

INSPECTION REPORT

FOXHILLS INFANT SCHOOL

Colbury, Southampton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116024

Headteacher: Mrs J Barrett

Reporting inspector: Mrs H Bonser
22870

Dates of inspection: February 28th – March 3rd 2000

Inspection number: 197078

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Foxhills Colbury Southampton
Postcode:	SO40 7ED
Telephone number:	01703 292453
Fax number:	01703 293261
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Dibben
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Hilary Bonser	Registered inspector	English; Geography; History. Equal opportunities	The school's results and achievements; Teaching and learning; Learning opportunities; Assessment; Leadership and management.
Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development; Care and welfare for pupils; Partnership with parents; Links with community; Accommodation.
Anthony Green	Team inspector	Mathematics; science; information technology; design technology; special educational needs.	Financial efficiency, staffing, resources.
Doreen Butterworth	Team inspector	Under-fives; religious education; art; music; physical education.	Personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Associates Ltd

Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a community infant school for boys and girls of 4-7 years of age. It has 245 full-time pupils, of whom 89 are in the reception classes and are not yet six years old. The school draws its pupils from the local area. The majority now comes from the nearby urban area of Totton, with the remainder coming from the local villages on the edge of the New Forest. This balance has changed since the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' attainments are now broadly average when they start school. There are 77 pupils with special educational needs, which is above the national average. This number has risen since the last inspection, although the number of pupils in the school has dropped slightly. About 7% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. At present there are no pupils who speak English as their second language or come from ethnic minority backgrounds.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Foxhills Infant School is an effective school with many good features. Pupils now achieve well, especially in English and science, where standards are above average. They behave well and are keen to learn. The school provides well for its pupils and the quality of teaching is good. The headteacher, governors and staff work together very well to improve standards. Compared to national figures, the school has a higher than average income, but provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading, writing and science are above average and pupils make good progress.
- Teaching is good or better in two-thirds of lessons.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership; the school is managed very well overall.
- Pupils behave well and work hard; they show good personal development and get on very well with each other and all the adults who work with them.
- There is a good range of learning opportunities; the school provides very well for pupils' moral and social development.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs; they make good progress.
- School and parents work together very well; parents are very satisfied with what the school provides.

What could be improved

- The unsatisfactory levels of attendance; there are many absences for holidays taken during term time.
- The opportunities for pupils to use information technology in all subjects.
- Some inconsistencies in marking, teaching strategies and lesson planning to make teaching and learning even better.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997, when it was found to be a school with a number of good features and several that were unsatisfactory. The action points noted have been successfully tackled, especially since the appointment of the present headteacher two years ago. Standards in information technology and design technology have risen. There is now an effective management structure and planning has improved. In addition, there has been a substantial improvement in the quality of teaching, resulting this year in rising standards in reading and writing. The quality of leadership and management has improved further and governors are now more fully involved in the school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for children in the foundation year has also improved further. There is a strong determination in the school to continue to raise standards and the quality of teaching and learning, backed by effective action and very good teamwork.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with		Key
	all schools	similar schools	

	1997	1998	1999	1999		
reading	A	A	C	D	well above average	A
writing	C	C	C	D	above average	B
					average	C
mathematics	A	B	C	E	below average	D
					Well below average	E

The results from last year in reading, writing and mathematics are average compared to schools nationally. They are below those of schools with a similar context and results over the last three years have fallen in reading and mathematics. In an unsettled period in management before the appointment of the present headteacher, the changes in the intake of the school were not tackled effectively. Since then, a number of well-planned steps have been taken to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards. It was too early to see their effect in the results of 1999. However, current work and lesson observations show that standards this year have improved and are now above average in reading and writing. This shows the increasing impact of the action taken. By the end of the reception year, most pupils reach the standards expected for their age. Boys and girls of all abilities achieve well in reading, writing and science by the time they leave the school. They are beginning to make good progress in mathematics this year, with the introduction of the national numeracy strategy. The school is making good progress towards the challenging targets it has set.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils like coming to school, they are eager to learn and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, and often very good, in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils act responsibly; they work well on their own and with others. They get on very well together and with all the adults in school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory; a quarter of the pupils have already been absent for family holidays this year.

Pupils are keen and interested in their work. They behave well and and this helps to create a very orderly environment, where they feel secure. They show real care and concern for each other and act sensibly. They work and play together very well and enjoy very good, relationships with the adults in the school. Attendance levels have fallen, because many parents take their children on holiday during term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Good overall	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good or better in 66% of lessons. It is very good or better in 30% and excellent in 9%. This shows a significant improvement from the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall, with only 3% that was very good. There has also been a marked reduction, from 17% to 5%, in the amount of unsatisfactory teaching seen. In English, mathematics, science and information technology, teaching is good and this helps pupils to achieve well in these lessons. Teaching is very good in music. In the well-taught lessons teachers are knowledgeable and very clear about what they expect pupils to learn. They ensure lessons are interesting and stretch pupils of all abilities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall; enriched by a good variety of visits and visitors. Few clubs for older pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; pupils have clear, achievable targets and are very well supported.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; very good provision for moral and social development, good for spiritual and satisfactory for cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Effective measures mean that pupils are supported and cared for well in all areas of school life.

The school has a very good partnership with parents who show outstanding commitment in adding to the range of pupils' learning opportunities, through, for example, the provision of the computer suite and cooking equipment, as well as their involvement in the library. The school also makes very good use of the grounds to provide a strong environmental dimension to the curriculum. The good provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes well to their good personal development and behaviour. However there are not enough opportunities for them to learn about people of other cultures in their local area.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall; outstanding leadership by the headteacher, supported very well by the senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; they take an increasingly active part in the management of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Strengths and weaknesses are analysed very well and result in effective action.

The strategic use of resources	Available money is used very well to support priorities on the school development plan.
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The headteacher has successfully promoted a very strong, shared sense of direction and very effective teamwork. There is a very clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards and well-planned action to achieve it. The improvements in reading and writing are an example of this. Principles of best value are applied very well to all decisions. The levels of staffing, the accommodation and learning resources are good overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Their children are well taught. • The school expects their children to work hard and helps them to make good progress. • The school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. • Children are well behaved. • Staff are approachable and responsive to their views and concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The frequency of information about their children's progress.

The judgements of the inspection team support the very positive views that parents have of the school. Evidence shows that the range of clubs for pupils is limited. There are already several appropriate ways for parents to obtain information about their children's progress and the school is altering the timing of the annual written report to improve these further.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Results in 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, based on average points, are broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 3 is above average in reading and well above average in writing. This reflects the particular focus last year by the school on improving the quality of writing. Variations between the performance of boys and girls are not significantly different from the national picture. Teacher assessments in science indicate that standards are above the expected levels. Compared to schools in similar context, the results are below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. National test results have fallen in reading and mathematics over the last four years but remained close to average in writing. There is well-documented evidence that there has been a change in the area from which the school draws the majority of its pupils over this time. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals remains similar, as it is an area of high employment. The change of context has, however, been accompanied by an increased number of pupils with special educational needs, together with a corresponding decrease in the number of higher attaining pupils, which is reflected in the baseline assessments over this period. In an unsettled year after the last inspection, without a permanent headteacher, these changes were not tackled effectively.
2. Since the appointment of the present headteacher, comprehensive, well-planned steps have been taken to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards. It is too early to see the full effect of these in last year's results. However, current work and lesson observations show that standards in reading and writing, as well as in science, are now above the expected levels and continue to meet national expectations in mathematics. This reflects the increasing impact of improved teaching and a number of carefully thought out, effective strategies to raise the standards of work of pupils of all abilities in these areas. The school has set challenging targets to continue to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics. These are based on the careful tracking of individual pupils and the school is on course to meet them.
3. Children's attainments on entry to the school, as shown in baseline assessments, are broadly average. Several have speech and language disorders. Children make satisfactory progress overall, firmly consolidating and broadening their knowledge and skills. By the end of the reception year the majority of children meets the expected levels in all the areas of learning and exceeds them in creative, personal and social development. In Key Stage 1, pupils of all abilities build on this secure foundation, make good progress and achieve well now, by the time they leave the school, especially in English and science and increasingly in mathematics and information technology lessons. This is a result of the improved teaching, challenging work and very good identification and provision for pupils in need of additional support or challenge. The good behaviour, concentration and positive attitudes that pupils have towards their work also make a significant contribution to this.
4. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English are above the expected levels in reading and writing and meet them in speaking and listening. Pupils make good progress overall. By the age of seven pupils listen carefully to their teacher and to each other and begin to build on the ideas of other people. Their speaking skills are not as well developed as their listening skills. While some speak confidently in front of groups of different sizes, many still need help to explain their ideas clearly. Pupils use a good range of strategies to establish the meaning of unfamiliar words and many read very expressively. They write confidently in a good variety of forms, often adding interesting detail. Their spelling of common words is generally accurate. The literacy hour has been introduced in a consistent way that gives continuity of approach for pupils as they move between year groups. Appropriate adjustments have been made this year to allow more time for teaching extended writing and re-drafting skills. The benefits from this are clear in the good progress pupils have made since September. Pupils are also given frequent opportunities in some subjects to practise and extend their literacy skills. For example they record their observations in science and provide newspaper reports about the Great Fire of London.
5. Standards in all aspects of mathematics, including numeracy, meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, they often make good progress in lessons

now, as a result of improved teaching and the introduction of the national numeracy strategy this year. By the age of seven, most add and subtract small numbers, identify halves and quarters and have a sound understanding of the place value of hundreds, tens and units. They improve their strategies for mental calculations. Pupils have some opportunities to use and extend their numeracy skills across the curriculum. In a Year 1 science lesson, for example, pupils plot the growth of hyacinth bulbs on graphs. However, such opportunities are not planned for systematically.

6. Standards in science are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject. They show a good understanding, for example, of the process of hypothesising, constructing a fair test and drawing conclusions. The grounds provide excellent, well-used opportunities to support and extend pupils' learning
7. Standards in information technology meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and have improved since the last inspection. The additional, well-used learning opportunities now available through the new computer suite are helping many pupils to make good progress, especially in word processing. They open files, edit and print their work. There are some good examples of the subject being used to support science, mathematics and literacy. In a lesson for more able writers in the suite, pupils used computers to draft and improve their story ideas. However, not enough use is made of computers in classrooms and planned opportunities for information technology across the curriculum are not fully exploited.
8. In religious education, the majority of pupils meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1 and makes satisfactory progress. They develop a sound knowledge of Christianity and the key features of Sikhism, although most are not aware that there are common beliefs in different religions. They improve their understanding of their feelings and actions, and of the effect of these on others. Assemblies and circle times provide good support for the subject.
9. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards broadly meet the expected levels in art, design technology, history, geography and physical education and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in music are above national expectations and pupils make good progress as a result of the consistently high quality of teaching. Standards are similar to those described in the previous report, except in design technology and music where they have improved.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in well-focused individual education plans. Tasks are well matched to their needs and they are very well supported with their work in class and when they are withdrawn for additional individual or group work. This is reflected in the significant number of them who meet the expected standards in reading, writing and science by the end of Year 2. The school now takes careful account of regular assessment information to track the progress of every pupil and set targets for them. Those who are not felt to be making sufficient progress are given additional support or more demanding work. This helps pupils of all abilities to achieve well, especially in literacy. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The good levels described in the previous report have been at least maintained and have, in some areas, improved. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and enjoy coming. This is reflected in their positive attitudes to all that the school offers them. Pupils' attitudes in lessons are good overall. From the youngest pupils upwards, they show good levels of concentration, engagement and focus on the task set. For example, in a reception year drama class, pupils were eager to take part in drawing and colouring the scenes for the story. They were fully involved in the 'journey' to find the bear and showed high levels of enjoyment in telling the story and using the appropriate words to describe each scene. Pupils listen well to the instructions given to them by teachers and other adults and most are willing to wait their turn to answer. Pupils work at a good pace and are prepared to seek out the next task. They work hard and are often heard to comment that they have done more and better than before. They are eager to learn and are willing to talk about what they are doing. On the very rare occasion when pupils' attitudes to learning slip, this relates directly to the quality of teaching. In the one instance observed, there was a lack of planning

and insufficient challenge to engage the pupils, and no clear expectations of behaviour. Pupils are beginning to take control over aspects of their school life. At the start and end of the day, they have the opportunity to exchange their library books. They do this enthusiastically, showing enjoyment in choosing books and using the school's library computer system confidently.

12. Behaviour in class and around the school is good; it is often very good. Pupils are able to sit still and listen to their teacher, they are polite to each other and to adults and show a good level of respect for property and equipment, such as musical instruments and computers. Pupils are aware of the school's expectations of behaviour and try hard to rise to them. These are reinforced through assemblies and circle time, if necessary. Those corrected for minor misdemeanours respond positively. Pupils were observed taking responsibility for their own and other's behaviour. One boy reminded his neighbour not to talk during assembly and, during circle time in a Year 1 class, another boy moved himself away from someone who was annoying him. Pupils are very tolerant of the behaviour of others, particularly of those who are experiencing specific difficulties in this area. Pupils also show good levels of self-discipline in the mature way in which, for example, they return their lunch boxes to the correct place without the need for supervision. Behaviour in the playground is good, with pupils being aware of each other and understanding the rules for a safe playtime. No bullying was observed during the inspection. Any brought to the attention of the school is handled quickly and effectively. Pupils are confident in approaching staff with any concerns. The school has not excluded a pupil in recent years.
13. Pupils show good personal development. They enjoy taking part in the day-to-day routines within school. Pupils distribute the registers at the start of each session and return them to the office. There is a good system whereby Year 1 and 2 classes have group leaders who are responsible, on a weekly basis, for ensuring that their group is well organised and involved in their lessons. Individual pupils are responsible for operating the compact disc player in assembly. There is evidence from the scrutiny of work that pupils are able to organise their own work when required to. Pupils making a paper model of a bear with moving parts were required to collect everything they needed and to complete the task with as little help as possible and many were able to do this. They work on their own or in small groups very sensibly, showing good levels of concentration.
14. Relationships across the whole school community are very good. Pupils relate well to each other and to the adults within school. They play and work well with their peers and are able to do this in both friendship and other groupings. They respect the feelings of others and, as they get older, are beginning to realise that their actions have consequences. They are beginning to understand that other people have problems. When asked what they would do if they won a lot of money, for example, some suggested helping the people suffering from floods in Mozambique. A very positive feature of pupils' development is their ability to listen to each other, as shown in several lessons, where hands went down when their own idea was given by someone else.
15. Whilst pupils are very enthusiastic to come to school, the level of attendance falls well below that expected and well below that described in the previous report. There are few unauthorised absences, but the level of authorised absences is too high. This is mainly due to the large number of pupils taken out of school for holidays. Already a quarter of the pupils have been absent on holiday, and the school year is only half over. The school is aware of this situation and is working hard to create an ethos in which education is highly valued and that holidays are taken only during term time when absolutely necessary. The very small number of unauthorised absences so far this year is being dealt with by the school, supported by the educational welfare officer.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall and is a strength of the school. It is good or better in 66% of lessons, very good or better in 30% and excellent in 9%. This shows a significant improvement from the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall, with only 3% that was very good. There has also been a marked reduction in the amount of unsatisfactory teaching seen, from 17% to 5%. Several factors have contributed strongly to this improvement. Since the present headteacher took up her appointment two years ago, all teachers have taken part in carefully planned in-service training. The headteacher also monitors teaching regularly and the discussion that follows leads to targets for further improvement.

Attention has been concentrated on classroom organisation and on developing subject knowledge and teaching strategies in English, mathematics and information technology. It has led to a noticeably consistent and effective approach in these areas throughout the school and has contributed significantly to the rising standards.

17. The effectiveness of these measures is reflected in the good quality of teaching in English, mathematics, science and information technology. In music, teaching is very good and in history and physical education it is satisfactory. In religious education, art, design technology and geography, not enough teaching was seen to be able to make an overall judgement. The quality of teaching in both the foundation year and Key Stage 1 is good overall. In the foundation year, 75% of teaching is good or better and 38% of this is very good or better, with no unsatisfactory teaching. In Key Stage 1, 62% is good or better, of which 28% is very good or better; however 8% is unsatisfactory.
18. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good. It has a significant impact on the good progress pupils make. Teachers work hard to plan and implement consistently the national literacy and numeracy strategies, helping pupils to build on previous learning. They are supported well in this through appropriate training. Teachers have high expectations of the level of pupils' work and plan appropriately challenging activities for pupils of all abilities. They make good use of regular assessments to provide generally well-matched work in class and to identify the pupils who need additional support or extension. In literacy, for example, trained support staff provide effective additional help through the 'Sidney' programme for younger pupils, who are experiencing some difficulties in reading and writing. The headteacher has a weekly class for more able writers. Many of the pupils involved make rapid progress. The introduction of individual tracking and target setting in literacy and numeracy this year has also resulted in more focused teaching. Teachers generally make good use of opportunities across the curriculum to help pupils develop their literacy skills and, to a lesser extent, their numeracy skills.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and supported in class by teachers, support staff and the co-ordinator. Teachers match work well to the individual needs of the pupils, although this is not always shown in their planning. The quality of teaching is very good when pupils are withdrawn for extra support. When pupils meet the targets in their individual education plans, they are quickly moved on to new ones. The speech therapist assistant and support staff provide very effective support for pupils' learning. Teachers and support staff manage pupils with specific difficulties and disabilities very well, showing very good understanding. All of this results in pupils making good progress towards their targets and is a significant factor in the number of them who meet national expectations in English, mathematics and science.
20. In almost all lessons there are strong features, which create the very good working environment in the school and contribute to the good achievements of pupils and their positive attitudes to learning. For example, all teachers manage pupils in an effective, pleasant and consistent way. This is based on the very good relationships and mutual respect between all adults and pupils. They value pupils' ideas and, as a result, pupils are eager to contribute and ready to learn from their mistakes. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and diligently and to behave well. They help pupils to achieve this by creating a calm and purposeful atmosphere in lessons and organising the classrooms in a consistent way, both of which support pupils' growing independence. This is reflected in the way that most pupils listen well, and settle quickly and sensibly to group activities, frequently showing how well they sustain concentration and work without direct supervision. Teachers make useful ongoing assessments of pupils during lessons, which they use in planning subsequent work. Support staff often make a valuable contribution to this by noting pupils' responses.
21. There are several features that distinguish the very good and excellent teaching from the satisfactory and occasionally unsatisfactory teaching. In an outstanding Year 2 English lesson, the teacher shared very clear, precise objectives for each part of the lesson with the pupils so that they knew exactly what they should be learning and improving at each stage. This was further enhanced by the very effective use of individual writing targets and the way that pupils reviewed their own progress against these in a brisk final session. Some teachers make very good use of the final part of lessons to assess and reinforce pupils' learning and help them to understand how this will be built on in the next lesson. Many teachers use very skilful, open questioning. Good examples include a Year 1 lesson based on the 'Little Gingerbread Man',

where the teacher helped pupils make links with previous learning about the differences between play scripts and narrative writing. She built on pupils' responses effectively to help them improve their understanding of how speech is represented in stories, relating this to how characters might feel. This also helped pupils to read back the story more expressively. In a Year 2 poetry lesson, the teacher used good subject knowledge and skilful questioning and explanation so that pupils knew precisely how they could improve the ways in which they might express their responses to poems they were reading. In a very good science lesson, where pupils began with the same task, the teacher asked searching and rigorous questions to continually increase the challenge for different groups of pupils as the lesson progressed. In several very good lessons, group activities were particularly well chosen to extend fully pupils of all abilities. Another positive feature is the flair with which some teachers use very well chosen resources, which fully support the objectives of the lesson and capture and sustain the pupils' attention. Very good examples of this were seen in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs.

22. The quality and consistency of planning has improved since the last inspection. It now supports continuity of learning for pupils as they move through the school and provides similar experiences for pupils within the same year group. However, there are still inconsistencies in the level of detail in weekly planning, which results in some lessons where the objectives and activities are not sharply focused. Teachers in each year group work from the same weekly planning. Frequently what made the difference in the quality of lessons was the way the teachers had broken down the broad weekly objectives into smaller specific steps in their own lesson planning. In general, marking is not used well to help pupils to know precisely how to improve their work. In less effective and unsatisfactory teaching, lessons are less focused and tasks are not adjusted well enough for pupils of differing abilities. Introductory sessions and discussions are too long and some pupils lose interest. The pace of work is slower and pupils do not show as great a sense of urgency in completing their work.

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

23. The school provides its pupils with a broad range of good learning opportunities. A particular strength is the very good use of the extensive grounds to provide well-planned environmental dimensions in much of the pupils' work. Very good examples of this are seen in science, geography and personal and social education. The school successfully maintains a broad curriculum while giving appropriate time and emphasis to literacy and numeracy. It uses a good range of effective strategies in teaching these basic skills. These are reflected in the progress pupils make. The curriculum also provides good opportunities for pupils to develop independence, to make choices and take responsibility. It promotes the personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils well and makes a significant contribution to their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. This helps to prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
24. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Sex education is taught according to the school policy and integrated with drugs awareness in a good programme for personal, social and health education, which is currently being more fully embedded in the curriculum. Members of the local community make very good, regular contributions to this programme. The curriculum is further enriched by a good variety of other visitors, such as drama groups and well-planned visits within the locality, including those to Longdown Dairy Farm, Minstead study centre and Manor Farm. Older children have the opportunity to join the choir, which performs successfully in school and in the community and takes part in local music festivals. However, apart from some musical activities at lunchtime there is little provision for after school clubs.
25. The school gives good attention to ensuring that boys and girls of all abilities have full access to the curriculum and that they are suitably challenged. This is seen, for example, in the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, which fulfils all the requirements of the Code of Practice. Individual education plans are well structured, with small achievable targets that are frequently updated. These motivate pupils well and help them to make good progress. There is an additional support programme for Year 1 pupils who experience difficulties in reading and writing and an extension class for more able writers in Year 2. The curriculum is adapted very well to meet the particular needs of those pupils with specific disabilities. This is done with considerable insight and success. Good use is made of initial assessments and information about the children starting school, and the curriculum is adjusted appropriately to meet their needs more closely. This year, for example, careful account has been taken of

the unusually large proportion of boys in the reception classes, as well as ensuring that the girls are not disadvantaged. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

26. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The daily act of collective worship meets requirements and, together with assemblies, provides good opportunities to develop spiritual awareness. Well-chosen music creates a calm and quiet atmosphere in assembly, and quiet and sensitive leadership engages the pupils in a quiet response. They consider the special qualities of a large green egg with wonder and predict what type of creature might emerge from it and how long it will take to hatch. The regular use of the candle is a signal for the pupils to engage in quiet reflection and prayer. The good quality music and singing provide an added dimension. The imaginative use of the school grounds for activities such as 'senses' walks as well as for other environmental work make a very good contribution to pupils' appreciation of nature and their spiritual awareness.
27. There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Pupils are set a very good example by all staff and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. This is helped by opportunities for them to draw up their own classroom rules and to explore issues together in circle times. All staff have a very positive approach to managing the pupils. They apply the behaviour code consistently. Classrooms are organised and managed in a way that encourages pupils to be independent and responsible from the time they start school. They are given frequent opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups, where they are helpful and supportive to each other. Teachers also make good use of circle times to encourage co-operation. In a Year 1, the teacher made skilful use of a well planned and managed circle time to build positive relationships and a team approach, through activities such as "pass the squeeze". As a result the pupils showed good levels of maturity, tolerance and respect.
28. The school makes satisfactory provision for cultural development. The wide range of visits and visitors increases pupils' knowledge of their own culture. Religious education provides opportunities to learn about their own Christian heritage and about the traditions and beliefs of Sikhism. Valuable links have been made with a school in Zimbabwe. An interesting display invites the pupils to make comparisons between their own cultural locality and that of the African community. There are some new musical instruments from Africa on display. At present, however, there are too few multi-cultural images and resources to reflect the cultural diversity of the pupils' neighbouring locality.
29. The local community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Members of the public services and other local interest groups, such as Wood on Wheels, visit the school to broaden and reinforce pupils' experiences. The local community is kept informed of activities and events at the school through regular articles in the parish magazine; the school also holds open days to which everyone is invited. Local industries and businesses respond generously in a number of ways to requests for support with fund raising events. The school is a member of an active local school cluster. At present, it is engaged in producing a millenium quilt to be displayed in the secondary school and also preparing for a music festival. The school has good induction and transfer procedures that are well used to ease pupils into school and to move on to the next stage of their education. Good links with the neighbouring junior school also help this.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school provides good support and guidance for all pupils, which has a positive impact on standards. The school has good procedures for ensuring the welfare of its pupils, as in the previous report. All staff provide very caring support for pupils and they have a very good knowledge of their individual needs. All pupils are well known to a number of members of staff and they are confident and secure in approaching them with any difficulties or concerns. The atmosphere in school is welcoming and secure. The emphasis the school places on pupils' personal and social development has a significant impact on helping pupils to become increasingly independent, self-confident and knowledgeable about themselves. The school gives a high level of support to pupils with specific needs. Personal development is monitored in the same careful way as academic development.
31. The school's policies relating to health and safety are good. The annual safety check and risk assessment on the building is thorough and used to identify areas which require attention. There are concerns about the flooding, after heavy rain, of the area outside the reception classrooms. Any emergency requiring the fast evacuation of the building during such times would necessitate young children paddling through these

floods. Arrangements are in hand to resolve this. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day; teachers were observed checking that a member of staff was on duty outside before allowing the pupils to go out to play. First aid arrangements are good. Pupils' medical needs are well known to staff. Any allergies or dietary needs are recorded on the pupil profiles and, additionally, on a list in the staff room. Parents are asked to mention any medical concerns on consent forms for trips. The school has good arrangements for child protection. It follows the local procedures and all staff are familiar with these. There are currently two designated teachers and the headteacher is to undertake training this term. The school prepares thoroughly for any case conferences in which it is involved.

32. Measures to promote discipline and good behaviour are very effective. They are based on positive encouragement rather than the use of sanctions. Pupils are very aware of the school's behaviour policy and they respond well to any correction of their behaviour. Any problems concerning behaviour or any kind of harassment are discussed, if necessary, during assemblies and circle time. The school develops well-focused individual plans for those pupils who have difficulty in managing their behaviour; parental support is sought in these cases and is good. Teachers make good use of praise and rewards to encourage achievement and good behaviour. Success in all areas of development is acknowledged every week at the 'Foxy' assembly. Certificates are awarded for achievements such as completing the 'Sidney' support programme; 'Foxy' badges are only awarded for special effort and success and are greatly prized.
33. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school has recently moved to using an electronic system to record attendance. This, in addition to issues raised by classteachers, is having a good effect on the identification of reasons for absence and has enabled the headteacher to identify the small amount of unauthorised absences. These have been referred to the educational welfare officer. The school also keeps records of which pupils are taking holidays. The headteacher reminds a few pupils who are persistently late about the importance of being punctual. These procedures represent an improvement since the previous report.
34. All staff support pupils with special educational needs very well. There is very good liaison with outside agencies and external support staff. The school has a number of pupils who require support with speech and language; the school meets this need well with the services of a part-time learning support assistant, who has received specialist training. Very good comprehensive records are kept of each pupil and are continually updated by teachers, support staff and the special needs co-ordinator. This contributes well to the good progress these pupils make.
35. Overall, the monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is good. There have been considerable improvements in assessment procedures and the use of the information produced, since the last inspection. The results of baseline and ongoing assessment in the reception year are used very well to match activities to the individual needs of children. The strengths of each child are noted and targets set for improvement. These include targets for personal and social development as well as for literacy and numeracy. They are shared and reviewed with parents. Baseline assessments are also used well for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs, whose progress is also monitored thoroughly. Trends in the baseline profile are monitored carefully so that appropriate adjustments can be made to the curriculum. Screening tests at the end of the reception year and in Year 1, as well as reading tests and ongoing assessment in Key Stage 1, are used well to identify pupils who are not making the expected progress. They are given additional support or challenge through, for example, an intensive support programme in Year 1 and an extension writing class for pupils in Year 2. Information from the national tests each year is now carefully analysed to identify areas of weakness in the curriculum or, for example, differences in the performance of boys and girls. Appropriate and effective action is taken. As a result of this, last year, for example, targets to increase the number of pupils reaching Level 3 in writing were successfully met. There are opportunities for teachers in each year group to moderate examples of pupils' work together against national standards. This helps to inform the accuracy of their judgements and raises their expectations of what pupils might achieve.
36. In English, mathematics, science and to a lesser extent in some other subjects, there is a consistent pattern of assessment tasks each term. These, together with twice termly assessments of pupils' writing in their 'Zig-zag' books, provide a very clear picture of how pupils achieve as they move through the school. This has been built on this year by the introduction of a rigorous individual tracking system of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. It is used to set targets for each pupil, which are shared and

reviewed with parents. These provide useful additional information about pupils' personal and academic work and are used well to question their achievements. This provides good support for their continuing progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The parents have very positive views of the school. Those completing the questionnaire and attending the meeting prior to the inspection indicate that the school is very approachable, with an open door policy, and that it welcomes parents into the school to talk about a wide range of topics, either generally or regarding their child. Parents indicate a high level of satisfaction with their involvement in the education of their children. They especially like the high level of expectations set for their children in all aspects of their development. Parents expressed some concern about two issues; the information they receive about how their child is getting on, and the limited range of activities outside lessons offered to the children. Inspectors feel that the easy availability of teachers at the end of the day, together with the school's willingness to see parents at any mutually convenient time, ensures that parents can discuss their child's progress readily. There are also regular parents' evenings and informative written reports are provided annually. The timing of these reports is now changing from the end to the middle of the academic year. This means that any problems identified in it can be tackled during the subsequent weeks, with progress towards targets discussed at a later date. As regards the issue of extra-curricular activities, inspectors find that there is some justification for this criticism. There is a choir and the school occasionally provides other lunchtime musical activities. All pupils go on a good variety of visits. However, at present, there are no other lunchtime or after school clubs for the older pupils.
38. Information provided for parents overall is good. Curriculum information is now provided regularly for all subjects, with more specific details for literacy and numeracy. This is an improvement over the last inspection. Parents receive a regular newsletter that keeps them abreast of what is going on in school, and letters about specific subjects such as visits. The annual report is of good quality. It gives good information about what pupils can do, what they understand and the skills that they have acquired. In Years 1 and 2 there are targets set in English and mathematics. In Reception, the targets include personal and social skills. There is an opportunity for parents to make a written reply as well as to discuss the report with teachers afterwards. Parents have been invited to attend useful meetings relating to numeracy and literacy. The special needs co-ordinator holds regular meetings for parents whose children are involved in the 'Sidney' support programme. Parents found a course on parenting skills very helpful. An appropriate home-school agreement has been drawn up and is in use.
39. The school benefits very greatly from the involvement of parents in its every day life. Parents come in both before and after school so that pupils can exchange their library books. They are encouraged to use the computerised system, with its scanner, themselves, and parents supervise this activity and give encouragement and guidance where necessary. They also ensure pupils return books correctly and keep the library tidy. Parents enjoy undertaking this task and meeting the children. This also helps to foster in the children a love of books, as does the bookshop that they run weekly. Parents also come in to help with reading and other activities such as cooking. Each pupil has the opportunity for a regular cookery session. Parents help promote their children's learning through supporting them at home, for example, with 'Impact' maths and through hearing them read. Some parents are unclear about the way reading is being taught, since the introduction of the literacy hour. The school knows that this area needs further clarification.
40. The school is extremely fortunate in having a thriving and hard working parent-teacher association. It is a reflection of the very good relationship that has been promoted between all members of the school community. Very large sums of money are raised each year to help further the work of the school, especially from the Spring Fayre. The most notable recently has been the total refurbishment of the studio to provide a new computer suite. The parents raised a considerable sum of money in a short space of time and, by providing most of the labour, were able to complete the project quickly. The expertise of individuals was used, for example, to design and make the computer tables and chairs themselves, after carefully assessing the pupils' requirements. Other projects have included helping to restock the library and to equip the cooking area, as well as enhancing the outside play areas with seating. The outstanding

commitment and involvement of parents is very commendable and adds greatly to the quality and breadth of the learning opportunities for all pupils. It shows a further improvement from the time of the previous inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The overall leadership and management of the school are good. In the year following the last inspection, the school was without a permanent headteacher. Some headway was made in tackling the weaknesses identified in the previous report and in responding to the changing context of the school. Since the appointment of the present headteacher two years ago, good progress has been made. Standards in information technology and design technology have risen, for example, and the role of the senior management team has been successfully developed. A number of well-focused strategies have led to a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. This, in turn, has contributed to the improved standards in reading and writing evident this year, as well as good progress pupils are now making in mathematics lessons. In addition to this, there has been a significant improvement in the informed and active involvement of the governing body over the last two years and in financial planning.
42. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She gives a very strong sense of direction to the work of the school, which is clearly focused on raising standards and the expectations of performance of all pupils, by improving the quality of teaching and learning. This is based on a clear and increasingly successful determination to reverse the downward trend in national test results over the last four years, in spite of the changing baseline profile. She has shared this view very effectively with the governing body, staff and parents, securing the commitment, enthusiasm and willingness of all to continuing improvement. A strong feature in achieving this has been the very appropriate time and attention she has given to team building. This has resulted in a well co-ordinated team and community, working with a clear sense of purpose towards common goals. Another particular strength is her very well judged pace of change and development. This is based on a perceptive recognition and analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, drawn from performance data, observation and discussion. It is reflected in clear, well-prioritised development plans that include precise, focused targets.
43. The vision statement, aims and values of the school are very evident in its daily life, policies and procedures. They promote a culture of learning and challenge for all members of the school community, to which all respond well. There is a strong emphasis on enabling and challenging all pupils to achieve their best. This is reflected in the careful tracking of individual pupils and in the very good provision for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. It is also seen in the additional and increasing challenge given to more able pupils, for example in writing. Particular importance is given to personal and social development. This is seen in the good breadth of the curriculum, as well as the good provision for personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The effectiveness of this is evident in the good personal development and behaviour of pupils and their good attitudes to learning. Parents are rightly appreciative of the positive influence of the school's aims and values on the children. Very good relationships and the open active partnership and good communications between all members of the school community, which have been established by the headteacher, underpin this.
44. The headteacher is supported very well by her deputy and by the governors. The deputy headteacher is fully involved in all decision-making and development planning, as well as contributing well to the efficient, smooth day-to-day running of the school. The senior management team is now very effective in promoting a consistent approach and good teamwork within year groups. The special needs co-ordinator provides excellent leadership. She is fully aware of the needs of all pupils, works very closely with class teachers, support staff and parents, and ensures appropriate training is given. This makes a strong contribution to the very good provision for pupils. She has improved procedures for identifying pupils with special needs and the quality of the individual education plans since the last inspection. There are new support programmes in place and additional support staff to meet the particular needs of pupils with speech difficulties or specific disabilities. The governors have allocated considerable additional funding for this from the school budget. Pupils involved are already making faster progress. The co-ordinator and governor for special educational needs, together with the headteacher, monitor the effectiveness of these measures closely. Subject co-ordinators manage their subjects well overall. They monitor planning and provide useful guidance and support for colleagues. They have clear and appropriate views for the

continuing development of their subjects within the framework of the school development plan. However, they do not yet monitor teaching or the outcomes of pupils' work to ensure consistency across and between year groups.

45. The headteacher monitors teaching systematically. Lesson observations are focused and the subsequent discussions and action points agreed with teachers have already made a substantial contribution to improvements in the quality of teaching. Another key factor in this is the good arrangements for appraisal, performance management and professional development. These support school priorities well, in addition to individual needs, and have led staff to an increasing commitment and awareness of what needs to be done in order to raise standards. The headteacher carries out careful and detailed analysis of test results. This leads to well-planned comprehensive action to remedy weaknesses that have been identified and to evaluate any improvements. Good examples of this are the wide-ranging action taken to raise the standards of writing and the focus on helping pupils to develop strategies for mental calculations.
46. Governors are committed, well informed and very supportive of the school. The development of their procedures and their full participation in training opportunities enable them to meet all statutory responsibilities satisfactorily. They contribute with increasing effectiveness to policy and decision-making through their committees and full meetings. They now have specific areas of responsibility within the curriculum, where they are beginning to monitor performance and improvements as well as providing support for staff. A good example of this is the visits made by the governor for special educational needs.
47. Financial planning is very good. The governing body is now fully involved with the headteacher in prioritising spending decisions, based on improving the educational standards of the pupils. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. For example, the governors have very well considered reasons to justify the higher than average staffing costs. One reason is that the high quality of teaching of part-time staff makes a significant contribution to the good standards in music and science and to the very good provision for special educational needs. The members of the finance committee are experienced accountants and monitor expenditure regularly in order to check that actual expenditure is in line with the agreed budget. They give very good support to the school.
48. Administrative systems are very good. They are unobtrusive, efficient and respond to needs. The administrative officer ensures that information is readily available for the headteacher, the finance committee and the governing body; to ensure that finances are kept in good order and costs easily determined. Specific grants are very well used, for example the "Millennium Festival Fund" for improving the wooded area and the "Early Years Fund" for ensuring that there is a good transition by children from pre-school education to the reception classes. Since the previous report, a large surplus has been used effectively to support staffing costs, as well as for re-siting the library.
49. The headteacher, staff and governors ensure that good use is made of resources and that spending is linked to competitive consultation and tendering. For example, the cost of the new computer suite was almost halved because of very competitive tendering. There are good procedures in place to review and evaluate the effects of financial decisions.
50. Good use is made of new technology. The administrative officer has a very good knowledge of computerised administrative procedures. Good use is made of information technology for data analysis and for supporting pupils with special educational needs. The use of multimedia computers in the new computer suite is good. Very good use is made of the computer in the school library. The use of computers in the classrooms is not sufficiently developed. Internet access for pupils is not yet in place.
51. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum well overall. There is an appropriate balance of experience and expertise, although some staff lack confidence in some aspects of information technology. Staff work well in effective teams. Newly appointed teachers, supply teachers and student teachers are given very good support and guidance and are assimilated well in to the life and work of the school. Staff training, including that for support assistants, is appropriately matched to the school's development plan. The school is an effective provider for initial teacher training.
52. Learning resources are satisfactory for history and religious education, very good for information technology and good for all other subjects. Resources for design and technology, geography and

information technology have improved to a satisfactory level since the previous inspection report. Resources for the under fives are satisfactory but the amount of large outdoor climbing apparatus is limited. The library, with its computerised system is well stocked with fiction and non-fiction books and used well to support pupils' reading development.

53. The good accommodation has a positive effect on the delivery of the curriculum. There are a number of specialist rooms, including an inviting library, a new computer suite and a small cookery area, all of which are well used and add to the breadth of the curriculum provided for the pupils. The outside environment is particularly attractive and the 'Millennium' trail in the wooded area adds greatly to the pupils' opportunities to explore and experience areas of the curriculum in a very stimulating and enjoyable way.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In the context of the school's many strengths, the governors, headteacher and staff should address the following matters in their action plan in order to raise standards and the quality of education still further:

- Improve levels of attendance by:-
 - Reducing the number of authorised absences due to family holidays taken during term time.
(see paragraphs 15, 33)

- Increase opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in information technology across the curriculum by*:-
 - Ensuring that subject planning includes reference to how information technology will be used.
 - Further increasing the confidence and skills of teachers through appropriate training.
(see paragraphs 7,51,85,86)

- Reduce inconsistencies in some aspects of teaching and learning to improve its quality even more by*:-
 - Establishing a consistent approach to marking so that pupils know exactly how to improve their work.
 - Establishing common practice for sharing specific, achievable objectives with pupils at the start of lessons and in the use of plenary sessions to reinforce and assess learning.
 - Ensuring that all weekly planning is detailed enough to show how the planned activities will be adjusted for groups of differing abilities.
 - Further improve teachers' skills in using open questions to challenge and extend pupils' learning.
(see paragraphs 21,22, 68, 74, 89, 103, 112)

In addition to the above, the following points for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:-

- Providing more opportunities for pupils to learn about people of other cultures in their own area.
(see paragraphs 28, 93)
- Increasing the range of extra curricular clubs for older pupils.
(24,37)

** The school has already identified these areas for development.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	21	36	29	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR- Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	245
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR- Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	77

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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year, 1998/9.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999 (98)	50	46	96

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	41	43
	Girls	42	39	43
	Total	81	80	86
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84(90)	83(89)	90(91)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	42	47
	Girls	41	43	46
	Total	80	85	93
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85(88)	89(88)	97(96)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	245
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		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: YR- Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	160

Financial information

Financial year	1998/9
	£
Total income	436995
Total expenditure	476297
Expenditure per pupil	1891
Balance brought forward from previous year	69110
Balance carried forward to next year	29808

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	247
Number of questionnaires returned	102

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	39	1	0	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	47	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	48	10	0	1
The teaching is good.	68	30	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	48	14	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	29	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	36	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	42	47	10	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	70	25	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	38	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	27	17	6	26

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. There is good early years provision and teaching in the reception classes. This is an improvement from the previous report. Children are admitted to the school in the September of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were 89 children in the reception classes, of whom 32 were in their first term of full time schooling. The majority have some pre-school experience and there is increasingly good liaison with the pre-school groups. Baseline assessments show that children's attainments on entry are broadly average. They also show a decrease over the last three years in the number of higher attaining children joining the school. Boys and girls, of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in the areas of early learning, and achieve well in some aspects of these. By the time they leave reception, their overall attainments meet those expected for their age. Good quality teaching, provision and co-ordination, together with very good teamwork between teachers and support staff, have a positive impact on the standards achieved by the children.
55. Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and, by the end of the reception year, the standards they are on course to achieve in this area are above those expected for their age. The children are well behaved, caring and supportive of each other. They give help willingly when the need arises and congratulate each other for good efforts and work. They work and play independently without adult supervision for extended periods of time. The quality of teaching is very good. Staff plan very carefully for this area of learning and the children are well motivated. In lessons they concentrate well, pay close attention to their tasks and are very diligent. Children show interest in their learning and respond enthusiastically to the very well designed activities that grasp and hold their attention. They particularly enjoy their work with a variety of teddy bears and respond thoughtfully to well-planned questions, as very careful detectives, to try to discover why "Brown Ted" is special. They show concern on discovering that "Belinda Bear" has a bandaged paw. The children can apply their independent skills in new situations and are able to assist in setting out physical education equipment sensibly and with the minimum of supervision. They show due respect for the rules of the game. Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond appropriately. The good social learning and independent skills of these children support them in difficult situations and they are able to maintain their concentration, even when a child in an adjoining class becomes distressed. The whole class regains their composure quickly, return their attention to their teacher and continue to learn regardless of the disruption.
56. By the end of the reception year children meet the expected standards in language and literacy. They listen well and show interest in books and stories, joining in enthusiastically and expressively with a whole class reading of "We're Going on a Bear Hunt". An impeccably timed drama lesson, linked to this reading, enabled the children to re-tell and sequence the story accurately for themselves. It also gave them the opportunity to develop their own ideas and words creatively. The lesson reflected the good, and at times very good, quality of teaching in this area of learning. The majority of children see themselves as writers and can write their own names. The highest attaining children can re-write a simple story using their knowledge of letter sounds to spell simple words and spell words such as 'the', 'in' and 'my' accurately. Progress in pencil control and letter formation are good overall because of the daily practice when children first enter the classroom in the morning. Lower attaining children are still unaware of the link between sounds and letters, cannot yet write their own names unaided and their writing consists of letter shapes and symbols. Higher attaining children read simple stories confidently and are able to use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out simple words and recognise others by sight. Many other children are working well to develop these skills. Children improve their speaking and listening skills when introducing their teddy bears to the rest of the class. Most speak in coherent simple sentences and some add interesting anecdotes about their bears.
57. Children make satisfactory progress in mathematical knowledge and understanding, so that by the end of the reception year the majority of children achieve the standards expected for their age. The majority of

children are able to count and recite number names, in order, up to 20. Teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good and very good teaching. Higher attaining children can match hand claps accurately to 20 and are challenged well in making addition sentences, using numbers up to 12. They use the correct vocabulary and notation. A few pupils use early number bonds to recall instantly small totals such as 2 add 2 equals 4. In one class pupils make good progress in lessons because the teacher uses the time and structure very well. The crisp pace, interactive teaching and very good, clear explanations also contribute to this. The children particularly enjoy giving sweets to teddies to make up number sentences. Classroom assistants give good support in numeracy lessons, sitting quietly alongside children and helping them to focus on the activities. The assistants are also effective in joining in with counting and giving the children good models of what should be done.

58. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world meets the expected standards; they make sound progress overall. Children learn about toys from different countries and understand the difference between old and new toys. They make puppets of different types from a variety of materials and use different techniques to create rod puppets, peg puppets and sock puppets. Children show enjoyment and satisfaction when making jam tarts. They clear away afterwards, count their tarts and record their experiences on a helpful sheet. They investigate materials and sort them into those that are hard and those that are soft. All of the children are aware that many everyday appliances use electricity while other household objects do not. In these activities, however, there is no difference in challenge to enable some children to attain at a higher level. All children make good progress in working with computers. They use the mouse and keyboard with confidence to type simple stories and to 'drag and drop' pictures. Two children were observed confidently using the mouse to select colours for an art program being used to "paint" a teddy bear.
59. Children's physical development meets the expectations for their age and they make satisfactory progress. They use a range of small games equipment with good control and dexterity, are aware of the space and use it well. They can walk and march in time to music and show appropriate balance and physical co-ordination. Tools such as pencils, scissors, brushes and rolling pins are handled with increasing levels of control. Teaching was satisfactory in one lesson seen; it was outstanding in another because the teacher continually increased the challenge with skilful questioning, helping children to sustain concentration through positive feedback and inspiring them to do their very best. The children made rapid progress in using small equipment, as they were very clear about how to improve their skills.
60. Children make good progress in creative development and the standards attained by the end of the reception year are above the expected levels. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers provide a stimulating learning environment where children can use their imagination in a variety of ways in role-play areas, such as one created as a picnic area for the bears. Children make close observations and use a variety of media such as paint and pastel to represent a number of toys. One group created pictures of Hairy Bear, using pastels well to draw the striped pyjamas. Detailed planning supports the very good teaching in music and the activities are very well matched to the interest and ability of the children. They make very good progress in music lessons. They respond with interest and show high levels of concentration. They can copy rhythms, keep a steady beat, sing songs from memory and pitch their voices to match the size of the bears that the teacher shows them. They rise enthusiastically to the challenge of performing more complicated rhythms, because they enjoy singing "The Three Bear Rap".
61. The quality of provision and teaching for children in the foundation stage are good. They have improved considerably since the last inspection. Teachers and support staff work very well as a team and now provide a stimulating environment. They have a good understanding of how young children learn and use this well in planning a good, relevant range of learning opportunities. These now promote literacy and numeracy skills well and lead to a smooth transition to the National Curriculum. Good use is made of baseline and ongoing assessments to provide work that is matched well to children's needs. Good management by the early years co-ordinator ensures a consistent approach and continuing development. There is an attractive grassed area with resources to promote role-play. Children's opportunities to use the smaller hard play area are limited by frequent flooding. At present there is not enough appropriate large play equipment for outdoor use, for children to practise their climbing skills.

ENGLISH

62. Results from the 1999 national tests, based on average points, show that by the end of Key Stage 1 the attainment of pupils in reading and writing is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is above average in reading and well above average in writing. However, the small proportion of pupils reaching the higher grades in Level 2 means that results are below those of similar schools. Test results over the last four years show that in writing the performance of pupils has remained close to the national average, but has fallen in reading, from well above average to average. Evidence from lesson observations and the work of the current Year 2 pupils show that pupils' attainment overall in both reading and writing is above the expected levels. This shows an improvement from the national test results of last year. This is due to the increasing impact of well thought out and effective strategies to raise the attainment of all pupils over the last two years. These include additional weekly time spent on the teaching of writing skills, the careful identification of pupils who need additional support or challenge and the introduction of a very good system for tracking and setting literacy targets for all pupils.
63. Standards in language and literacy when pupils first start school are broadly average, although an increasing number have speech and language disorders. The school has responded to this by employing a learning support assistant who has been trained in speech therapy. Children in the reception year broaden and consolidate their knowledge and skills in this area of learning and meet the expected standards for their age by the end of that year. Pupils make good progress overall as they move through Key Stage 1 and achieve well. Good teaching and the good behaviour, concentration and positive attitudes that pupils have towards their work make a significant contribution to this. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as result of very good provision and very effective teaching and support. Higher attaining pupils also make good progress, partly as a result of the additional challenging provision made for them, in a weekly writing class.
64. Standards in speaking and listening are close to national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. By the age of seven, pupils engage in conversation with adults confidently. They listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. Some pupils begin to build on each other's ideas as in a Year 1 circle time, when pupils were discussing how they might spend an unexpectedly large sum of money. In general pupils' speaking skills are not as well developed as their listening skills. Many add detail only when prompted and do not always explain their ideas clearly without help. Some pupils speak clearly in front of large and small groups, using complex sentences and interesting vocabulary. All pupils show confidence in speaking and answering questions in class, secure in the knowledge that their ideas will be valued by their teacher and their peers.
65. Standards in reading are above the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils of all abilities make good progress through the key stage. Those experiencing particular difficulties or not making the expected progress are identified at an early stage in Year 1. They are given additional, carefully targeted individual or group support. The benefits of this are reflected in the high proportion of pupils in Year 2 who are already reaching the expected standards. By the age of seven, pupils read an appropriate range of books with increasing fluency and accuracy. They use a good variety of ways to tackle unfamiliar words and show a good understanding of what they are reading by substituting sensible words for those they do not know. A strong feature is the expressive way in which many pupils read, making good use of punctuation and contextual cues. Teachers make good use of guided reading sessions to deepen pupils' understanding of the plots and characters of stories, as well as helping pupils to apply the basic phonics and other reading skills they are taught. Guided reading books are organised well to ensure increasing challenge for all pupils and that appropriately demanding books are available for higher attaining pupils. Good use is made of the attractive library both to promote pupils' interest and enjoyment in books, as well as to teach them basic library skills. Almost all pupils borrow books to take home on a regular basis. Even the younger children show discrimination in selecting their books and know how to locate both fiction and non-fiction books by making use of alphabetical order and a simple classification system. They are supported in this very well by teams of parents who staff the library at the beginning and end of every school day. Parents also run a weekly bookshop, which is used well by the children. All of these factors combine to make a significant impact on pupils' progress and attainment in reading, as well as contributing to the positive attitude boys and girls of all abilities show towards books.
66. Standards in writing are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. The good progress made by pupils of all abilities is very evident from looking at pupils' work since the beginning of this school

year and their Zig-Zag folders of assessed work over the key stage. By the age of seven, pupils convey their ideas in a wide variety of forms of writing. These include poems, letters, book reviews and newspaper accounts. Good use is made of opportunities, in subjects such as history and science, for pupils to practise and extend these skills. Many pupils begin to vary and extend their sentences by adding some appropriate detail and descriptive words. Many use capital letters and full stops correctly. Their spelling of common words is generally accurate. Higher attaining pupils begin to use more complex structures and interesting vocabulary and phrases such as 'rampaging' and 'She stared at him with widened eyes'. Pupils show good understanding of basic story structure and apply this appropriately to their own writing. When redrafting their work, they sometimes add detail as well as improving the accuracy of their spelling and punctuation. Their handwriting is legible and usually joined. In a few classes, individual targets are used very effectively to help pupils to improve their work.

67. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is good or better in nearly two-thirds of lessons, and very good in half of them. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. This has a significant impact on pupils' learning and achievements. There are a number of features which distinguish the very good and at times outstanding teaching from that which is satisfactory. Several of these were exemplified very well in a Year 2 lesson, where children were continuing the story of 'Not Now Bernard'. There were very clear, precise objectives for each part of the lesson, which the teacher shared very effectively with the pupils so that they knew exactly what they should be learning and improving. In the introductory session, the teacher used very good strategies and skilful questioning to encourage children to listen to and build on the ideas of others, when brain storming for the 'story pot'. She intervened well in the discussion to initiate different lines of thinking, stimulating the pupils' interest. The lesson was tightly structured and timed, so that pupils knew how much they had to achieve within each section of it. The pupils were so well motivated and familiar with the challenging expectations that, without exception, pupils of all abilities settled to planning and writing their story immediately and were totally engrossed for the 40 minutes allowed. Their fluency was such that their pencils hardly left the paper. At the end of the time, all had successfully completed their first draft of a structured story. Their enjoyment and satisfaction in having risen to the challenge was evident. Teachers are very aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses, through a consistent pattern of regular assessments and testing. They make good use of this information in providing additional support where required or more challenging work for pupils who are not being fully extended. For example, in the weekly class for more able writers, the teacher increases the challenge through paired activities, the focused use of information technology, and an emphasis on sustaining the writing process over a period of time. Very good teaching in this group results in pupils making rapid progress. For example, they build upon and improve a simple story outline to include vivid description and lively writing as in 'The Great Sweetland Voyage'. Several teachers make good use of effective learning support assistants to make observational notes about individual responses during whole class sessions as well as during group work.
68. In less effective, although satisfactory lessons, the pace is slower and pupils do not show a sense of urgency in completing group activities. The broad objectives of the weekly planning are not made more specific for individual lessons and are not shared as thoroughly with the pupils. This results in both teaching and learning being less focused. There is some evidence in past work that the group activities during the literacy hour are not always as closely matched to the abilities of average and higher attaining pupils in all classes. Not all teachers use marking effectively to help pupils know precisely how they could improve their work.
69. The co-ordinator works in close partnership with the headteacher to provide good leadership. She has a considerable depth of knowledge which she shares with colleagues through in-service training. It is reflected in the very good role model she provides for the teaching of the subject. Teachers have worked hard and successfully to implement the national literacy strategy consistently, so that pupils build effectively on previous learning. They make good use of frequent opportunities in several subjects for pupils to extend and practise their literacy skills. In history, for example, pupils increase their skills of writing in different forms, such as newspaper reports and diaries of the Great Fire of London.

MATHEMATICS

70. Results of national tests in 1999 show pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 to be close to the national average at level 2 or above. The proportion of pupils obtaining Level 3 is also close to the national average. Results for the four years from 1996 to 1999 are above the national

average. Results are in line with the national average for all aspects of the subject, except in shape, space and measure, where they are above. Results for the four years from 1996 to 1999 show no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of the key stage pupils are achieving standards in line with national expectations. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report.

71. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils can identify odd and even numbers and number patterns, add and subtract small numbers, identify halves and quarters and have a sound understanding of the place value of hundreds, tens and units. Pupils are developing effective personal strategies for mental calculations. This is the result of a school focus on this area at present. A good example was observed in Year 2 where pupils were encouraged to use and explain their own strategies for adding and subtracting four different numbers to obtain answers from one to twelve. The use of numeracy across the curriculum is sound but is not always specifically planned for. In science, Year 1 pupils measure the distance that toy rabbits in buggies travel down a slope, and plot graphs to show the growth of hyacinth bulbs. Time lines are used in history. In art, Year 2 pupils draw symmetrical patterns based on the work of William Morris. In design technology older pupils use standard units to measure ingredients when cooking. Pupils use their knowledge of directions when programming the floor "roamer". However, planned opportunities are limited and are not always shown on study unit plans.
72. In their work on shape, space and measurement Year 2 pupils can soundly describe common two-dimensional shapes by their mathematical attributes. In one Year 2 class observed, pupils had a good understanding of shape and confidently used mathematical language to describe and sort regular and irregular two-dimensional shapes. Pupils are beginning to measure accurately and can estimate to the nearest metre or half metre. The majority of pupils know the hours on a clock face whilst the more able can tell half past, quarter to and quarter past the hour.
73. When data handling, pupils at the end of the key stage can sort objects using a variety of reasons. They can draw and interpret simple bar charts. For example, as part of a science topic, pupils draw graphs to show which type of ball has the highest bounce. Year 1 pupils can interpret simple bar graphs showing their favourite book by a known author.
74. The overall quality of teaching is good and has improved since the previous inspection. This is largely due to the consistent implementation of the national numeracy strategy, which has been supported by well-planned staff training. This results in pupils making good progress in many lessons, although it is too soon to see the impact of this on standards at the end of the key stage. There are still some inconsistencies, in spite of the same weekly planning being used across year groups. Only a few teachers begin the lesson by sharing the objectives with the pupils, or review at the end of a lesson whether those objectives have been met. In one Year 2 lesson observed, the quality of teaching was very good. However, in another Year 2 lesson the teaching was unsatisfactory. The very good lesson was exemplified by good pace and the very good use of questions to assess and move the pupils on to their next stage of learning. There was a good review of the pupils' work to establish whether they had achieved the objectives set. In the unsatisfactory lesson, pupils were not encouraged to share their personal strategies for finding an answer and incorrect answers were not used as teaching points to develop understanding. Questioning was not adapted to extend the more able or to involve those experiencing difficulties and they lost interest. Learning support staff provide pupils with effective help and are given good guidance by teachers. Throughout the school, the overall attitudes of pupils to mathematics are good. Generally, pupils respond with enthusiasm to questions, work well together, share willingly and treat resources with care. They are not afraid to offer answers and strategies which may be incorrect; in doing so they learn from their mistakes. Pupils work well independently and concentrate well. This is fostered well by the consistent way that teachers organise and manage their class. Relations between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good. The generally challenging tasks ensure that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress within lessons. Pupils are developing their mental recall of tables and number facts well, to support mental calculations.
75. The national numeracy strategy is making a satisfactory impact on the attainment of pupils and a good impact on teaching. Long term and medium term planning is sound and identifies learning outcomes. Planning is regularly monitored by the co-ordinator. The headteacher is monitoring teaching. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' progress and understanding. The school is systematically assessing all pupils and setting half-yearly targets for each pupil in order to raise standards. Examples of

assessed work are kept on each pupil in order to track progress. Good use is made of regular, practical homework to support work in class. Parents are supportive and write positive and informative comments in the mathematics homework diary. The use of information technology is satisfactory. For example, a data program is used to draw graphs of the growth of a bulb and a floor “robot” is used to develop concepts in number, shape, space and measurement.

SCIENCE

76. National Curriculum teacher assessments for 1999 show results at Level 2 and above to be above the national average. Attainment in experimental and investigative work is in line with national averages, above average in life and living processes and materials and their properties and very high in comparison with national averages in physical processes. At Level 3 and above, results are very high in comparison with the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards continue to be above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Findings are similar to those of the previous inspection report.
77. Pupils are developing good scientific knowledge, understanding and skills. By the end of the key stage, they can communicate their understanding and discuss their experiments with confidence. They use equipment well and predict the outcomes of their investigations. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson on electricity, pupils were observed discussing simple circuits and the use of electricity around the home. They did so with enthusiasm and shared ideas well. In an excellent Year 1 lesson observed on forces, pupils used toys and a ramp confidently to predict and test the effects of different surfaces moving down the slope. Pupils develop a good understanding of hypothesising, carrying out a fair test and making conclusions.
78. In their study of life processes and living things, pupils can identify the major organs of the body and the major parts of a flowering plant. For example, Year 1 pupils grow hyacinth bulbs and study their different parts.
79. When studying materials, pupils can sort by colour, texture and hardness. They record their results in the form of simple charts. Year 2 pupils test the strength of paper in order to find the best type for carrying six apples. Year 1 pupils heat foods, such as biscuits, margarine and chocolate, to investigate any changes caused in the food.
80. In their work on physical processes, Year 1 pupils compare the distance that small buggies, used to carry toy rabbits, travel down a slope, and understand simple electrical circuits. They are able to talk about the effects of the forces of pushing and pulling on objects. Year 2 pupils carry out simple static electricity tests with balloons and record their results on charts.
81. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection report. In a Year 1 lesson observed on forces, the quality of teaching was excellent. Teachers have a good understanding of what they teach. This was exemplified by very good questioning to assess and move pupils on to their next stage of learning within the lesson, challenging tasks, excellent provision and use of resources and well-matched work for each pupil. Throughout the lesson the teacher stressed the language of science, for example “fair testing” and “forces”. Consequently pupils of all abilities were fully and actively involved and challenged. They worked hard, knew how to improve their tests and thoroughly enjoyed their activities. They made remarkable progress in the lesson. The generally high quality of teaching means that pupils are enthusiastic about science, particularly when there is a practical and investigative component to the lesson. They are eager to share their knowledge and understanding with each other. They are co-operative in group work and want to learn more, although in one Year 2 class observed the groups were too large and some pupils were not fully engaged in the activity. Boys and girls work well together and make similarly good progress. Support staff are given good guidance and make a positive contribution to pupils’ learning, especially of those with special educational needs. Daily and long-term assessment is good. Regular testing of pupils takes place and results are filed in an assessment folder for each pupil in order to track attainment and progress.
82. The subject is well resourced. The woodland area and pond make an excellent contribution to the subject and are well used. Work in science contributes satisfactorily to numeracy. For example, Year 1 pupils plot the growth of hyacinths on graphs. Year 2 pupils measure the height that balls of different materials

bounce and plot the results on a graph. The contribution to literacy is good. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their work and write or word process accounts of their experiments. Science contributes well to the spiritual and social development of pupils. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has a clear awareness of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. Since the previous inspection a comprehensive scheme of work has been introduced and there are examples of levelled work for each pupil to assist teachers in their judgements and planning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

83. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in information technology, which are in line with those expected nationally. Year 2 pupils use the mouse and keyboard confidently. They can open a file, edit their work, delete and insert letters and words, change the style, size and colour of fonts, and print. From an early age, pupils use simulation games and programs to support their language development. They show a good understanding of the use to which their skills can be applied. They are aware how control technology can be directly used in the home and at school. The majority of pupils show satisfactory standards in word-processing. However, there is no system for tracking skills. This means that able pupils and those bringing skills from home are not being sufficiently challenged.
84. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, especially when word-processing. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching and progress were described as unsatisfactory. In two lessons observed during the inspection week, pupils made very good progress. The timetabled use of the new computer suite is ensuring that skills are taught systematically to whole classes. This is beginning to have an impact on standards. Pupils are now beginning to build effectively on their skills and knowledge as they move through the school. This is clearly seen in the development of their word processing skills, from the simple use of the cursor and keyboard in the reception classes to the redrafting and refining of text in Year 2. A very good example of this was observed in a lesson for an extension group for Year 2 pupils. During an afternoon they made very good progress. The teacher had assessed previous work thoroughly in order to prepare very well matched prompts on screen. Pupils typed short sentences in response to these; the teacher then used skilful questioning to help pupils improve and build on them. They removed the prompts and ended with well-developed descriptive paragraphs. In a very well taught Year 1 lesson, the teacher also made very good links with literacy lessons, as the pupils designed a cover for the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. The teacher gave clear instructions and good support in helping pupils to make very good progress in editing and altering fonts, colour and layout. In another Year 1 lesson the teacher made very good use of practical resources to help pupils to predict and sequence instructions to control the movement of a floor 'robot'. The very good attitude of pupils to information technology makes a significant contribution to their learning throughout the school. Boys and girls display the same very good attitudes and the same growing confidence and interest in the subject. They are eager to learn new skills and happy to share these with their classmates. Their behaviour is very good.
85. Since the previous inspection, resources and accommodation have been updated. Recently, the Parent-Teacher Association has made an outstanding contribution to pupils' opportunities in providing a new computer suite, with multimedia computers. The furniture for the suite was tailor-made by parents to meet the needs of pupils. The suite is already impacting on pupil and staff confidence and is contributing to rising standards. This is especially noticeable in Year 1 where pupils' word-processing skills are beginning to outpace those in Year 2. Year 1 pupils were observed to highlight words and sentences in order to delete or change fonts and colours, a skill not observed in Year 2. However, not all teachers are ensuring that the skills taught in the computer suite are transferred back to the classroom. Classroom computers are underused and during the inspection week some were not used at all. In many cases this is because of a lack of confidence and knowledge by some teachers. Staff training already takes place in staff meetings and will be fully addressed when a national training initiative is implemented in the summer. Teachers have sufficiently high expectations in lessons but not all staff have sufficient knowledge and skills. Good use is made of learning support assistants and trainee teachers in lessons. They are given good guidance and make a positive contribution to the subject.
86. The good management of the subject by the team of three co-ordinators is seen in the improvements in provision and in teacher confidence since the last inspection. The curriculum is being developed and

planning has improved. One member of the co-ordinating team has developed a well-structured series of lessons, which builds on prior skills and knowledge. Good use is beginning to be made of the digital camera. Very good use is made of the library computer by pupils to issue and return their books. All pupils, from reception onwards, use the hand held bar-code scanner with confidence. A part-time technician is employed to ensure that the computers are well maintained and correctly programmed. Above all, there has been a shared commitment to improve the provision. The benefits of the school's investment in the subject are already being seen in the rising standards in word processing being achieved by pupils. The subject supports literacy, science and mathematics well and the spirituality of pupils. The suite is treated with great respect and examples of awe and wonder was observed when Year 1 pupils learnt to change the size of fonts. However, curriculum topic planning does not specify the links between subjects and information technology. The arrival of new programs for the multimedia computers has been delayed but once installed will promote further cross-curricular links. The subject is now well placed for continued improvement and development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

87. Very little teaching of religious education was observed during the inspection period because of the way the subject is organised, in units of work taught in discrete blocks. Judgements are therefore based upon a scrutiny of planning, a limited sample of work in books and on display and discussions with staff and pupils. These indicate that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
88. By the end of the key stage, pupils have begun to develop their knowledge of different religions. They study Christmas, Easter and Divali. They know some stories from the Bible about Jesus, write about the Christmas story and learn about Guru Nanak. Pupils understand some religious symbols and recall the star as a symbol of guidance, showing the shepherds the way to Jesus. Higher attaining pupils understand the significance of bread and wine as symbols of the body and blood of Jesus. The annual visit to Colbury church has makes a lasting impression upon the pupils and they recall what they learnt well. One pupil could link the explorations in the graveyard to the loss of her pets and talked with sensitivity about this. There are good opportunities to study the key features and symbols of the Sikh religion. Most pupils can name the five K's, but the majority are, as yet, unaware that different religions share some common features and beliefs. They do not yet understand the importance of religion in some people's lives.
89. A lesson seen in Year 1 was very short, with a slow pace, and there was a lack of planned interaction and engagement. This meant that the pupils did not have the opportunity to think carefully or ask and answer questions. Assemblies are planned to enhance the provision for religious education. In a lower school assembly, the teacher used some pupils to act out the story of the five loaves and three fishes with the help of interesting resources. This captured their attention, added to their enjoyment and helped them to remember the story. Pupils are introduced to specific vocabulary, such as 'disciple' and 'miracle', and well-planned questions encourage reflection about the reasons for the miracle. During this time the pupils behave well and show considerable interest. In an assembly for the whole school, some older pupils explained the meaning of parts of the Lord's Prayer very well.
90. There are some weaknesses with continuity in this subject because of the periods between units of work, when there is no explicit study of religious education. The headteacher is acting as co-ordinator for one year, and is aware of the need to address this. There are plans to develop appropriate assessment procedures next year. There is a good selection of religious education books in the school library and a collection of resource books in the staffroom. These provide good support for teachers. The resources for Sikhism are effectively used. Resources and artefacts to aid understanding of Christianity are limited.

ART

91. No art lessons were seen during the week of the inspection. Judgements are made following scrutiny of policy and planning documents, analysis of samples of work and displays and discussion with staff. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils produce work in line with the national expectations for their age and they make satisfactory progress.
92. Pupils in Year 1 manipulate and mix paint, pastel and tissue paper. They apply these colour-mixing skills to produce attractive observational drawings of flowering bulbs in pastels. Year 2

pupils build on this when they learn to pay close attention to the shape and contours of leaves and flowers. They study the work of William Morris and make their own designs and drawings in this style. They evaluate each other's work and record their thoughts and impressions, including how the work could be improved.

93. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject and has organised the curriculum into a scheme of work, giving systematic cover of the programmes of study. Simple suggestions for assessment are provided in the scheme of work and the planned study units. She monitors teachers' planning and the work on display each half term. Resources are satisfactory overall, although the work of major artists and artists from other cultures is not strongly represented and limits pupils' opportunities to compare these.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. No lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection week. Therefore, judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, photographs and discussion with pupils, staff and parents helping with cookery.
95. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils meet the expected standards and make satisfactory progress. Year 2 pupils design, make and evaluate boxes for carrying Easter eggs and design and make life-size shoes, to fit a purpose, and Year 1 make story books with moving parts on each page. By the end of the key stage pupils can identify appropriate materials that should be used. They learn the skills of cutting, sticking and joining satisfactorily and can construct models from commercial construction kits. In cookery, pupils begin in reception by making jam tarts. The skills taught there are built upon in Year 1, where pupils make buns and cheese straws. By Year 2, pupils are able to follow a recipe to make pizzas. Pupils clearly enjoy these lessons and are eager to show adults the result of their cooking.
96. The teachers' planning shows that design and technology is included in topic work. Assessment is satisfactory but does not systematically record the progress made by pupils in their skills and knowledge.
97. Since the previous report, a scheme of work has been implemented, which is now being updated. There is a good range of resources, which includes a well-equipped cookery area. Pupils cook at least once a term in small groups. Volunteer parents take the cookery lessons and provide very good support. The subject makes a good contribution to social skills and to literacy, for example in sequencing and following instructions. Pupils work very well together and with parent helpers. The co-ordinator is providing good leadership and has ensured that standards have risen since the previous report. The subject's action plan highlights that design and technology will be a focus for further development in the next academic year

GEOGRAPHY

98. No geography was taught in Key Stage 1 during the inspection period. Evidence from previous work, displays, planning and discussions with staff indicate that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and broadly meet the expected standards by the end of Year 2. Standards are similar to those described in the previous inspection.
99. By the end of Year 2, pupils compare photographs of different parts of the world and identify and name geographical features, distinguishing between those that are man-made and natural. They follow routes around the school, noting the relative location of places and objects, which they then represent on a pictorial map. They locate familiar places on a street plan of their locality. They draw comparisons between aspects of life in Zimbabwe and England by making good use of photographs, letters and questionnaires that have been exchanged with a school in Harare. This helps pupils to build a balanced understanding of life in distant localities, especially when the centre of Harare is compared favourably with that of Totton. They see the pupils working in a computer room similar to their own. This makes a good contribution to their cultural development. Pupils in Year 1 investigate geographical features of the extensive school grounds and learn to follow directions, using appropriate geographical vocabulary. In finding out where a small bird would find food, they compared the conditions and habitats of different locations such as hedgerows and under trees. They collect information about the different types of food found

in different locations and enter it on to a database, to begin to look for patterns. They draw simple pictorial maps of the routes they follow.

100. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has a clear, appropriate view for the continuing development of the subject. The curriculum identifies key geographical skills for each year group, which helps pupils to build on previous learning. Teachers make appropriate use of the subject to extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Information about the food that birds find in different locations is presented for example, as menus and graphs. Very good use is made of the school grounds to broaden and extend the context for pupils' work in all year groups. They observe over time, for example, how the present drainage work is improving the environment of the nature trail. This together with activities such as sensing walks, increases the positive contribution made by the subject to the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

101. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection week. However, evidence from these, discussions with staff, scrutiny of planning, displays and previous work indicate that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress through the key stage and meet the national expectations for the subject. Standards are similar to those described in the previous inspection report.
102. In Year 1, pupils learn about famous historical figures such as Grace Darling and Guy Fawkes and why poppies are sold in school in November. They dress up in Victorian costume for a day visit to Manor Farm, where they identify changes over the last hundred years in school life, methods of farming and domestic life. During the inspection week, in lessons about the way daily life changed after the introduction of electricity, pupils in Year 2 showed good recall of information and understanding gained during their visit to Manor Farm. They knew, for example, how washing dollies and mangles were used and how meat was preserved before refrigeration. They were able to identify household objects from photographs, describe how they were used and sequence them appropriately. In learning about the Great Fire of London, they begin to ask appropriate historical questions and to consider causes and consequences of historical events.
103. Insufficient teaching was seen to make an overall judgement on its quality. In the lessons seen, there were examples of both good and unsatisfactory teaching. In both lessons the teachers made good links with work on electricity in science and with the previous visit pupils had made. This captured the pupils' attention well and they were interested and keen to offer their ideas. The good teaching was characterised by the skilful use of open questioning which encouraged pupils to extend their initial responses and helped them to build effectively on their previous knowledge. There was a good balance in the lesson between discussion and written work and between group and individual activity. Pupils knew exactly what they were expected to learn and what written work was to be completed by the end of the lesson. They settled promptly to their tasks and worked at a good pace. In the other lesson, most pupils made little progress, as the questioning did not take enough account of what they already knew. The discussion and class activities lasted too long, the pace slowed and many pupils were not actively involved, which meant that some found it difficult to sustain concentration. Teachers make good use of opportunities in history for pupils to extend their literacy skills by writing in a variety of forms. For example, pupils write newspaper reports and diaries of the Great Fire of London, and use writing frames to help them structure a record of what they have learnt at the end of the topic. Pupils also practise their information technology skills through the use of concept keyboards to sequence pictures.
104. The co-ordinator ensures, through the planning, that good attention is given to the development of historical skills. Relevant links are made with other subjects such as religious education, geography and science. This, together with the effective use of visits to places of historical interest in the locality, enhances the breadth of pupils' learning across the curriculum and contributes well to their social and cultural development.

MUSIC

105. Judgements are based on a singing practice, singing during assembly and a lunchtime music club, as well as lessons seen during the inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are above national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons and as they move through the school. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report.
106. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils sing tunefully in unison, from memory and at times in two parts. They show a good sense of pulse and control. They handle instruments carefully and use them well, sometimes to accompany their own singing. All pupils in Year 2 learn to play the recorder and enjoy performing together. They are able to play a simple rhythmic tune, keeping in time, holding long notes when necessary and can follow a simple notation. They respond to some of the symbols used, such as those for rests and repeats and show a good awareness of each other's playing.
107. The quality of teaching is very good overall and sometimes excellent. This consistently good teaching is achieved because the teacher uses her subject knowledge to the best effect. Her planning is detailed, with a small number of specific objectives carefully translated into stimulating activities, well matched to the abilities of the pupils. The teacher demonstrates and teaches precisely to guide the pupils towards the learning objectives, thus helping pupils to make good, and at times, very good progress. She checks on progress carefully during the lesson and makes very good assessments, which enable her to match teaching and learning closely. Pupils are very well motivated. They show high levels of interest and enjoyment, very good behaviour and pride in their achievements.
108. The co-ordinator is a part time teacher and teaches every class from the scheme of work she has devised. This helps pupils to build very effectively on previous learning. She ensures clear direction for the subject, is well organised and makes very good use of her teaching time. Good opportunities are provided for parents to attend concerts and performances to listen to their children sing and play instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

109. No games lessons were observed during the inspection week, therefore judgements are based only on observations of gymnastics lessons. In those, standards are in line with national expectations and have been maintained since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
110. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can travel in a variety of ways and hold simple balances with control and safety. They link jumps, rolls and changes in height into a sequence with satisfactory control. When given the opportunity, the majority are able to improve these movements through watching others and by practice. They describe the work of others and say why it is good. Some know that energetic exercise makes their hearts beat faster and can explain why.
111. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory overall and good at times. Pupils behaved well. They listened to instructions and showed respect for the performance of others. In a well-taught Year 2 lesson, the teacher had high expectations and pupils were challenged to produce good work by refining and improving their movements. The teacher demonstrated well to make the tasks understood and the pupils knew what was expected of them. They concentrated well and produced a variety of well-controlled balances. They used their mathematical knowledge to produce symmetrical balances in pairs. In less effective teaching there is a lack of challenge in the amount and pace of activities. Too much discussion raises the level of inattention and off-task behaviour. In one class, the variations in what pupils wore were particularly marked with some wearing school blouses, shirts or cardigans and therefore attention was not drawn to matters of hygiene. Some teachers do not set the example themselves of changing for physical education.
112. The experienced co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject, following an extensive ten-day training course. Planning sheets have been devised for lessons based on the scheme of work, to provide progression in the subject. The co-ordinator monitors planning. Resources are adequate, well organised and well used, but at present there is no focused assessment.