

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **PEEL COMMON JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Gosport

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116175

Headteacher: Carol Bishop

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess  
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 195280

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Drive Rowner Gosport Hampshire
Postcode:	PO13 0QD
Telephone number:	01329 281206
Fax number:	01329 230811
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Brenda Wilkinson
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

## Information about the inspection team

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23708	Geoff Burgess	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information Technology Music	Results & achievements Teaching & learning Leadership & management School improvement
9487	Frances Hurd	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values & personal development Attendance Partnership with parents Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development Personal welfare & care
24342	Denise Franklin	Team inspector	Science: EO Art Design Technology Religious Education SEN	Learning opportunities
28014	Peter Buckley	Team inspector	English Geography; History Physical Education	Assessment & academic monitoring Strategic use of resources

The inspection contractor was:

Geoff Burgess Inspections

4, Dodhams Farm Close  
Bradpole  
Bridport  
Dorset  
DT6 3EZ

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The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Peel Common School, situated in spacious grounds next to its partner infant school on the edge of Gosport, serves a wide spectrum of families of British heritage from the surrounding residential area but with a substantial number choosing to come from further afield. Less than a twelfth of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below the national average. The number of pupils on roll has been between 220 and 235 for the past five years. Over a quarter of pupils are on the special needs register of whom three, an average number, have statements of special need. Attainment on entry to year three has been broadly average recently.

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

This is a much improved, satisfactory school, very well led and managed, where satisfactory teaching is helping standards to improve through the school. With a broadly average intake and above average funding, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Provision for pupils who find learning and conforming difficult is good and they are making good progress
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they get on well together
- Staff take good care to ensure the safety and welfare of all its pupils
- Parents are very pleased with the good efforts being made to keep them informed and involved
- The head and deputy head have revitalised the school community, giving it energy, shared purpose and a growing sense of pride

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

- The quality of teaching, though much improved, is not yet consistently good enough to raise standards to match the steady improvement in similar schools
- Aspects of the way the curriculum is planned and timetabled also limit the school's capacity to raise standards and best use is not made of all the time available
- Too few pupils are proud of their work

*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 given a very full agenda for improvement after the last inspection in June 1997, most of which had not been adequately addressed when the new head took over in January 2001. Since then, the whole school community has been very busy doing what needed to be done to put things right. The quality of teaching in years three and four is much improved. Assessment procedures have been substantially upgraded and much better use is being made of the information this provides. All aspects of pupils' care, including child protection are well in hand. The governing body now fulfils all its obligations effectively and the new leadership is ensuring that the school is focused on the key issue of standards. Almost every aspect of provision is substantially better than it was five years ago. Standards are better than they were then and building through the school and overall improvement is good.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	B	D	E	well above average A
mathematics	A	C	E	E*	above average B
science	C	C	D	E	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

After three years of average, above average and sometimes well above average results in national testing, pupils' attainments fell significantly in 2001 to below and well below average. When compared with schools in a similar situation, results were all well below average with mathematics in the bottom five per cent nationally. However, when compared with the standards being achieved by the same group when they joined the school in 1997, these results actually represent a satisfactory improvement over the four years. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily throughout the school in English and mathematics and, with low attainment on entry in 1998 but improving since, standards are still below average in year six but improving through the school. Pupils are making better progress in science and achieving average levels. Standards in information technology have improved greatly in recent years with years three and four achieving as expected but years five and six have not yet had the time to catch up on work missed earlier. Attainment in non-core subjects is mainly as expected but the quantity and quality of work in pupils' books in subjects such as geography, history and religious education does not always show this. Pupils who have difficulty learning or conforming are making good progress towards their individual targets.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls enjoy coming to school and joining in the increasing number of activities it has to offer. Most are very willing to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences in class discussions and many follow up schoolwork at home. However, the response of many to group work is less enthusiastic especially in the afternoons. Attitudes to school and learning are satisfactory.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour round the site makes a significant contribution to improving standards and the happy, ordered feel of the school. Behaviour in class is usually good, sometimes very good, but sometimes, poor behaviour by individuals wastes time for the rest.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils get on well together and with their teachers and helpers. They enjoy and take very seriously the many more opportunities they have to contribute to the life of the school. Most are growing into sensible and mature citizens but some have difficulty taking responsibility for their actions and learning.
Attendance	With much more to interest and involve them, there are no problems with pupils' attendance or punctuality.

Most pupils are reacting very positively to the many more opportunities to join in and take more responsibility for their time in school. However, good work habits have not been developed by some older pupils and a few pupils cause disproportionate trouble with misbehaviour.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory

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

The majority of teaching is satisfactory with most of the rest good and a small number of very good and unsatisfactory lessons. While all teachers achieved at least one good lesson, only year five had more good and very good lessons than satisfactory. Good teaching featured in almost all subjects observed with both very good and unsatisfactory teaching in literacy lessons. Whole class teaching in most lessons is good but expectations and the speed of working in follow up work is not as good which accounts for the fact that most teaching and learning is satisfactory. Sustained challenge and high work rates helped to make two lessons very good while confusing activities and low expectations led to two unsatisfactory lessons. Learning support assistants are making a good contribution to the learning of pupils with extra needs.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	All pupils have equal access to a broad and varied range of learning experiences with literacy and numeracy suitably emphasised. Planning procedures have been substantially revamped to make good use of national and local schemes of work. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is now planned in. Ever increasing use is being made of visits, visitors and special events to enhance the curriculum and a good start has been made in providing activities for pupils outside normal lessons to enrich their learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Procedures for identifying need, setting targets and monitoring progress are much improved and pupils are making good progress. They know and understand their individual targets and are very proud when they achieve them. Good provision, mainly through the good work of learning support assistants, is made for pupils who find learning or conforming difficult. Other pupils are well supported in class by their teachers who provide work at the appropriate levels. Parents are kept well informed and are involved at all stages. The small number of pupils with very special needs are well catered for and included in all the school has to offer.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Staff make satisfactory provision for pupils' personal development. Provision for pupils to appreciate the arts, their own cultural heritage and learn about and value cultural diversity, and to develop social skills and attitudes and think about moral issues is satisfactory. The school recognises that not enough attention is given to helping pupils to reflect on the more spiritual aspects of life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers and other staff know the children well and take good care for their safety and well-being. School procedures for these aspects are sound and improving steadily. A close watch is kept on attendance and behaviour. Recently introduced assessment arrangements are being used increasingly to keep an eye on academic progress and guide planning but have not had time to make a full impact.

The school is working very hard to build up its partnership with parents and this is much appreciated by the families of its pupils. Communications are much improved though, as yet, children's annual reports are not very informative. With little tradition of parental involvement, this is an area that is building slowly but overall the school's links with parents are very much better than they were.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership & management by the headteacher & other key staff	The contribution which the head has made to the substantial recent improvements in the school is outstanding. Well supported by the new deputy, she has shown admirable determination and wisdom in managing the very full agenda she inherited. Other staff are following their example and leaders and managers in all areas of the school are becoming more effective and influential. The school is very well led and managed
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Most of the governing body are new to the job but they have shown admirable commitment in undertaking necessary training and accepting all their responsibilities with enthusiasm. Previous arrangements did not provide them with the information and procedures necessary to fully understand what needed to be done but the new head has helped them to come to terms with the reality of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The current governing body are providing very good support to the head in bringing the school up to speed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is another area which has improved enormously in the past eighteen months. With the head in the lead, every aspect of the school's provision and performance has been looked at carefully and evaluated to see how it can be improved. The whole school community is involved in the process, which is leading to a good deal more informed discussion about the way forward. Action planning and the actions taken are very good.
The strategic use of resources	Much better use is being made of all resources including teaching and support staff, the accommodation and resources. An important consequence of much better improvement planning is the way all available funds are targeted at developments identified and agreed as priorities. Through this, staff are accumulating the resources and facilities lacking at the time of the last inspection.

The head has, with optimism, great common sense and refreshing openness, transformed a school, which lacked direction, self-confidence and a real sense of community. Pupils, parents, governors and staff are all enjoying the opportunity to make their full contribution to the life of the school.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their children enjoy going to school</li> <li>• teaching is good</li> <li>• the school is helping pupils to grow up sensibly and behaviour is good</li> <li>• the staff are very approachable and the school is welcoming to parents</li> <li>• the school is well led and managed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the work their children are expected to do at home</li> <li>• the range of extra activities outside lessons available to their children</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with most of parents' views. Teaching is improving but not yet consistently good. Big efforts are being made to increase the number and variety of extra activities to good

effect.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Last year, for the first time for several years, national test results in English, mathematics and science fell below average with mathematics falling for the second year to well below average. When compared to schools in a similar situation this represented well below average attainment in each subject with mathematics very low. However, the results achieved by the same group in their Key Stage 1 tests show that they came into the school in year three below average in writing and science, and well below in mathematics. This means that, on average, these pupils made the equivalent of four years worth of progress in English and mathematics in the four years they were in the junior school and more in science. For instance, the school's analysis of value added shows that in reading, all pupils gaining Level 2 at the age of seven gained Level 4 as eleven year olds and all but one pupil converted Level 3's to Level 5's. Hence, although standards were low, progress over time was sound.

2. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the current year six have made satisfactory progress over the past year but will only achieve below average standards in writing and mathematics. However, since this age group also had below average standards when they joined the school in 1998, a similar picture to last year emerges. Pupils in each year group are achieving overall average standards in reading, mental maths and science and their speaking and listening skills are similar to pupils in most schools. With improved planning, teaching, target setting and support for pupils who find learning difficult, pupils are generally achieving satisfactorily in English, mathematics and science in the rest of the school and standards are improving year on year.

3. However, the achievement profile of pupils in subjects where they are taught in groups based on what they had previously achieved ('sets'), is uneven. In upper 'sets', above average writers and mathematicians make sound progress while their broadly average classmates are doing well working alongside them. In most upper 'sets', potential higher fliers could be stretched further. Lower attaining pupils in the lower 'set' are achieving as expected while those who find learning particularly difficult are making good progress towards their targets. However, broadly average pupils in the same 'set' are not achieving as well as pupils who were marginally ahead in the upper 'set'.

4. Pupils with special needs make good progress towards the targets set on their individual education plans as shown by very regular reviews and the new targets set. They all have their own target card and have a say in setting their own targets. Many tell the teacher when they feel they have achieved their target and if the teacher agrees, a new one is set with the pupil. This has a positive impact on the progress each pupil makes towards longer term goals.

5. The school has made a substantial investment in equipment and training in information and communications technology recently and this is paying dividends in seeing standards grow through the school. Hence, pupils in years three and four are achieving close to expected standards in most aspects of the subjects except control and monitoring. Having had very limited experience in the lower school, years five and six have some way to catch up but are making good progress.

6. Most pupils are achieving expected levels in the other non-core subjects in years three, four and five but standards are lower in year six. Discussions with pupils show that they have remembered and understood a good deal of what they have studied in geography, history and religious education but, in several classes, this is not reflected in the volume and quality of related work produced in class. For instance, older pupils talk animatedly and confidently about what they have learned about other religions but the work in their religious education books is very mundane and poorly presented.

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

7. Behaviour is good overall. It was judged to be good or better in sixty per cent of lessons seen during the inspection and unsatisfactory in only four per cent. In these lessons the behaviour of a minority wasted time and made learning harder for the rest of the class. The slow pace of some lessons means that pupils are under-occupied and they take the opportunity for lengthy personal conversations. Pupils are friendly and welcoming to visitors, and happy to talk about their work and their school. Behaviour at lunchtimes is generally good. Most pupils follow the routines sensibly and obey the instructions given them by the lunchtime supervisors. At playtimes behaviour is nearly always sensible and cooperative, although those playing football sometimes get cross and cause problems. Older pupils were seen playing with younger ones and girls as well as boys are encouraged to join in football games. Pupils are not always considerate to others when moving around the school. For instance, on some occasions pupils let doors close behind them in the face of adults or children carrying equipment. Clearing away after an activity sometimes requires several requests from the teacher before it is done.

8. Most pupils find school a good place to be and so attendance is satisfactory, being in line with national averages. Punctuality is also as it should be. Nearly all pupils arrive promptly for school and settle down quickly, ready for work. Pupils show a satisfactory level of interest and involvement in the activities they are given to do. In the most successful lessons they become absorbed and excited by what they are learning. In a year three science lesson on the permeability of different soils, they were genuinely intrigued by the differences they discovered. Pupils are proud of their school, particularly of the attractive grounds, the teaching of physical education and the new computer suite. Year six pupils have responded well to the new responsibilities given them in the past year. However, in class some pupils are easily distracted by what is happening in or out of the classroom and do not hesitate to comment on it. Several find it hard to maintain attention when they have to sit and listen without anything to occupy their hands. They are sometimes over-eager to get tasks done, without fully understanding what they have to do. Pupils in a year three class boasted to an inspector that they had completed a mathematics worksheet 'first of anybody' without noticing they had done so incorrectly, ignoring the instructions they'd been given. A high proportion of girls show a noticeable lack of enthusiasm for physical education and need much encouragement to take part.

9. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and respect other people's feelings, values and beliefs. They know right from wrong and generally abide by the school's code of conduct. Most showed themselves capable of understanding other people's points of view in personal, social and health education lessons. This was demonstrated in a year six discussion about the problems of friendship and in a year three one where pupils discussed imprisonment and prisoners having listened to an extract written by John McCarthy, the former Beirut hostage. Pupils carry out the responsibilities they are given around the school satisfactorily although these are limited below year six. School councillors are very proud of having been elected to their position, although at present the council is simply a means of conveying suggestions. It has not yet begun to see itself as a body that could initiate action, perhaps by organising fundraising events or presenting assemblies. Relationships in the school are generally good amongst pupils themselves and between adults and children. The school council was confident that if pupils had a problem, adults would sort it out. It felt the school handled bullying well - "a bully wouldn't get away with it". Many pupils tend to lack initiative and independence in learning and have little awareness of how well they are doing or what they need to do next. In some classes pupils found it difficult to work together, arguing, for instance, about who should record the work rather than getting on with the task.

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

10. A key issue at the time of the last inspection was to 'improve the quality of teaching'. The report stated that about a quarter of lessons were unsatisfactory, with most of these in the lower school and in English, information technology, and physical and religious education. Fewer than half the lessons observed throughout the school were good and none were better.

11. Very little was done to help teachers to develop their teaching in the years following the

inspection, and in fact, opportunities presented by the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies were at best, not followed up, and at worst, ignored. With few models of good practice in the school, teachers did not have the opportunity which colleagues elsewhere had, to see for themselves what high quality literacy and numeracy teaching looked like. Any classroom monitoring that took place was sporadic, judgmental and not developmental. As a consequence, when the new head took over, her analysis of teaching matched the previous report. In addition, several years of mundane activities conducted at a pedestrian pace with little expected and lacklustre outcomes meant that pupils had got used to working at a much slower pace and lower intensity than is acceptable. Inspectors estimate that the school was two to three years behind other schools in the development of its teaching, learning and curriculum.

12. Since then, the head has concentrated on exploiting all the various national initiatives such as the two strategies and performance management, to provide support and a structure for helping teachers to develop professionally. In this, she has been greatly helped by advice and support from the local authority and by the appointment of a new deputy head who provides a much needed model of good practice. Teaching and learning has improved as a result. Unsatisfactory teaching is now unusual; all teachers are capable of teaching a good lesson; teaching is satisfactory in all subjects and good teaching features in almost all; year fives regularly experience very good teaching. However, the senior management team are aware that there is still some way to go before the quality of teaching and learning matches that expected in other schools and which is necessary to help pupils to truly fulfil their potential.

13. A common feature of most lessons is that the initial whole class introduction and explanation is business like and engaging for pupils who take an active part in it. In some lessons, such as the mental maths element of numeracy lessons, this is often a good feature with plenty of interaction and a very animated response from the class. Good use of mini white boards makes it possible for all pupils to respond quickly and for teachers to monitor understanding and give instant feedback. Final summing-ups are not as well used and in some cases, where time targets are not set and activities take too long, lessons simply stop with no opportunity for pupils to think about what they have learned.

14. The main factor in deciding the quality of teaching involves the way introductions are followed up by pupils in the classroom. In the very best of lessons, pupils are given challenging open-ended tasks which require them to use their initiative and stretch their understanding. This was seen in a very good mathematics lesson where the simple expedient of providing pupils with two sets of numbers in 'clouds' on the board, meant that they could choose a very large range of division 'sums' to practice 'clumping' (breaking off large known multiples and adding the factors). Higher attainers thrived on the chance to set themselves ever harder targets while the teacher concentrated on supporting the small group of less confident mathematicians. Learning objectives, clearly explained at the start of the lesson, were followed up in a focused summing up session and every pupils was aware of what they had learned. Pupils responded with energy, enthusiasm and a good deal of enjoyment.

15. This was not the case in two unsatisfactory lessons where, after a sound start, pupils were given work to do that they found confusing and not very interesting. Black and white photocopies of magnificent religious buildings in one lesson and worksheets which actually prevented pupils from doing what they were asked in the other, did not help. In both cases, those pupils not working with an adult soon lost concentration and everything slowed to a sluggish compliance rather than lively involvement. For some, this was an opportunity for low level fussing while in other classes, some disengaged pupils wasted time for others. This was particularly the case in the long afternoon sessions that not infrequently deteriorated towards the end into lethargic boys and girls working at low level tasks at a slow pace.

16. Planning is much improved though in some lessons, the focus is still on the activity rather than the learning objectives. However, recently introduced assessment and target setting arrangements have not been in place long enough for teachers to fully understand what appropriate expectations for the pupils in their classes are. Consequently, they are sometimes not high enough. This is compounded in the 'sets' used in literacy and numeracy where, in most

cases, the more able pupils within each set are not being stretched. On the other hand, a definite recent improvement has been the way the teaching role of learning support assistants has been upgraded and they make a good contribution to the learning of lower attainers in the lower sets and especially those pupils on the special needs register. Support usually takes place within the classroom but when appropriate, such as during the activities part of the numeracy hour, pupils are withdrawn to ensure that their particular needs are met. Teachers work closely with individual pupils and learning support staff to plan short-term targets and as a result, they now use individual education plans (IEPs) much better to support learning. This indicates a significant improvement in target setting over the last year.

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

17. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory, with a broadly based and appropriate range of subjects being taught. All now meet statutory requirements and religious education is appropriately taught using the locally agreed syllabus. However, the current timetable means some of the non-core subjects being taught for over an hour and a half for one subject in the afternoon. As a result some year groups are only able to cover one unit of a subject in a year and not always in sufficient detail, particularly history and music. Equality of access and opportunity are satisfactory.

18. Long and medium-term planning is satisfactory. Policies are in place for all subjects but until very recently subject managers have not been involved in the process of reviewing them. The headteacher has changed this system and subject managers will, in consultation with the rest of the staff, review all policies biennially and add guidelines for teaching each subject. Medium-term plans for many areas of the curriculum have been reviewed and are being adapted to include the national suggested guidelines for each subject. Teachers use a common format for literacy and numeracy plans. During the inspection, teachers used a common, easy to follow, format for all other subjects, which clearly indicated the learning objective for each lesson, tasks and activities for each group of pupils and planned assessment opportunities. This is good practice and supports learning well.

19. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. Though their full implementation was delayed, the school has worked hard to catch up and is now in a period of consolidation. However, teachers have not yet had the opportunity to visit other schools to see how the teaching of literacy and numeracy has developed further over the last two years. Links with other subjects are being made but this is not yet embedded in planning. The present arrangement where pupils are organised into two classes according to their ability (sets) is impeding some pupils' learning because it is leading to very different expectations for the two groups of broadly average attainers in the two sets.

20. Provision for extra-curricular activities has improved significantly since September 2001. Parents felt, justifiably, that this required some improvement, particularly in provision for sporting activities. The school has successfully addressed this and pupils are now offered a range of activities organised by teachers, support staff and parents including football, cycling proficiency and several clubs for recorders and science. School teams now take part in matches with other schools. Pupils also take part in residential visits and, this year, have been able to visit to local places of interest to support their learning.

21. Staff make satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The planned curriculum, which was not in place in 1997, includes an appropriate policy for teaching sex education and for drug awareness education. An officer from the local police force visits the school regularly to work with pupils in all classes. All teachers satisfactorily follow up these sessions with the pupils. Older pupils have also taken part in a Junior Citizen's Activity Day organised by the police. The school is working towards a 'Healthy School's Award'.

22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good and improving. All pupils identified as having SEN are given good support in the classroom, particularly for literacy and numeracy. Those with very specific needs are well supported by learning support assistants in

many areas of the curriculum to ensure that they are fully included in all activities. This provision has improved significantly this year. For example in a geography lesson in which pupils were discussing the suitability of moving a settlement to certain areas, one pupil, who is visually impaired, was provided with a model of the areas made for him to feel. A particularly good feature of provision is the full involvement of pupils in setting and meeting the targets on their individual education plans. They have copies of their own clearly measurable short-term targets and are very proud when they report their achievements to the teacher.

23. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is satisfactory and is another area of very recent significant improvement. Peel Common School has long-term links with the local Pentecostal church, whose members regularly join assemblies. As a result of these links, pupils often contribute to charity events for children in Romania and have received letters back. Local community workers such as representatives from the local council and sewage works have talked to pupils about environmental issues. Visits from theatre groups and the forthcoming 'Arts Week' provide valuable links with the community.

24. Links with partner institutions are good and have also significantly improved very recently. A good transfer and induction programme for pupils coming from the infant school has been arranged with much better liaison between teachers in both schools. The special needs coordinators (SENCO) from the two schools meet to ensure that the correct provision is made for pupils who have special needs and learning support staff visit the infant school to meet and observe the pupils they will be working with. Links with the local secondary school are also good. All year six pupils spend two days at the secondary school and take part in the normal school activities. The SENCO visits the junior school to ensure the needs of pupils with special needs are organised for when they start at the secondary school and the head of year seven brings some former pupils to the junior school to talk about their experiences in secondary school. These procedures ensure a smooth transfer between the two schools. In addition teachers are able to meet with other teachers in their cluster group and maths 'Master Classes' have been organised for very able pupils in year six.

25. The school makes overall sound arrangements for promoting pupils' personal development. Provision for the social development of pupils is satisfactory. It has only been in the last year that pupils have been given wider opportunities for responsibility outside the classroom (for instance, through the school council, and the new tasks given to year six pupils at lunchtimes), and this is still a developing area. During recent years the older pupils have been given a variety of new responsibilities. Year six pupils man phones and reception desk at lunchtime, control the use of the play equipment, and act as door monitors to let pupils in and out of the school to the playground. Year five pupils will soon take over the management of the play equipment. In class, a significant proportion of lessons offer pupils little opportunity for investigative and independent learning. The school has only recently begun to recruit teams to play in competitive sport. Nevertheless, it is an orderly and happy community, with a growing self-esteem and pride in itself, and pupils share these views. The school promotes fundraising for charity, particularly for a project in Romania.

26. Provision for the moral development of pupils is satisfactory. Staff provide good role models for pupils working well together and treating each other, pupils and visitors with courtesy and consideration. The school code of conduct is prominently displayed, and all pupils are listed on the behaviour chart in each classroom, which positions them in a green or red 'warning' zone. Pupils kept in for unsatisfactory behaviour have to write a letter of apology to the person inconvenienced by their behaviour. This obliges them to reflect on other people's points of view and to understand why they themselves are being punished. Assemblies are planned around clear moral and social themes, and teachers ensure that these are presented in contexts which mean something to the pupils. For instance, the deputy head used the example of footballers abusing and injuring a referee to illustrate the need to respect rules, on and off the football pitch. Pupils have until recently had very little opportunity to consider and debate moral issues and some staff are still inexperienced in helping them to do so.

27. Arrangements for promoting pupils' cultural development are satisfactory. The school has

begun to make use of local facilities to enrich the curriculum, and in the last year pupils have visited the Mary Rose Museum at Portsmouth and Portchester Castle. Representatives of the Roman re-enactment group Legio Secunda Augusta came to the school, and two different theatre groups have worked with groups of pupils. A local jazz band provided entertainment and musical opportunities. During the Arts Week planned for later this term, a local artist will be in residence at the school and a jazz dancer will work with older pupils. Pupils have studied the work of the artists Georgia O'Keefe and Kandinsky recently, and year five pupils have been studying the Caribbean island of St Lucia in geography. Pupils are made aware of the beliefs and practices of different faiths through religious education lessons but there are very few artefacts or books reflecting non-English and non-Christian cultures, and teachers sometimes miss opportunities to explain and celebrate the nature of other cultures. Thus in a music lesson which featured music from the Punjab, pupils were given no information or pictures of the people and the area from which it came. Recent additions to the musical aspect of pupils' cultural development have included a school choir and lessons in violin and keyboard taken by visiting teachers.

28. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils are given some opportunities to reflect and explore their feelings in assemblies but some assemblies seen during the inspection did not fulfil statutory requirements as acts of worship. No mention was made of any deity and no form of worship took place. The use of music is underdeveloped. Only one assembly during the inspection gave pupils an opportunity to sing, and although taped music was played while pupils entered, it was often almost inaudible, was not discussed, and was not played while pupils left. Not enough is done to make assembly time seem special. In class, teachers concentrate on conveying factual information. They do not look for opportunities to awaken pupils to an appreciation of intangible areas of life, such as the beauty of nature, or the dignity and power of places of worship. Thus in a lesson on the habitats of minibeasts, there was no encouragement to wonder at the variety of their different ways of life. In a religious education lesson on Sikhism the only resources used were black and white photographs, which gave pupils very little idea of the visual impact of visiting a Gurdwara.

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

29. The school takes satisfactory care of its pupils. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The school office has been using an electronic system for recording and monitoring attendance since the start of this academic year. This is backed up by meticulous systems for checking the whereabouts of every child. Separate detailed records are kept of unpunctuality and holiday absences, both of which are regularly monitored for emerging patterns. The importance of attendance and punctuality is strongly emphasised in all information for parents. Register keeping fulfils statutory requirements, and is checked at least termly by the educational welfare service.

30. Procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour, and for eliminating oppressive behaviour, are good. Although the behaviour policy needs to be updated, the system of sanctions and rewards it outlines is used consistently in all classes. The school is currently developing an anti-bullying policy with the help of an assistant educational psychologist. Pupils are made fully aware of the school's code of conduct and devise their own classroom rules. Some referred to having won rewards for their behaviour or its improvement in their comments on their annual reports. The headteacher meets the lunchtime supervisors at least twice a term to develop their behaviour management skills and discuss any particular issues. She and one of the supervisors have attended a training course on play activities. The school provides a good range of small games equipment for use at playtimes. However, some staff are more confident and successful at managing behaviour in and out of class than others.

31. The school has sound procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupil welfare. This represents a considerable improvement from the last inspection, when the lack of provision for child protection was a key issue. A very detailed child protection policy is given to all members of staff and new governors when they join the school. However, the health and safety policy still needs to be updated. The headteacher, as the child protection liaison officer, knows she needs to update her training and this has been arranged for later this term. Appropriate links have been

made with outside agencies, except for the educational welfare service, which is currently in some disarray locally. The cluster group of schools to which Peel Common belongs, holds working lunches with representatives of the social services, the police and the educational psychology service. This has proved very useful in establishing contacts and gaining support for particular children and families. The school has particularly close links with the Visual Advisory Service. The three fully qualified and very experienced first aiders all have up-to-date qualifications. Between them coverage is ensured throughout the school day. The dedicated medical room has a bed and a well-stocked first aid cupboard. Small first aid boxes are kept in each of the two 'practical work' areas outside the classrooms. The school takes appropriate action before offsite visits to ensure that health and safety requirements are met.

32. The governors use a local authority checklist to carry out termly site inspections followed by premises committee meetings at which any discrepancies are checked and noted. Staff inform the governors or the headteacher verbally of any concerns in between inspections: no record is kept of these or of any action taken to deal with them. The school needs to improve its formal recording of risk assessment and actions taken. Electrical and physical education equipment is tested annually by outside contractors. The school has improved its security arrangements since the last inspection, although it has had only minor problems with vandalism, and no burglaries or serious incidents. The headteacher and a governor have attended a training course on personal safety awareness and will be providing training for other members of staff.

33. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The school has greatly improved its provision for the support of individuals with special needs since the last inspection, and recently a member of staff has been appointed to ensure that able pupils are well supported. A weekly session is held for a small group of pupils who find it difficult to control their emotions and relate badly to others. One year five class is piloting the use of one-to-one pupil conferences, where each child has the opportunity to discuss their personal and academic development, and to plan targets for the future. Several lunchtime clubs have been set up to relieve pressure on the playground and a homework club for year five pupils has been introduced.

34. The policy for personal, social and health education needs to be reviewed and updated, and the scheme of work is under review, since current arrangements for personal, social and health education do not ensure progression in learning for all pupils. Pupils are informed about healthy living, and the police and school nurse support drugs and sex education teaching. Pupils are given good guidance on safety issues, both by regular visits by a community police officer, and by the school's own information on how to cope with difficult or dangerous situations. For instance, year six were learning through role-play how to contact the coastguard if they saw someone in trouble in the sea. Most classes now use some form of circle time session, particularly for class assemblies, when pupils have the opportunity to discuss their feelings and ideas about important issues.

35. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection and are now sound, but have had insufficient time to become embedded and impact on pupils' achievement. The policy is under review, but there are clear structures in place for what information is passed on from year to year. Those used include the statutory assessments for pupils in year six, the optional tests in years three to five, and additional nationally accepted standardised tests in reading. Assessment has been built into units of work such as science concept mapping. Tracking against national criteria in the foundation subjects is recorded as; working towards, target achieved and target exceeded for each year group. All this information is in the process of being stored electronically to enable teachers to set individual pupil targets for improvement and to monitor their progress against these.

36. The use of assessment to guide planning and the monitoring of individuals pupils' progress is sound at present and has the potential to be very effective as the arrangements for pupil assessment driven by the headteacher and deputy head become established. Until recently, insufficient attention has been paid to improving teachers' skills in assessing pupils' work, levelling and moderating samples against National Curriculum criteria, and thus enabling pupils, in

particular the older ones, to know what they need to do to achieve a higher level.

37. Assessment procedures for identifying pupils, who find learning difficult, are good. The school uses the criteria set out by the local education authority very effectively, supported by results from standardised tests and assessments. Diagnostic tests are also used by the SENCO to identify pupils with specific learning needs. These are used well to ensure that good support is provided for pupils who find learning or conforming difficult and are fully included for all areas of the curriculum. Pupils' individual education plan reviews are very regular and the annual reviews of pupils with statements of special educational needs meet requirements. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good. Links with other agencies are good and the school regularly receives support and advice from the educational psychologist. Other support services contribute well to support the school in meeting the needs of the pupils.

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

38. The headteacher has worked hard over the past eighteen months to improve links with parents and they are now good. Peel Common School now operates an 'open door' policy: teachers are available for informal consultation at the end of school and parents can see the headteacher at short notice. Parents are invited to assemblies for each year group once a term, and these have been very well attended. They are also invited to monthly coffee mornings at the school. Good arrangements have been made to introduce new pupils and their parents to the school and to inform parents of the arrangements for transfer to secondary schools. However, homework arrangements are inconsistent between classes, and pupils are not always given feedback on the work done at home, which parents find frustrating.

39. A great improvement has been made in the quality of information for parents, which is now satisfactory. The headteacher has introduced thrice-termly newsletters for parents giving dates and details of forthcoming events. Information evenings about sex education, statutory assessment tests, the year six residential week and cycle safety have been held and an open evening organised when parents could come in to see the new information communication technology suite. A 'sharing achievement' board has been set up in the foyer, where work shown in assembly is displayed and children can show it to their parents. The prospectus and governors' reports fulfil statutory requirements and give information clearly and concisely.

40. Parent consultation evenings are held each term. Parents are invited to comment on their children's reports and these comments are seen by the headteacher. Reports include suggestions of ways in which parents could help their children's progress but these are sometimes written in jargon that obscures the meaning, such as the suggestion that parents should 'encourage your child to read between the lines of texts'. Some reports include unhelpful negative comments on pupils, such as 'distracts others while giving the impression of working hard'. Pupils are given two grades for each subject, one for effort and one for their progress towards 'achieving the end of year targets for this age group'. This phraseology is vague and gives parents no guidance as to their own child's attainment. The reports also include the percentage of pupils in each year group who have achieved these targets in English, mathematics and science. These percentages are sometimes mistaken by parents for scores achieved by their children in some form of end of year exam. The reports do not include any information on the topics studied during the year and the school does not give parents any other curriculum information at present.

41. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to children's learning, both at home and through their involvement with the school. Parents' evenings are very well attended and there was a good response to the various meetings the school arranged on specific topics last year. Most parents hear their children read at least once a week, encourage them to do their homework and to make use of computers at home and the local library. The 'Friends' organisation raised about £1,300 for the school last year with activities such as an Easter egg raffle and a Ladies' Night with Body Shop and Chocaholics stalls. They also organise social events like a family picnic on Sports Day and pupil discos. The head has given the committee her wholehearted support. A small number of committed parents help in school and others are always happy to help with offsite visits and

special events such as the 'Egyptian Day'. Others help with extracurricular clubs. It was noted at the time of the last inspection that the school was slow to take up offers of help from parents: this is certainly not the case now.

42. Links with parents of pupils who find learning and conforming difficult have improved significantly recently. Parents of pupils who have statements of special educational needs are fully involved in the annual reviews. Both formal and informal discussions are held with parents of pupils at other stages of the Code of Practice. Parents receive a copy of their child's individual education plan and return a signed slip to say they have received the plan. Targets are discussed with the parents at the consultation evenings.

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

43. The last report said that the headteacher was not providing sufficient leadership in managing the school and that key aspects of management were unsatisfactory. These included a lack of focus on standards and quality in teaching; insufficient monitoring of these aspects; insufficient involvement of subject managers and the governing body in leadership and management; weaknesses in planning for improvement and a lack of a strategic view in financial planning. This constituted a major part of the agenda detailed in the key issues.

44. Despite the serious nature of the weaknesses in leadership and management identified, very little changed over the next few years. When the new head took over in 2001, she inherited all the outstanding issues and a staff and governing body who had had very little experience of playing a full role in managing and decision making. The school was a very closed community which, despite national initiatives and the major input of ideas, funding, resources and support available and seen in other schools, had stopped developing. Excellent leadership and very effective management have ensured that all that has changed.

45. Very sensibly, the head concentrated first on opening up the school and ensuring that the necessary management structures and procedures were in place to start to involve everyone in the process of making decisions to improve the school. With much help from the local authority, a process of developing an effective monitoring and evaluation cycle focusing on standards was established and all existing policies and procedures were audited. Very comprehensive and detailed reports to governors helped them to start to properly understand where the school was and what needed to be done. The arrival of the new deputy head in September 2001 gave a boost to this process and he now takes a full share in the various initiatives and procedures which are steadily being implemented. Together, they form a very powerful team with a clear understanding of what needs to be done, a shared vision for the development of the school and the optimism and energy to bring this to fruition.

46. A key element of this has been the encouragement, training and opportunity given to the rest of the staff so that they can start to properly manage their areas of responsibility and share in the development of the school community. These are early days, but already many are making a difference in their area of responsibility. A good example is in the management of special needs which now has its proper profile in the school and where much better use is being made of available resources to support pupils in need. However, the senior management team is aware that much needs to be done in the areas of training and support before all coordinators have the confidence and capacity to make the fullest contribution.

47. Management of provision for special educational needs is good. All paperwork is very well organised and the coordinator monitors individual education plans regularly to ensure that the targets set by the teachers are appropriate to meet the individual needs of the pupil. This year she has been able to work with the headteacher to ensure that best use is made of learning support staff. Pupils who find learning difficult and those with behavioural difficulties are thus able to make good progress. The special needs governor is supportive and very much appreciates being more involved in the discussions and monitoring than in previous years.

48. The governing body had not traditionally been involved in taking an active strategic role in decision making or in monitoring the school's work. Governors were too reliant on the previous

head for information and so not sufficiently aware of the appropriateness of decisions made. Most of the present governing body are new but it is already clear that, individually and as a group, they have the best interests of the school at heart and are prepared and have the capacity to fulfil the role the school requires of them. All have undertaken relevant training and, with the help of the head, a full range of committees, working groups and individual responsibilities have been established with a calendar of meetings set up for the school year. Appropriate structures and procedures are in place and business is being conducted efficiently and well. Very important elements of this process have been the commitment of the governing body to ongoing self-evaluation, the very straight-forward and detailed reports the head has provided to bring governors up to speed on the current situation, and their increasing involvement in 'hands-on' monitoring in school.

49. Monitoring of teaching, planning, pupils' work and understanding, and of the effectiveness of actions taken, have become central to the decision making and management process. Teachers now receive clear feedback on their teaching and performance management has been welcomed as a positive tool for helping all staff to share in their own professional growth. A recent decision to working towards 'Investors in People' is a very good indication of the school's commitment to the professional development of its entire staff. All available national assessment data is being analysed to monitor progress and look for trends and increasing use is being made of in-house assessments for the same purpose.

50. Planning for improvement was an issue in 1997 and at the time the present head took over was at best, ineffective. With the very full agenda she inherited, the impact of actions already taken is obvious. As it becomes more manageable and staff and governors more used to the process, the school strategic plan has itself developed into a practical and useful management tool. Current priorities are appropriate and focused on standards and provision and ways of building on the process are constantly being looked at.

51. Overall strategic use of resources, including funding, is good. Much better use is being made of teaching and support staff, the accommodation and books and equipment. The headteacher has taken a very proactive role in changing the culture of financial planning to support the school's educational development. It is now very good, and is generated through open consultative procedures, a marked improvement since the last inspection. Unfortunately, the many government funding initiatives, prior to the head teacher's appointment, were not acted upon and as a result opportunities to improve the accommodation and resources have been missed. The school's strategic plan incorporating the school improvement action plan provides a sensible framework to identify priorities, costings, timescales and the person responsible for each action. The headteacher delegates appropriate levels of responsibility for spending to staff with management responsibilities; yet again this is only a recent development.

52. Arrangements for financial control and administration are very good and audit recommendations have been addressed. The school's administrative officers maintain effective financial procedures that provide valuable support to the headteacher and governing body, and they provide a welcoming 'front of house'. The use of information technology to support the management of the budget is well developed but otherwise its use is only satisfactory. Staff are beginning to store assessment data electronically to record academic progress but its use to support teachers' planning is limited.

53. The extent to which the principles of 'best value' have been applied are good. The governors have started to consider these in relation to competitive purchasing, for example, in equipping the information and communication technology suite, and consulting the parent body, but have found the use of comparative data from the local authority limited, although it has generated discussion.

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

54. To build on the very good improvements to provision put in place and so ensure that pupils achieve the sort of standards seen in similar schools, the governors, headteacher and staff of Peel Common School should:

- (1) Seek to bring the overall quality of teaching up to levels seen in the best lessons by:
  - accepting that pupils throughout the school are capable of achieving more than they are and expecting them to do so (Paragraphs 12, 16 & 69)
  - ensuring that learning objectives and not activities are the priorities in all planning and that these are known by pupils and reviewed at the end of all lessons (Paragraphs 13, 14, 60, 72 & 97)
  - planning activities which require pupils to take some responsibility for how they will organise, improve and present their work (Paragraph 6)
  - setting specific targets and time limits for all activities to encourage a sense of purpose and urgency among pupils (Paragraphs 15, 61, 62, 67 & 72)
  - making use of teachers' subject strengths and interests in other classes
  
- (2) Ensure that the way the curriculum is organised and timetabled best meet the needs of pupils by:
  - analysing the impact of current 'setting' arrangements on the achievement of pupils of all abilities (Paragraphs 3, 55, 58 & 66)
  - investigating the impact that the present afternoon timetabling arrangement has on the breadth of the curriculum and pupils' attitudes to learning (Paragraphs 8, 15, 17 & 72)
  - deciding what the optimum length of lessons in the non-core subjects such as physical education and music should be (Paragraph 79 & 81)
  - using all this information to create a timetable and ways of organising teaching and learning which best meet the learning needs of Peel Common pupils
  
- (3) Provide pupils with the opportunity and encouragement to work in ways in which they can be proud of what they have achieved and produced by:-
  - implementing all the suggestions in (1) above
  - ensuring that all work has a real purpose and that it is valued and appreciated to encourage pupils to want to improve and present their work well (Paragraphs 95 & 97)
  - cutting down on the use of worksheets so that pupils can have the satisfaction of organising and producing work which is all their own (Paragraphs 59, 61, 66, 69 & 81)
  - occasionally giving pupils the opportunity to develop, improve and present their work for a special 'audience' such as a display, an assembly, a group or class book or a special project. (Paragraph 84)

**OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Pupils' spiritual development is not sufficiently emphasised; books and other resources for other faiths and cultures are in short supply and some assemblies do not fulfil requirements (Paragraph 27, 28 & 97)
- Some health and safety policies need updating (Paragraphs 31, 32)
- Subject coordinators for most of the non-core subjects are not yet sufficiently active in improving provision and standards in their subjects (Paragraphs 18, 46, 91 & 94)
- Pupils' reports and homework do not fulfil their real purpose (Paragraphs 38 & 40)

**PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

***Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection***

Number of lessons observed

50
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

21
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### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		2	19	27	2		
Percentage		4	38	54	4		

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents two percentage points

### 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)		221
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		54

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	94.6
National comparative data	94.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	22	36	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	20
	Girls	27	19	34
	Total	42	34	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (85)	59 (75)	93 (98)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	15	18
	Girls	31	23	32
	Total	47	38	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (75)	66 (79)	86 (88)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	5	0
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers and classes: Y3– Y6

Number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.1
Average class size	27.6

#### Education support staff: Y3– Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
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### Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	475334
Total expenditure	486237
Expenditure per pupil	2105

Total aggregate hours worked per week	136
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Balance brought forward from previous year	17151
Balance carried forward to next year	6248

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

#### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	221
Number of questionnaires returned	56

#### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	50	5		
My child is making good progress in school.	48	39	11	2	
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	64	5	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	41	25	5	2
The teaching is good.	43	48	7		2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	38	7	5	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	27	2	7	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	25	5	5	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	43	4	7	2
The school is well led and managed.	57	34	2	5	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	38	12		

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

36	30	21	2	11
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Other issues raised by parents

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

### **ENGLISH**

55. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, speaking and listening are average, but below average standards in writing place overall attainment English below the national average at the end of year six. The school has gone some way in year six to recognising the problems associated with the setting of pupils for literacy by creating a third set out of the two classes for three sessions a week. However, in years four and five, the two set arrangement has not benefited the average ability pupils in the lower set and the needs of all pupils should be addressed when reviewing setting arrangements. Standards are improving steadily through the school and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. While pupils with special educational needs are achieving well over time against their prior attainments, the attainment of higher ability pupils is below national expectations.

#### **Speaking and Listening.**

56. Year six pupils attain average standards in speaking and listening skills. They talk and listen confidently in a range of situations as, for example, when listing the criteria for a good Jubilee poster. Year five pupils asked questions of a 'hot seated' pupil taking the role of Muris, the father of a family in war torn Bosnia Herzegovina. Year three pupils worked well collaboratively in offering opinions about changes they could make in the locality. Year group assemblies, often celebrating work in history and geography, focus on speaking skills. However, there are too few planned opportunities provided, for example through a wide range of drama related activities, for pupils to fully develop their speaking skills.

#### **Reading**

57. Overall standards in reading by the end of year six are similar to the national average, and a significant number of pupils read very well. By the end of year six, most pupils read confidently and accurately for a range of purposes. They talk about their books and are beginning to offer opinions about them, although few are able to make comparisons between a number of different authors. Most can identify at least one different author. Pupils in years three and four are developing their reading skills systematically. They read a good range of texts, enjoy reading and are heard to read regularly. Teachers encourage reading through group reading activities, for example, year four pupils read 'The Borrowers' as a play text in a group, choosing their roles and reading their parts very sensibly. Year five pupils read, as a class, the text 'No Gun for Asmir' changing the text from third to first person in preparation for diary writing. All pupils have a home school reading log, and most are heard to read at home. Pupils in years five and six use information from research well and understand how the school library is organised. Reading records are well maintained and pupils often write book reviews.

#### **Writing**

58. Standards of writing achieved by pupils by the end of year six are below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that teachers are adopting strategies to improve the weaknesses in this area and that writing is improving through the school. Recent in-service training, focused on writing, is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, and they are writing for a wider range of purposes. Pupils in all years made notes either using small white boards or paper. For example, in a year three lesson pupils wrote down questions on a large sheet of paper in preparation for a 'hot seating' activity. In a year four lesson pupils focused on punctuation used in an advert and most know that 'Act now' is a command and the use of an apostrophe for omission and possession. From a photocopied text, year five pupils used their skimming and

scanning skills to note down the feelings of a character. In a year six lesson pupils used persuasive writing with slogans to encourage people to attend the Jubilee celebrations. The upper set managed the task well, but there was a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils by, for example, asking them to use alliterations in their slogans.

59. Pupils are now beginning to write in a range of situations and there is more evidence of the planned use of writing across the curriculum. However, from the analysis of pupils' work, teachers' historic reliance on a surfeit of work sheets has inhibited the development of writing. There is also a perceived need to write everything on plain loose-leaf paper before sticking it in an A4 book which is not only time consuming but it also leads to work not being finished or kept. Pupils' hand writing is generally sound and, from an early age, joined and legible, but too much time is spent on clipping line-guides under the plain paper and this distracts pupils from gaining speed and accuracy in their writing. Spelling is systematically taught and homework set.

60. Teaching is mainly satisfactory with one very good and one unsatisfactory lesson seen, which is an improvement since the last inspection. However, teachers have not received all the earlier literacy training and although this has been a high priority in the last year and the local authority consultant very supportive, the quality of the literacy hour falls below that seen in most schools. Introductory whole class sessions are mostly well taught. Well-paced introductions and targeted questioning show that teachers have a good knowledge of the needs of individual children. Lessons are carefully planned with stated objectives but these are rarely shared with pupils so that they do not know what they should be learning. In the best lesson seen, the teacher asked pupils to review their learning against these objectives at the end of the lesson, and skilful questioning was used to extend learning within the lower ability year five set.

61. However, from a generally good introduction the written tasks are too worksheet orientated and expectations of what pupils can achieve and the pace at which they can work are too low. These factors contribute to pupils' achievement in English being only satisfactory. Teachers generally manage their pupils in a positive and effective way and their behaviour is good, but the lack of pace and rigour does not help them to develop a work ethic. They make use of computer to help pupils develop their word processing skills although computers were under used in the classrooms during literacy lessons. They deploy and brief their teaching assistants well, and this contributes to the effective support they give to both pupils with special educational needs and others groups with which they work.

62. Teachers are beginning to use their assessments of pupils to match work to pupils' needs and to sample and moderate writing across the school to increase their own awareness of how pupils' skills are developing in relation to National Curriculum levels. However, pupils are not sufficiently aware, particularly the older pupils, of how they need to improve in relation to these levels. The marking of work needs more consistency across the school.

63. The subject manager has worked hard, particularly in the last year with the local authority literacy consultants, to raise standards in writing, but there has not been enough time this year to make a significant difference to standards. Classrooms have pupils' literacy work well displayed, including good examples of imaginatively word-processed work, and most have key vocabulary and literacy prompts appropriate to the age of the pupils. A sufficient number of good quality fiction and non-fiction books and other resources support the teaching of literacy. Recently introduced sound assessment procedures have had insufficient time to track pupil progress and their use to support pupils' academic progress is so far only satisfactory.

## **MATHEMATICS**

64. Although results in national testing were good at the time of the last inspection, progress was said to be only 'sound' and aspects of the way the school organised groups by ability (sets), together with some weaker teaching was said to 'negatively affect progress' for lower and average attaining groups. Despite the opportunities presented by the introduction of the numeracy strategy, very little was done to improve provision for mathematics until the arrival of the new

head and subsequently the new deputy head, who is a leading maths teacher, as subject coordinator in September 2001. A version of the 'setting' criticised at the time of the last inspection is still in place and, having recognised that it is still 'negatively affecting progress' for many pupils, the coordinator has modified it in year five as a trial for considering more radical change throughout the school.

65. A consequence of the lack of attention to developing the subject while schools elsewhere were rapidly building up a much more rigorous way of teaching it, was that standards achieved in national testing relative to other schools dropped by the equivalent of over a year between 1999 and 2001. With improved planning, teaching and use of assessment over the year, pupils' achievement this year is now sound in most classes and good in year five. Standards are better in year six than last year but still below average with fewer pupils working at Level 4 than should be the case. However, pupils' achievement will need to be better in all years to catch up on the backlog from previous years.

66. Pupils' work in books and, very noticeably, on a large number of worksheets, shows that boys and girls have covered the ground recommended in the numeracy strategy in each year group. However, in most year groups, the difficulty levels between the work expected of the more able and least able in each of the two 'sets' is not very great. Not infrequently, all pupils in a set do the same work. In addition, many worksheets involve low level activities such as 'colour two-thirds of three kites' in year five. In most lessons, the initial mental maths sessions produced the most animated response from pupils and they showed the best levels of mathematical understanding. Lower attaining year threes responded well to a musical version of the 3x table and, using digit cards, showed they were happy answering their teacher's sharp questioning. Higher attaining year fours are confident in answering questions about the properties of polygons and 'top set' year sixes quickly translated 610 grams to 0.61Kg using mini white boards.

67. However, in many lessons the follow up activity resulted in much less focused work and a slower pace meant that less was completed than might be expected. In a year six lower 'set', the teacher used good, sharp questioning to help pupils to understand how to find the cost of one biscuit given the costing for 100g of each ingredient. Pupils responded well to this but, apart from a small group, most of the set are not very confident and several lost concentration when set the follow up task even though with a few prompts, they did understand the maths involved. As a consequence, several pupils, mainly boys, achieved much less than desirable in the time allotted. Sometimes, the teacher's good subject knowledge or lack of it leads to differences in learning. This was seen in year four, where one group made good progress translating shapes through the clear and well matched explanation and lively discussion and question and answer session. However, in the other higher attaining class, a less clear introduction resulted in the teacher needing to explain the task again to groups and individuals, some of whom took much longer than necessary to complete the task.

68. A very good indicator of what is possible was observed in a larger, year five higher attaining set where the coordinator motivated and cajoled pupils into attempting calculations they thought they could not do and proved they could. Boys and girls enjoyment was obvious and the level of their mathematical awareness surprising. One pupil suggests that  $25 \times$  a number is halfway between  $20 \times$  and  $30 \times$  - another relates  $196 \div 6$  to the fact that 196 minutes is just over three hours and a sixth of an hour is 10 minutes !! Many know that a remainder of 4 in this 'sum' equals two-thirds and several know that this is 0.666.. as a decimal. Throughout the lesson, pupils were clear about what they were trying to achieve and the teacher emphasised - 'if you don't know, ask' - at which one boy responded that he 'didn't get it'. While the majority got on, the few who 'didn't get it' volunteered themselves for help with the teacher - and soon they all did.

69. The management of the subject is now in very good hands. A lot has been done and the coordinator is very aware of what more needs to be done. Teachers are making much better use of assessment to set the level of challenge and modify planning but it is still not purposeful or accurate enough. Planning is more flexible and suited to pupils' actual needs but expectations are not high enough. Teachers' knowledge and confidence is improving but the coordinator needs to spend more time working alongside several colleagues to speed up this process. Resources are adequate but too much use is made of worksheets.

## SCIENCE

70. Standards in science are similar to the national average by the end of year six, which is better than the below average year six test results in 2000. There was a significant dip in test results last year but evidence from teacher assessments for those pupils at the end of year two showed that they had made satisfactory progress in their learning during the four years in the junior school. All pupils currently in the school are making satisfactory progress in their learning.

71. By the end of year six most pupils can explain how a series and a parallel circuit can be made. They know that a bulb will not light if there is a break in the circuit. Most pupils use scientific names for some major organs of body systems and identify the positions of these organs in the human body. They know how the organs work, and can explain how humans breathe using diagrams and captions. Higher and average attaining pupils in year five name the main parts of a plant and their functions. Lower attaining pupils name the parts of a plant but not all are confident to explain the functions of each part. Younger pupils in year four can identify food sources of different habitats using a range of books effectively. Most pupils identify the structure of a food chain in the local environment and are beginning to use the terms 'predator', 'prey', 'producer' and 'consumer' correctly when explaining their food chains. In year three, pupils investigate the permeability of a clay soil and a chalky soil. They understand that they have to use the same amount of water and soil to make the experiment a fair test and conclude that it takes longer to drain through the clay soil.

72. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are appropriately planned and the school has benefited from the support of their local adviser to help them plan activities to extend the more able pupils, particularly in the upper end of the school. This has had a positive impact on pupils' learning. However, lessons are often too long to keep the interest of the pupils. Time limits are not set for each task and sometimes lessons lack a clear focus. For example, in one lesson, pupils were asked to research for information about the food eaten by certain animals, living within the school environment. One group was asked to use the internet, another to find information from a CDROM and another to look for the information in non-fiction books. The teacher instructed each group to rotate to each activity and there was no time at the end of the lesson for pupils to share their information or for the teacher to establish whether the learning objectives had been achieved. Teachers usually question well to promote discussions and to assess knowledge and understanding. For example in one lesson the teacher targeted questions to establish whether pupils knew what plants need to survive. Resources are appropriately organised to enable pupils to settle promptly to tasks and teachers give satisfactory support to individuals to ensure understanding.

73. Satisfactory cross-curricular links are made with other areas of the curriculum, particularly mathematics and information technology. Pupils use the internet and CD ROMs to research information such as finding out what food is eaten by different animals. Pupils, of all ages, record data using graphs and tables. Pupils in year three use their knowledge of measuring liquids to ensure that the same amount of water was poured into each pot of soil.

74. Teachers are just beginning to use information from satisfactory assessment procedures to guide them in planning activities to meet the needs of the pupils. They are beginning to use the suggested end of unit assessment activities, identified in national guidelines for teaching science, as part of their assessment procedures. The school is aware that the area of looking at samples of pupils' work to agree on the national curriculum level of attainment needs more attention to raise teachers' confidence in assessing individual pieces of work. The coordinator has successfully amended the scheme of work based on the national guidelines for teaching science to meet the specific needs of the school. Resources are satisfactory and the school makes good use of its extensive grounds to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils in the older classes are benefiting from a weekly science club organised by one of the teachers who has particular expertise in science. This is a popular activity and pupils are invited to take part for blocks of ten weeks and to work towards Young Scientists awards. This develops their interest and investigative skills well

and has a positive impact on their learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN TECHNOLOGY**

75. Standards in art and design technology (DT) are as expected of pupils for the end of year six. Evidence, from looking at samples of pupils' work and from lesson observation, indicates that standards in art have improved and standards in DT have been maintained since the last inspection. Learning is satisfactory in both subjects for all pupils, including those who find learning difficult.

76. By the end of year six, pupils explore and collect visual information to help them develop their work. They use their knowledge and understanding of materials and processes to communicate ideas and meaning satisfactorily. Older pupils use their sewing skills and techniques to produce individual collages of a musical instrument based on a line drawing. In year five, pupils study closely the work and style of the artist Georgia O'Keefe to make observational drawings of flowers, using chalk and pastels. Pupils put together a range of techniques, learnt during the last six weeks, to create pictures of a high standard. They use tone, shade and colour matching effectively in their work. Younger pupils use pictures of paintings by Monet to practise tonal drawing and use the drawings satisfactorily to recreate collage pictures of their favourite Monet painting. Throughout their time in school, pupils develop their skills of colour matching and mixing. For example pupils in year four mix colours to match autumn leaves and older pupils look closely at colours in their environment and mix paints to create these colours.

77. Boys and girls have sound opportunities to work in a range of media, to create three-dimensional structures and to work in clay. This judgement is based on samples of their work and from photographic evidence collected by the coordinator. For example, year five successfully make three-dimensional figures based on a figure sketches of a group scene. Younger pupils make simple Egyptian masks as part of their history project and older pupils make very attractive three-dimensional masks inspired by their science investigation about the planets. Older pupils use clay to make picture frames and figures in a beach scene. The standard of this work is as expected of pupils of this age. Pupils use their sketch books well to practise the skills and techniques they are going to use in their work. They take a pride in the presentation of the sketchbooks, which are used effectively to support their learning.

78. In DT, pupils work with a variety of materials and components with some accuracy. They are beginning to pay attention to the quality of the finished article. Pupils in year four explain in detail how they designed and made a Roman cart or chariot. They could explain how they made a frame for the base, how they joined and reinforced edges of its frame and made the axle and wheels for the vehicle. They were able to evaluate their work and to adapt their original designs to improve the finished product. Pupils in year five talked confidently about their 'Happy Snapper' models. They planned their model and drew pictures of the expected finished product from different angles. They could explain the term 'pneumatics' and applied this knowledge effectively in their work. Examples of pupils' work included a turtle and a dog whose mouths could open and close, made from a range of materials. Pupils in the same year explained how they designed and made collages of Tudor costumes, using a variety of stitches.

79. The quality of teaching of art is satisfactory overall. No judgement can be made on the quality of teaching of DT because only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Good teaching of art was observed in one lesson in which the teacher's good subject knowledge enabled all pupils to achieve well. Art lessons are appropriately planned but many are too long and pupils do not have a time limit in which to complete their work. As a result, many pupils take too long to settle and are often off task chatting to their friends. Most teachers are using the sketchbooks effectively to encourage pupils to practise new skills and techniques before applying them to a piece of work and following the marking procedures, introduced by the co-ordinator. This is recorded in the back of the pupil's book so that it does not spoil the actual piece of work. It is a good example of teachers valuing the pupil's efforts and good marking. Teachers share their expertise in art and DT in year five and this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning.

80. Management of art is good and the coordinator works hard to support her colleagues in

planning. The art scheme of work is satisfactory and the coordinator has a clear view of what areas need to be developed in the school. She feels that more skills and techniques need to be taught directly and pupils given the opportunity to use these skills in a final piece of work. Photographs of displays are used to monitor continuity and progression of skills and the coordinator monitors samples of pupils' sketchbooks effectively. She has been instrumental in setting up an 'Arts Week' scheduled for later in the term when pupils in the lower school will be working with an artist in residence. Older pupils will experience a wide range of activities provide by the teachers and groups of pupils are working with a street jazz dancer.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

81. Standards in history and geography are in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of year six and have been sustained since the last inspection. Geography is planned in two units for each year group and this contributes to sound progression and continuity. However, planning in history allocates two units a year to years three and six and only one unit a year to years four and five and this inhibits pupils from developing skills on a frequent and regular basis and their achievement over time is only satisfactory. Pupils discuss their knowledge of history and geography with enthusiasm, but this is not reflected in their written work, which has a surfeit of low-level work sheets and few examples of challenging written work. In particular, the written work of higher attaining year six pupils does not reflect their knowledge and understanding of the subjects.

82. Year six pupils have a good understanding of time lines and can place events appropriately. In lessons studying the Ancient Greeks, they understand that the physical area of Greece is much as it is today, and that it arose out of the city-states. On a time line they can place events in Ancient Greece before the Common Era. They understand 'democracy' as freedom of speech and have a good understanding of many key words associated with the period. They can also talk quite knowledgeably about Britain and the wider world in Tudor times, which they studied in year five.

83. Year three pupils were enthusiastic in tackling the challenge of improving the local environment in terms of shopping, services and recreation. On a map they used symbols to indicate the improvement they required and in some groups were quite ruthless in demolishing existing homes to accommodate their plans! This activity generated good quality discussion and collaborative work. Ordinance survey mapping skills were enhanced in year four lessons when pupils studied maps of local villages and listed their facilities, while year five pupils investigated settlements and the reasons for their location. Year six pupils, who did not have a geographical unit at the time of the inspection, talk knowledgeably about their study of St Lucia.

84. The teaching of both history and geography is satisfactory. The units of study developed by the coordinator supports the teaching of geography well. Units are well introduced in both subjects and teachers have good subject knowledge. The main weakness is the over reliance on work sheets and the low expectations of pupils' ability to record their own ideas. There are some examples of pupils writing their own accounts, for example, their trip on the river Hamble, the mouth of a river, but these are too infrequent. The use of information and communication technology to support these subjects is also under developed.

85. The geography co-ordinator has worked hard to promote the subject through writing units of work and building up resources, for example, photographs of the locality to support OS maps. The new history coordinator is reviewing the scheme of work and the artefacts needed to support the subject. Assessment activities have been introduced in both subjects. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, visits have been arranged to support all local units in geography and there are also visits to support historical topics, for example, The Mary Rose and Portchester Castle.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

86. When the school was last inspected, pupils' progress was said to be slow because they had limited access to computers. Attainment was below that expected at the time and teaching was unsatisfactory with low expectations, limited expertise and poor class management to enable pupils to spend enough purposeful time being taught ICT skills.

87. This was an area where, belatedly, a start was made in improving provision before the new head arrived with the installation of a new computer suite in the room used as a library. A lack of expertise and confidence among existing staff meant that real progress in improving standards did not develop until nationally funded training for teaching and support staff started later in the year. All classes are now timetabled to work in the suite at least once a week and teachers are being encouraged to make use of the computers in other subjects when these sessions are not scheduled. As a consequence, pupils now have much more confidence in using the hardware and software. All know how to log on to the computer and access a variety of programmes using the mouse and the keyboard. Pupils in each year group use a word-processing programme to 'write' their work and they know how to change the font and size and colour of the text to suit their own purposes. When they have finished, they are able to save their work and, when appropriate, print it out. Unfortunately, although a colour printer is available, they printed out the one which only prints in black which limited the effect of their work.

88. Several examples of pupils putting the title and author on covers for their own books were seen with, in one lesson, pupils learning how to centre the text. In a year four lesson, pupils used a graphics programme to create a poster to promote athletics which is the current focus in physical education. Working in pairs, most pupils achieved a suitable slogan and several made good use of the graphics tools to draw and paint pictures or symbols. However, the teacher's long explanation meant that they only spent fifteen minutes out of the hour working on the computers. Older pupils showed that they know how to make use of CD Roms when researching Ancient Greeks and, in discussion, pupils in the same class explained how they accessed the email they were going to answer. Good use is made of the motivation provided by working on computers by learning support assistants to encourage lower attaining older pupils to practice their spellings in an 'Accelewrite / acceleread' programme.

89. All this shows a good increase in the amount of activity in the subject but there is still some way to go before older pupils especially, achieve what is now common in other schools. To catch up, pupils will need to spend even more time working on the computers either in ICT lessons or using them as a tool in other subjects such as art and music. The coordinator has worked hard, initially against the odds, to raise the profile of ICT in the school. She is aware that some aspects of the subject, notably the use of control technology, are underdeveloped and that some of her colleagues require further training. She has begun to develop detailed medium term plans with assessment tasks at the end of each unit to ensure that the full range of the subject is covered adequately. ICT record of achievement books detailing all that is now expected of pupils have very recently been introduced.

## **MUSIC**

90. In 1997, although pupils' overall attainment in music was as expected, progress in composing and making music was limited because of the lack of expertise amongst the teachers. This adequately describes the present situation except that the coordinator has put in a lot of effort into putting in the structures to improve the situation. It is perhaps significant that three classes did not have music timetabled during the inspection week and the year six lesson was taken as a year group on Friday afternoon. The one music lesson available for inspectors to observe was taken from a taped programme and did not involve the use of instruments. In fact, the year three pupils involved enjoyed listening to the Punjabi harvest song and, after a few practices, were able to 'hear' when to come in for the refrain which they sang tunefully and with some enthusiasm. The only other music heard during the week was singing in assembly which was satisfactory, and recorded music used also in assemblies and occasionally in class. The recorder club gives those pupils involved the chance to learn about playing together, sometimes in assemblies. In conversation, older pupils could remember 'doing' music but were unclear about what they had actually learned. Their knowledge of musical vocabulary and notation is limited.

91. The coordinator is not a music specialist but has used this to advantage by writing a new scheme of work based on Curriculum 2000 in a way that her fellow non-specialist colleagues can use. In this, she has made good use of local authority and commercial schemes. She is to be congratulated for introducing a choir and arranging for a small group of pupils to start to learn the keyboard and the violin. All the structures are in place but, as yet, music still has a low profile in the school and a good deal of work on implementing the planning and monitoring the outcomes is necessary.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

92. Lessons in games and athletics were observed during the week of the inspection, and evidence from teachers' planning and the school's scheme of work shows that pupils have opportunities to take part in all aspects of the physical education curriculum. In the lessons seen, the achievements of boys and girls are appropriate for their ages and have improved since the last inspection. All pupils swim in year five and most can swim 25 metres. There are opportunities to develop teamwork through orienteering and year five pupils have an annual residential activity based experience. Standards have been sustained since the last inspection.

93. The overall standard of teaching is sound. Pupils are well managed and there is generally a good pace to the lesson, enabling pupils to achieve maximum activity. A good example of this was in a year five rounders lesson, the teacher adapted the rules to ensure that all pupils batted and fielded and there was maximum participation. Teaching points were well made to develop skills and pupils were encouraged to evaluate their own skills and those of others. Pupils respond well and work together co-operatively. For example, in a year six lesson pupils recorded their performances in running against the clock and measured the distances they jumped and threw a ball. Athletics sessions generally contributed to pupils' use of mathematics and their social development through collaborative work.

94. The recently appointed co-ordinator is working to develop guidance and resources to support the scheme of work. The competitive school sports day introduced last month was much welcomed by parents, and the involvement in local school competition and the increasing number of extra activities are features that will raise the profile of PE in the school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

95. Pupils' attainment in religious education is as expected in the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those who find learning difficult, make satisfactory progress in their learning. However the amount and quality of work recorded in pupils' books is often of a low level in comparison to other schools, especially in the older classes. From lesson observations and in discussions pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of Christianity and some other world religions and achievement is satisfactory.

96. By the end of year six, pupils of all abilities can talk confidently, in some detail, about the differences between Christian and Sikh places of worship. They recall a visit they made to a local Christian church in a younger year group and explain the main features of a church. Many give detailed information about a Sikh temple (gurdwara) and know the importance of the Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Book) to Sikhs. They recall learning about the 'Five Pillars of Islam' and their significance to Muslims but are not able to recall any other details about the Islamic religion. Younger pupils describe briefly the places of worship of Jews, Sikhs, Muslims and Christians. In year four, pupils use the Creation story to distinguish between things that are good and evil and apply this to their own lives. For example, they know that lying, blaming others, stealing and killing are wrong and that being honest, polite, co-operative and helping people are the right things to do. Pupils in year five discuss responsibilities and the necessity to have rules living in a community sensibly, relating this to the Ten Commandments.

97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and all pupils make sound progress in their learning. Lesson plans are adequate but specific learning objectives are not always clear. As a result

pupils are often not taught about the beliefs of each religion in sufficient depth. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound but teaching is inhibited by a lack of artefacts and other resources to support learning. For example, in one lesson the pupils were given photocopied sheets about different places of worship and pupils did not have the opportunity to appreciate the beauty and wonder of churches, synagogues and mosques. This was satisfactorily addressed in another lesson, when pupils were given some reference books to look at. Good question and answer sessions promote discussions effectively but pupils are often given meaningless colouring exercises as evidence of recorded work. In an example of good teaching, observed during the inspection, the teacher had a very positive warm relationship with the pupils. A time limit was set for a group task, to create a set of rules for their community, which successfully ensured that pupils remained on task and achieved the objective of the lesson.

98. Management of religious education is satisfactory and the very new coordinator's action plan will continue to improve standards and provision. This includes a review of the scheme of work, improved resources and monitoring of pupils' work. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers are beginning to use the end of key stage level descriptors, as identified in the locally agreed syllabus, to assess individual pupil's attainment and progress. Resources are at present not adequate with little use made of visits or visitors to school to support pupils' learning.