through links. Learning resources are good and support the subject well.