

INSPECTION REPORT

OAKRIDGE INFANT SCHOOL

Basingstoke

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115859

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Hadingham

Reporting inspector: Mr Rob Crompton
7230

Dates of inspection: 19th – 21st March 2001

Inspection number: 197534

Full 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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Oakridge Road Basingstoke Hampshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Smy
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7230	Rob Crompton	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and achievements</i> How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11096	Margaret Davie	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22967	Muriel Griffiths	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Art Physical education Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30266	Hilma Rask	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs Equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Oakridge, about two miles from the centre of Basingstoke. It is about the same size as other infant schools with 157 pupils aged between four and seven. Almost all pupils are white, with a very small number of mixed Anglo-Asian and Anglo-Caribbean origin. As they start school, pupils' social, language and number skills are below those of most children of their age. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about average. About one third of the pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. Twenty-four pupils receive support from outside agencies for learning difficulties, behavioural and emotional problems or to improve speech and communication.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school with some excellent features. It is highly effective in enabling pupils to achieve high standards. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is strongly supported by the staff and governors. Highly effective teaching means most pupils make very good progress through the school. Parents are happy with what the school provides. It achieves its aim to provide a secure and happy atmosphere where children do their best. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- High standards are achieved through effective planning and good teaching;
- Excellent assessment procedures enable teachers to closely track pupils' progress and to provide work to meet their needs;
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and progress well;
- The quality and range of class work, together with educational visits, sustain pupils' interest and broaden their experience;
- The headteacher's excellent leadership ensures clear direction for the school and a continuous drive towards further improvement.

What could be improved

The school has no major areas for improvement. In the context of its many strengths, some minor improvements have been suggested. These include planning for the foundation stage¹ and increasing the number of books in the library

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved well since the previous inspection in September 1997. Science teaching has improved and standards have risen. Opportunities for pupils to develop creative skills have increased and the provision for cultural development has improved significantly. Teachers now use questions effectively to extend pupils' problem-solving skills. Despite several changes in the governing body, governors have first hand knowledge of the school and its achievements; they monitor developments and support the school well. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been good.

¹ The foundation stage is from a child's third birthday to the end of the reception year.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	B	C	B	B	well above A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	C	B	B	B	
Mathematics	A	B	A	A	

Although children's general level of attainment is below average as they start school, most make very good progress so that, by the end of the foundation stage, pupils achieve the standards expected at this age. This rate of progress continues, which means almost all pupils achieve the national targets for seven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science. Current standards of work indicate that these levels of attainment are being sustained.

Higher attaining pupils achieve their potential. The number of pupils achieving the higher level in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests last year was above average. Current work indicates that a similar proportion will do as well this year.

Most pupils have good computer skills and achieve the expected standards. Attainment is good in religious education, geography, design and technology and physical education. Standards in art and music are sound. Not enough work in history was seen to judge overall standards, but the level of work in Year 1 history is good. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and take a full part in all subjects. Higher attaining pupils generally achieve their potential. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.

The school sets ambitious targets. Last year these were exceeded in English and mathematics. This year, it aims to increase the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in reading by almost a third and in writing by almost ten per cent this year. It is well placed to meet these targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes; they are keen and enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; relationships between adults and the pupils and the pupils themselves are a strength of the school.
Attendance	Attendance is slightly below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall: 40	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 a strength of the school. In two-fifths of the lessons observed (40 per cent), the teaching was very good or excellent. A similar proportion of lessons was good (42.5 per cent) and the remainder (17.5 per cent) were satisfactory. Consistently effective teaching means that pupils concentrate, try hard and enjoy lessons; as a result, they make very good progress.

Children benefit from the very effective teaching in the reception classes. The systematic approach to teaching letter sounds and the emphasis on language development and early mathematical understanding means that children soon learn the basic skills and make very good progress during the year.

The teachers in the older classes have good relationships with the pupils. Lessons are well organised and practical experiences are frequently used to sustain pupils' interest and increase their understanding.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very effective and the development of these skills helps learning across different subjects. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to think aloud and to use their existing knowledge to learn new things. Effective teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) promotes learning well. Pupils are confident and eager to make progress. Teaching in science, religious education, music and physical education is also strong.

Teachers carefully assess progress and keep careful records. This enables pupils, especially those with special educational needs to benefit from being taught in appropriate groups. Classroom assistants play an important part in supporting pupils; they work in close co-operation with teachers and effectively support pupils individually and in small groups.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities is very good. Extra-curricular provision is excellent. The curriculum is enriched by many educational visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. An effective policy ensures that pupils receive very good support while taking a full part in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall: Moral values are shared in the school community and the adults in the school are good role models. Pupils support each other both inside and outside the classroom and work well together in pairs or small groups. Cultural development is promoted very well through art, drama, music and educational visits.

How well the school	Pupils are known very well and there is a high degree of concern for
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cares for its pupils	their welfare. All staff work successfully to ensure that children learn in a happy and secure atmosphere.
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The school's links with parents are very good. They appreciate the happy family atmosphere and open door policy, which allows personal concerns to be dealt with quickly and efficiently.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership and the school benefits from the effective partnership between the headteacher, governors and key staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body operates effectively. Many governors have close connections with the school and frequently keep in touch.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Thorough analysis of pupils' progress takes place and teaching is closely monitored. This approach enables the school to refine the curriculum and to set appropriate priorities for teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are carefully allocated in line with the school's priorities. Funds are spent carefully to ensure value for money.

Staff are suitably qualified and experienced. Accommodation is good overall; classrooms are spacious and indoor and outdoor facilities are good, although the library space is rather small. Learning resources are generally plentiful but the range and quantity of library books is limited.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good teaching and consistency in the setting of homework makes a significant impact on progress ▪ Careful grouping helps children achieve high academic and personal standards ▪ The reward system works very well ▪ The school enjoys a good reputation in the community and parents would be happy to recommend it to other families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The range of activities outside lessons

The inspection team agreed with parents' positive comments. The range of activities outside lessons was found to be excellent. In addition to extra-curricular clubs, the school provides an extensive range of educational outings and numerous visitors are invited to lead workshops in art and music, to tell pupils about their jobs or to introduce them to other cultural traditions. This means that children have a broad and varied range of learning experiences.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The overall picture is one of good standards. As they enter the school, children's levels of social development, use of language and understanding of number are below those generally found at this age. Most children make very good progress through the foundation stage so that they have a very sound basis for subsequent work. This rate of progress continues so that, by the time they leave the school, most pupils have done very well. Parents are understandably happy with the standards their children achieve.

2 The above average standards achieved at the time of the previous inspection have been further improved, with almost all pupils achieving the national targets for seven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science. Reading and mathematics are particular strengths. Most pupils achieve better than the national average and better than pupils in similar² schools. Results of the National Curriculum tests in mathematics were well above those found in most schools. All pupils attained the expected level for their age; a result better than that in 95 per cent of other schools. An above average proportion – about one third - achieved the higher level. When compared with similar schools, results were also well above average. Current standards of work indicate that this level of attainment is being sustained. In the 2000 tests in English, higher attaining pupils generally did well – a quarter reached the higher Level 3 in reading - but there were some weaknesses in their results in speaking, listening and in writing. These areas of English are improving, and standards in aspects of mathematics (shape, space and measures) and science (life and living processes), which were also relatively weaker last year, have risen. These improvements are a testament to the school's careful analysis of results and clearly focused teaching.

3 Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology and most have good computer skills and reach the expected standards. Standards in religious education are above those expected of seven-year-olds outlined in the locally agreed syllabus.

4 Pupils achieve well in most other subjects. Standards are good in design and technology, geography and physical education. Although not enough work in history was seen to judge overall standards, good progress is being made in Year 1, that suggests at least satisfactory standards. Attainment in art and music is sound; singing is good.

5 Through its systematic assessment procedures, the school is able to pinpoint those who are underachieving and those who have the potential to do better than average. The school promotes high standards for all groups of pupils and carefully analyses assessment information to check on the progress of both boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are making very good progress towards the targets set for them. The school can be justifiably proud of their achievement throughout their time at the school.

6 Pupils' achievements in tests and other assessments are carefully recorded and this information is used each year to set appropriately challenging targets. Those set for this year are ambitious; the school aims to increase the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in reading by almost a third and in writing by almost ten per cent. Given the consistently effective teaching in Year 2 and pupils' good attitudes to work, the school is well placed to meet these objectives.

² Comparisons are based on the proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7 Pupils of all ages are keen to come to school and enthusiastic about learning. This has a significant impact on how well they achieve. Parents strongly endorse this; the youngest children leave their parents and carers with confidence at the start of the day. Many already come into school on their own, put away their coats and bags sensibly and quickly settle down to some of the many activities set out in their classrooms. Pupils throughout the school listen to their teachers carefully, follow instructions very well and generally take part in discussions with confidence. Pupils in Year 1, for example, talked animatedly about how they could take care of their classroom environment by tidying up, putting away jigsaws and making sure their coats and bags were hung on their hooks, showing just how carefully they had been listening to their teacher.

8 Pupils with special educational needs generally show the same positive attitudes towards their learning as their peers. They benefit from the very good support and encouragement of the specialist teacher and the well-trained special needs teaching assistant. The favourable ratio of classroom assistants to pupils in the school is also of real benefit to pupils with special educational needs in the classroom setting.

9 Good teaching skills ensure that pupils are attentive and behave well during lessons. They clearly know the required routines, respond well and work hard on their tasks. When learning how to write lists, children in reception became interested very quickly because their teacher chose the names of a number of familiar television programmes to work with during her introduction. This immediately got them excited about working on their own lists. The teacher's very high expectations and skilful management of behaviour, along with the availability of plenty of materials to help them with correct spellings, meant that the children remained focused and achieved very well. Similarly, in a Year 2 science lesson, pupils' attention was quickly gained because they were asked to remember what they did that morning that linked to their topic of life cycles. The teacher's quick firing of questions made sure they all listened attentively and her firm but encouraging and confident manner meant they were keen to answer. The good pace and variety of activities in this lesson also made sure that the children were very involved in the learning and therefore achieving very well. Pupils respond particularly well to the good music teaching, singing with a great deal of enthusiasm and gusto.

10 There are just a very few instances where teachers' organisation and management skills are not as well established and sometimes result in pupils becoming restless or inattentive. This generally happens on the few occasions when children are sitting on the carpet and listening for too long rather than involved in activities.

11 Relationships are very good between adults and the pupils and the pupils themselves, and are a strength of the school. Teachers take every opportunity to encourage pupils and are quick to praise achievement. This has a significant impact on their self esteem and the amount of effort they put into their work. Their positive response to the school's reward system was demonstrated during an assembly. Encouraged by the award of 'records of achievement', they proudly and enthusiastically shared their good knowledge about local birds.

12 Attendance is slightly below the national average. This is mostly accounted for by illness and a few children being taken on family holidays during term time. There is, however, a very small number of families who do not take good attendance seriously enough and this has a detrimental effect on their children's learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13 Overall, the teaching in the school is good. Strengths have been maintained since the previous inspection and the quality has improved. There was a little unsatisfactory teaching last time, whereas no unsatisfactory lessons were observed during this inspection and the proportion of very good lessons increased by around 50 per cent. The quality of teaching has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and progress and is much appreciated by parents.

14 In the reception classes, teachers and support staff work extremely well together. Adults provide good role models for children and successfully encourage them to become more confident and independent. Staff establish good relationships with the children, helping them at every opportunity to settle into school routines. Lessons are very well planned and taken at a lively pace. Activities appeal to children and resources are used to good effect. Children are expected to behave well and respond accordingly. Because of the teachers' positive approach, children quickly gain enough confidence to answer questions and offer suggestions in lessons. Teachers successfully build on children's day-to-day experiences and, as far as possible, make learning fun. For example, children respond very well to the creative opportunities offered by the puppet theatre and role-play activities, and the more directed work in physical education. This leads to consistently high quality learning and very good progress towards the learning goals³ of the foundation stage and the first level of the National Curriculum.

15 Teachers in the older classes take full advantage of this positive start. Most are very good at generating enthusiasm and continuously challenge pupils to do their best. A good working atmosphere is maintained and teachers explain things very clearly. Teachers in Year 1 structure lessons well and adopt a lively approach, often using humour to good effect - for example by making deliberate mistakes when using the computer. Work is set at various levels to match pupils' needs, which means most rise to the challenge. A good example of this was the use of different dictionaries to teach alphabetical order, to ensure each group worked on a similar task at an appropriate level. Pupils understand the reason behind many of the activities because teachers increasingly make this clear. They try hard in lessons and work at a good pace with a good degree of independence.

16 This level of enthusiasm continues in Year 2, where the consistently high quality teaching helps pupils to build very well on their existing knowledge and skills and to achieve above average standards. Seven of the nine lessons observed in this year group were very good or excellent. In a very successful English lesson, pupils responded very positively to the task of exploring the text of advertisements and making their own jingles. This called on a wide range of literacy skills and offered a real challenge. Similarly, pupils were very motivated during an excellent mathematics lesson when they were invited to offer comments on four-digit numbers, such as 2435. Responses, such as 'It would be in the 5 times table...because the last digit is 5' provided evidence of effective teaching and pupils' very good understanding of number.

17 In addition to planning work at different levels in each class, year groups are often split into ability groups for literacy and numeracy. The balance between pupils being taught by their own teacher and the teacher of the parallel class has been carefully thought through. Pupils enjoy the security and continuity offered by working with their own teacher and benefit from highly focused work at the right level. This strategy is a positive factor in the good progress that pupils make and the above average standards achieved.

³ These cover personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

18 There are strengths in the teaching of other subjects, particularly in music, physical education and religious education. Information and communication technology is linked to day-to-day work in other subjects, which gives the work with computers meaning and purpose.

19 Very good use of assessment is at the heart of teaching and planning in the school and this is well used to ensure that work is set at appropriate levels for all groups of pupils. The school has a clear policy which takes account of the learning needs of able pupils. Effective diagnostic assessment ensures that appropriate work is set for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are well supported in their classrooms through well-planned teaching, carefully considered grouping arrangements, and tasks which take into account specific learning needs.

20 A few lessons, though satisfactory overall, lack pace, which restricts pupils' learning. Sometimes lessons are a little over-directed and do not include sufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs or small groups. However, the general quality of teaching across the school reflects a high level of expertise and commitment. Teachers are very well supported by the highly effective classroom assistants who enable pupils to have intensive help in small groups and to take part in many practical activities. Their presence means that the curriculum can be approached in varied and interesting ways. All staff work hard in the interests of the pupils to provide them with a rewarding experience and a very secure foundation for their future education.

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

21 The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and promotes good achievement. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum together with religious education, sex education and teaching about the misuse of drugs. The daily act of collective worship meets statutory requirements. The school is making good use of national planning guidance as the basis for its curriculum planning and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully implemented. Homework is used to good effect. The curriculum in the foundation stage needs to be more clearly focused on the early learning goals for children in the reception classes. The school recognises this and a review is planned for the summer term.

22 Pupils with special educational needs enjoy the same wide range of curricular opportunities as their peers. Provision for these pupils is very good and the positive ethos of respect which is fostered within the school contributes to their very good progress.

23 Extra-curricular provision is excellent. It includes sporting activities, board games, sewing and chess. These are well supported by the pupils. Lessons are enriched by many educational visits that link with various aspects of the curriculum such as those to Hampton Court, Winchester Cathedral, Hampshire's 'hands on' museum service and HMS Warrior and HMS Victory. The school also uses visitors from the local community to help broaden the experiences of the pupils, such as the community police, the fire service and visiting authors for book weeks.

24 Provision for personal development is very good and there is a strong programme for developing the children's awareness of personal, social and health issues. This includes visits from a theatre group which specialises in helping young children to develop ideas about social responsibilities and the regular use of circle times, when the children have opportunities to think about and discuss various aspects of personal development.

25 A sense of awe and wonder among the children is promoted when they visit Winchester Cathedral and when a candlelit celebration is held at Christmas. Pupils are encouraged to

reflect on the wonders of nature when they look around the school's grounds. They were fascinated by a collection of birds' feathers that the headteacher showed them in assembly. However there is little planned provision for spiritual development in the day-to-day curriculum other than in collective worship. Pupils join in prayers on these occasions and have a quiet time of reflection, for example, thinking about the people described as lonely, crying and sad in the song 'Kum Ba Yah'.

26 The school is good at teaching right from wrong. Moral values are shared in the school community and the adults in the school are good role models. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour in classes and each class has decided what its own rules should be. School rules are also displayed prominently. Pupils understand what is expected of them and teachers deal with inappropriate behaviour immediately. The children enjoy colouring 'smiley faces' on their records of achievement, which are given for acts of kindness, a special effort with their work or any kind of achievement. Class teachers also use various reward systems to promote good behaviour.

27 The promotion of pupils' social development is good. They are encouraged to play, share and work co-operatively and they accept and follow school routines. They are taught that they are part of the school community and have responsibilities, such as taking the class registers to the office. Work for charities includes supporting *Guide Dogs for the Blind*, the local hospice and *Leukaemia Busters*. Funds are raised to support a school in Africa and money is sent to assist famine relief from the annual Harvest assemblies.

28 The promotion of pupils' cultural development is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Every year the children enjoy a country-dancing afternoon in which parents are involved and during the inspection week there was a display to celebrate St. David's Day. Pupils in Year 2 have enjoyed a visit from the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, explored the festival of Diwali through a workshop and have visited the National Gallery in London. The curriculum is enriched by the loan of resources from the Intercultural Centre at Southampton and the school has built up collections of resources from the African and Asian continents. Recently, the younger children have enjoyed making cards for the Chinese New Year celebrations and they took part in a special assembly to celebrate this event with stories and drama. The school has arranged for a visit from an Indian Dance Group later in the spring and pupils had a visit from a South American band. In religious education, the older pupils experienced a Shabbat meal when they visited a synagogue. The school takes care to regularly review the book stock and remove outdated and stereotypical material following the recommendations of the school library service.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29 Pupils are known very well and there is a high degree of concern for their welfare. All staff work successfully to ensure that children learn in a happy and secure atmosphere where they can strive to do their best. The building is extremely clean, well maintained and pleasantly enhanced by samples of children's work, providing a pleasant and stimulating learning environment. Teachers and classroom assistants supervise pupils attentively during lessons, and meals' supervisors ensure that they receive the same high level of attention when they are playing outside.

30 Excellent assessment of attainment and progress ensures that work is very well matched to the needs of individual pupils and makes a significant contribution to how well they are achieving. Because the teachers are very aware of what the pupils can do and where they need help, support can be directed effectively to the children who need it most. In one of the reception classes for, example, both the teacher and classroom assistant unobtrusively assisted those who needed help dressing after their physical education lesson and encouraged the others with a quick word or smile. Some of these youngest children have also been identified as

needing extra help with phonics and are making good progress because they are getting extra support on three mornings a week specifically focused on this need. Pupils with special educational needs are also achieving very well because early identification and intervention ensures that they are getting the required extra help. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator works in close partnership with class teachers to monitor progress over time and the school has developed effective links with a range of professional agencies who are involved in the care of pupils with special educational needs; for example, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and educational psychologists.

31 Personal development is very well supported throughout the school because the teachers have a clear picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Systematic monitoring ensures that strategies are used effectively to encourage good behaviour and regular attendance, and to develop qualities such as cooperation, persistence and concentration. Much emphasis is placed on reward for good achievement and working hard to earn recognition. Pupils are proud of their stickers, star pieces of work and the many displays acknowledging their efforts. All children who have behaved well during the term get a behaviour certificate reinforcing the important role they all have to play in the smooth running of the school community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32 Parents are very positive about the school. They know it enjoys a good reputation in the community and feel they would be happy to recommend it to other families. They are particularly happy with the way that careful grouping helps their children achieve high academic and personal standards. They rightly feel that the importance placed on rewards such as records of achievement and good behaviour awards is having a positive impact on attainment, and that good teaching and consistency in the setting of homework makes a significant impact on progress.

33 The quality of information for parents is very good. The brochure and governors' annual report to parents are both easy to read and give lots of useful information. Accounts of governors' visits are published in the annual report and provide an interesting insight, for example into how the youngest are helped to practise their reading - *"They are eager to show me any new word they have learnt and tell me what the story is about, and sometimes what they did in the playground, what they are having for tea, doing on the weekend or what their babysitter is called! Then we read again of course!"* Annual reports on pupils' progress are generally very good because the way they are presented helps parents to understand what their child should be achieving, how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. Reports at the end of the reception year, however, are based on National Curriculum subjects rather than the areas of learning in the foundation stage.

34 A wide range of information is provided to help keep parents informed about their child's curriculum and how they can help to support learning. The school makes every effort to keep lines of communication open and provides regular meetings about topics such as literacy, numeracy and standardised tests for the seven year olds, despite variable attendance on these occasions. Detailed information is given about homework and the home/school reading diaries are often used well as a means of regular communication between teacher and parent.

35 The school's links with parents are very good. They appreciate the happy family atmosphere and open door policy, which allows personal concerns to be dealt with quickly and efficiently. The headteacher is much in evidence in the morning, greeting children and their parents. Many use this opportunity for a quick word with a teacher, to see the school secretary or share important news such as the birth of a new baby!

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

36 The school benefits from the effective partnership between the headteacher, governors and key staff. The headteacher has a pivotal role in ensuring that the school meets its aims and she provides excellent leadership. The deputy head and senior teacher work well with the headteacher and other staff, setting a very good example in their teaching.

37 The governing body operates effectively. Many governors have close connections with the school and frequently keep in touch. Subject leaders review progress regularly and report to governors' meetings, which enables governors to keep a close eye on developments and to agree priorities with the staff. Each governor takes a special interest in one class, which ensures that the governing body has a good overview of the day-to-day work of the school.

38 Areas for future school improvement are prioritised after considering staff views, test results and other assessments, together with government and local authority initiatives. The monitoring of teaching is very strong; teachers and co-ordinators continuously evaluate their work, using assessment data to good effect. The headteacher provides detailed reports for the governors, based on a wide range of data. The quality of her analysis enables the governing body to make informed decisions about future priorities.

39 Development plans clearly set out targets and responsibilities, with the anticipated benefits to pupils plainly stated. Careful financial planning ensures that funds are spent well to achieve the best value. Staff and governors share a commitment to succeed and governors are increasingly helping to shape the direction of the school.

40 Very good leadership and management ensures that suitable learning challenges are set for all groups of pupils and the school responds positively to their diverse learning needs. High expectations of what pupils of all abilities from a range of different home circumstances can achieve is a hallmark of this school and highly effective strategies are employed to bring this about.

41 There is a good range of suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. Support staff are skilled and effective. Effective teamwork is part of the school's culture; staff support each other well and there is a very strong commitment to professional development. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is effective. This is evident in the fact that - despite several staff changes - the quality of teaching has been sustained and improved since the last inspection. All staff have opportunities to attend courses and recent training, for example, is enabling the school to further refine the excellent assessment procedures. Information technology is being harnessed to good effect in this and many other aspects of teaching and administration.

42 Classrooms are spacious and indoor and outdoor facilities are good overall, although the library space is rather limited. Learning resources are generally plentiful and allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. The range and quantity of library books currently limits opportunities for pupils to pursue classroom topics independently or to follow up their own interests. The school is aware of this and improvements are included in development planning. The range of computers is just adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum but the school is due to receive further central funds in order to provide better resources for information and communication technology.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43 The school is very successful in helping pupils to achieve good standards from a relatively low starting point. There are no major issues for the school to address but the following issues should be considered:

- (a) Planning in the foundation stage (to be reviewed in Summer 2001) needs to be more clearly focused on the early learning goals rather than starting from a National Curriculum perspective (paragraph 47).
- (b) The quantity and range of both fiction and non-fiction books in the library should be increased (a current target in the school improvement plan) in order to facilitate pupils' independent research and enable them to follow up their own interests (paragraph 59).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2.5	37.5	42.5	17.5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	157
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	52

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.0	School data	0.2
National comparative data	5.2	National comparative data	0.3

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	23	29	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	23
	Girls	27	29	29
	Total	48	50	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (84)	96 (89)	100 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	23
	Girls	28	28	27
	Total	49	51	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (82)	98 (97)	96 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	101
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	324682
Total expenditure	338264
Expenditure per pupil	2115
Balance brought forward from previous year	19790
Balance carried forward to next year	6208

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	157
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	39	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	33	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	44	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	45	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	73	27	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	46	5	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	24	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	26	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	44	49	4	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	68	30	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	33	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	35	14	1	25

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

44 Children are admitted to the reception classes, initially on a part-time basis, at the beginning of the year in which they reach five. The classrooms provide an appropriate and attractive environment. There is a secure outside area and the school hall is used for physical activities. An improvement since the last inspection has been the provision of more interesting activities for outdoor play.

45 The children are given a good start to their education. As they start school, children's social and language development, their understanding of number and their knowledge of the world outside their home are below that generally found at this age. The resources for this age group are very good and the co-ordinator for the early years is experienced and effective in her work, giving the children a firm grounding for their further years in school. However, current planning is based on National Curriculum subjects with references to the early learning goals recommended for the foundation stage. This provides good subject continuity from reception to Year 1, but means that children's progress towards the early learning goals is given insufficient emphasis in teachers' records and reports to parents.

46 The quality of teaching is good, with some very good teaching observed. This has a positive effect on children's attitudes and behaviour in their early days at school. The teachers' quiet, encouraging approach helps children to settle well, get used to school routines and to benefit from the activities provided. Teachers' high expectations of learning and behaviour mean that progress is good in the foundation stage, with most children on course to achieve the recommended goals by the end of the reception year. All adults work effectively in the classrooms, which means that children are well supported in their learning. The teachers plan together and provide a broad range of activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

48 Children are keen to come to school because they know that they will be offered interesting activities and that they are valued. All adults in the reception classes give good support to the children and give lots of appropriate praise, which promotes their confidence and self-esteem. Most children listen attentively when required to do so, are keen to learn and concentrate well. Children relate very well to each other and to adults. They work co-operatively, share resources sensibly and understand about taking turns. They know what is expected of them and understand the difference between right and wrong in the setting of the school. Children behave extremely well; they walk sensibly in the corridors, they move to their tables quietly and sensibly and respond to instructions immediately. Adults help the children to develop independence and a sense of responsibility when changing for physical education, by encouraging them to do buttons and zips for themselves. There is a good focus on personal routines and hygiene. For example, children remembered why they needed to wash their hands after stroking a puppy and they helped the teacher design a poster about washing hands, for display in the cloakrooms.

Communication, language and literacy

49 Children enter the school with a limited knowledge and understanding of early reading and writing processes and a significant number are still developing the range of speaking and listening skills expected at this age. However, they make good progress; at the time of the inspection – about halfway through the school year - children's attainment in communication, language and literacy was about average for their age. Children interact well with each other and begin to hold conversations. They talk together in the course of play, making *playdough*

caterpillars or dressing up to go to see a 'performance' at the classroom puppet theatre. Most are confident to make comments and suggestions or to ask questions. They enjoy sharing books and know that they must handle them carefully. They are beginning to know sounds and many of them can name the initial and final sounds in words. Teachers use puppets to make the activities fun, which in turn helps children to remember letter sounds. Most children are beginning to attempt to write for various purposes; for example, after listening to the story 'Don't forget the Bacon', they wrote their own shopping lists. The higher attaining children wrote a list of things that they could use to 'make a cake for Kipper', with such items as cornflakes, tomato sauce and baked beans. They enjoyed talking about the story and explained clearly that 'no-one wanted to come to his party because they were too busy'. Pupils with special educational needs are given extra help with phonics in a short session every morning. The teacher makes clear links for them between writing, reading and spoken language through humorous rhymes, which help to reinforce their awareness of letter sounds.

Mathematical development

50 The majority of children make good progress in developing their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding, and attainment is above that expected for their age. Children make good progress in understanding numbers through sorting, matching, sequencing and counting everyday objects or mathematical resources. They confidently add and subtract numbers up to 10. They recognise the relationship between the spoken names of numbers and the written figures. Most hold up the correct numbers of fingers when singing a number rhyme such as 'Five Little Men in a Flying Saucer'. They talk about and copy simple patterns with two colours and are beginning to understand instructions about putting objects 'behind', 'in front' or 'on top'. The children are aware of how many can play at once in one area, such as using the paints or the puppet theatre. They counted out coins confidently when buying a programme for a visit to the puppet theatre. Teachers use every opportunity to count in the classroom, such as when a child made a caterpillar that he described as 'the biggest in the world', and the children helped to count the 54 segments. In a music lesson, a child looking at a triangle remembered that 'It's got three sides, so it's a triangle'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

51 Children make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They draw pictures of seeds growing and the majority know that seeds need water to grow. Most children can name things that need electricity at home, such as the television, the fridge and the video. Most can talk about the things that they saw in the school garden during the previous term when they went for a walk with their teacher and remembered that there were no leaves or flowers. They know that things will begin to grow again because it is spring and they know that the weather will get warmer. Children know that they change as they grow and spot changes over time using photographs of themselves as babies. They draw people and name the parts of the body, such as legs, arms and hands. Children are introduced to other cultures; for example, they enjoyed making a Chinese dragon as a group activity when learning about the Chinese New Year. Children use the computer confidently to make drawings and can program the floor robot to move where they wish it to go.

Physical development

52 Children's progress in this area of learning is good. They gain confidence in using space through opportunities for physical education in the hall. Their movements have a good degree of control when curling and stretching on the floor or using the large apparatus. Teachers focus on specific teaching points, such as balancing using two or three parts of the body which helps children to work hard at these activities and so make good progress. Children responded well when the teacher then asked them to make bridges using the apparatus; they controlled their movements very well and moved around the hall sensibly, showing awareness of others. Most

children have well-developed skills when handling small objects; they know how to hold pencils and they use paintbrushes confidently and carefully when painting flowers. It was not possible to observe the children playing in the secure outside play area during the inspection because of the weather but teachers' planning shows that suitable activities using tricycles and scooters are made available.

Creative development

53 Children make good progress. They learn to use paint appropriately and paint daffodils that they see growing outside. They develop their three-dimensional skills when they make clay hedgehogs and make models of chrysalises with butterflies emerging. Drawings of holly leaves using pencils show the development of close observational skills. Children enjoyed using percussion instruments when telling the story of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' and showed a good sense of rhythm when they tapped and recited the 'trip traps' at different tempos showing the goats crossing the bridge. They sing well and mostly in tune. They use their imaginations in role play using the puppet theatre, both when performing and dressing up as the audience.

ENGLISH

54 Since the last inspection, there has been clear improvement in overall standards in English. The effective implementation of the national literacy strategy has had a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Standards achieved by the age of seven are above those expected in both reading and writing

55 The good progress made at the foundation stage is sustained in Years 1 and 2, resulting in higher than nationally expected standards. Children with special educational needs make the same very good progress in their learning since the school identifies individual needs at an early stage and provides very good additional learning support programmes. Pupils with special educational needs particularly benefit from the SIDNEY programme (screening interaction for dyslexia notably in the early years,) which is very well taught by the specialist teacher and the trained special needs classroom assistant, making strong connections between spoken and written forms of English.

56 All staff in the school make determined efforts to focus on the development of new vocabulary to extend and develop pupils' speaking and listening skills in a range of subject areas. For example in science, Year 2 pupils found out if the words chrysalis and pupa mean the same when exploring the life cycle of the butterfly. The school places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' awareness of sounds and patterns in language, and this supports spelling development and reading particularly effectively. There is an appropriate emphasis on role play and drama, for example Year 1 pupils take on different roles in the class estate agent's office as they buy and sell houses.

57 Reading is promoted well throughout the school. All pupils take books home on a regular basis, which is recorded in a home/school reading record. Pupils are taught to recognise letter names and sounds, and encouraged to make active use of this knowledge when tackling unfamiliar words in texts. They are also encouraged to establish a knowledge of basic words which they recognise by sight. A real strength in the teaching of reading is the way in which teachers encourage pupils to use the full range of strategies to gain meaning from texts and note how pupils make use of these. Pupils are provided with plenty of time to choose books during quiet reading periods, whilst at the same time teachers undertake well-focused guided reading with a small group of readers. Teachers ensure that they share reading with individual pupils using a core scheme, as well as undertaking whole class story reading of books by popular children's authors, such as Roald Dahl, to encourage a love of literature. The higher attaining pupils in Year 2 tackle independent reading and begin to predict what might happen next. They start to consider different types of characters in the storyline. The majority of pupils

in Year 2 can distinguish between fact and fiction texts, confidently explain what the purpose of a contents page is, and use a simple dictionary with growing accuracy. The introduction of comics and additional factual texts to classroom resources has a positive impact on the interest which boys show in reading.

58 Writing has been given much priority in the school and teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. By the age of seven, pupils' skills in writing are above average. Most have a good understanding of the different purposes for writing and they enjoy tackling independent writing tasks, for example, making individual dictionaries, writing stories and recording investigations in other subjects, such as science and history. Very constructive marking enables pupils to improve the quality of their written work and the majority of pupils have developed good habits of using full stops and capital letters appropriately. Higher attaining pupils use speech marks particularly well in written dialogue and they write in extended sentences in a wide range of different contexts with a good degree of independence and confidence. In unaided imaginative writing a Year 2 pupil wrote, "When I am flying the air feels nice and cool and my wings are beating very fast through the cool air of the night."

59 Standards of presentation are very good and by the age of seven, the majority of pupils produce very well formed handwriting. A joined script is gradually introduced from the start of schooling and pupils have good opportunities to practise their handwriting skills. Spelling is consistently well taught and most pupils identify letter sounds by name and by sound, which they then combine into sound blends. Through games and activities, pupils are regularly encouraged to recognise sounds at the start, in the middle or at the end of words and they make effective use of this knowledge when attempting to spell unfamiliar words.

60 Teaching is consistently good and it is very good in the Year 2 classes where teachers' high expectations, lively pacing and very good subject knowledge promote learning through very well focused activities. Planning is very detailed. Teaching groups based on pupils' prior attainment enables teachers to target the teaching of specific phonic skills at appropriate levels. For example, higher attaining pupils in Year 2 enjoyed identifying rhyming words in advertisements and rose to the challenge of writing their own rhyming jingles to persuade classmates to purchase items. In a separate small group, pupils with special educational needs were equally well challenged by their task of constructing word wheels to form words ending with *ff* and *ng* sounds. Year 1 pupils developed early dictionary skills in well-planned activities matched to their levels of understanding, which resulted in productive learning for all groups of children. The favourable ratio of classroom assistants is of benefit to all pupils in their learning; although most are quite new to the role, they are well briefed and play an increasing role in the literacy hour.

61 Leadership and management of the subject are very good; teachers are given good support and the assessment system works very well. The new co-ordinator brings very good subject knowledge and understanding to the role and has already undertaken valuable monitoring of teaching and learning. Resources for English are good overall. Although there is a satisfactory range of appropriate books in the library, and the school has good links with the school library service, the school has recognised the need for more books and other reference material. Funding has been allocated for this in the next financial year. Currently however, there is insufficient use of the library area for individual enquiry and personal interest.

MATHEMATICS

62 Standards in mathematics are very good. Mathematics has been a strength of the school for several years. Over the last three years, results show that pupils have been ahead of expectations for their age by an average of six months. These consistently good standards are the result of high quality teaching, effective subject management and the general enthusiasm and interest in mathematics throughout the school.

63 As they complete the foundation stage, children are above average in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. They continue to make very good progress because the teaching is consistently effective, planning and assessment are excellent, and pupils respond very well to the variety of activities and stimulating resources.

64 The work in pupils' books and folders shows how well they progress from year to year. Pupils in Year 1 develop a good level of numeracy through a variety of practical activities. Building on early matching activities which reinforce number facts to 10, such as $6+4$, $7+3$, $5+5$, number squares are used to explore odd and even numbers, addition and subtraction, and numerical patterns such as the multiples of 2 and 10. Teachers use the correct mathematical terms and symbols right from the start. For example, they encourage pupils to use the *greater than* ($>$) and *less than* ($<$) symbols, and to use words such as *subtract*, *minus* and *digit*. 'Shopping' and measuring activities help to reinforce important concepts; thinking about the school day introduces pupils naturally to telling the time. Simple sorting activities – such as classifying objects by their shape and colour - provide a good foundation for work on data handling. The computer is used well to show how data can be represented graphically using picture bar charts.

65 Year 2 pupils cover an excellent range of topics and a large majority work at a level above that usually found at this age. They confidently count in 2s, 3s, 5s and 10s, with the higher attaining pupils having good recall of the relative multiplication tables. Most pupils have a very good grasp of place value. This was illustrated when a teacher asked pupils to tell her 'anything you know' about the number 2435. They made comments such as, 'It has two thousands...it is an odd number... it has two odd and two even digits...it's in the 5 times table' These observations revealed a level of numerical understanding well ahead of that usually found at this stage. Older pupils are given weekly task sheets which offer a high level of challenge. Some need to rapidly recall number facts to complete them in time. Other tasks make demands on pupils' existing knowledge to solve new problems about time, shape and angles. Pupils respond well to these high expectations; they cover a lot of ground and take care with presentation; for example, following practical paper-folding tasks, pupils drew accurate lines of symmetry on regular shapes. Higher attaining pupils are given suitable extension activities, such as exploring division as the inverse of multiplication or devising their own data tables and drawing conclusions. Pupils' very good knowledge of the properties of shapes is clearly indicated in the tables they construct showing the number of faces, vertices and edges of three-dimensional shapes such as a cuboid, pyramid or cylinder.

66 The quality and range of work in pupils' books indicates very effective teaching. This was clearly evident in the lessons observed, particularly in Year 2 where the teaching is of a very high standard. In both year groups, classes are split into ability groups for a substantial part of the time. This allows teachers to provide work which closely matches pupils' needs. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and higher attaining pupils rise to the level of challenge. Teachers change groups each week so they gain a very good overview of the progress of pupils in their own class and can record attainment and set realistic targets for improvement. The excellent assessment system means this process is manageable and effective.

67 All teachers are skilful at asking questions which build on pupils' existing understanding. This was a common feature of the mental warm-up sessions at the beginning of numeracy lessons. This was particularly effective in the Year 2 lessons, where the teachers' open-ended questions drew an excellent response. Sometimes pupils found it difficult to contain their enthusiasm and were eager to demonstrate their growing confidence. Teachers use 'deliberate mistakes' to good effect. This was successful when Year 2 pupils were building up multiplication tables and looking for patterns. The teacher's warm rapport meant pupils were attentive, fully engaged in learning and keen to contribute.

68 The subject is managed very effectively by the co-ordinator who, as a leading mathematics teacher, provides an excellent role model for colleagues. All teachers have been observed and given supportive feedback. This systematic monitoring of teaching and learning has allowed the school to build on its existing success and to further develop teachers' expertise. The school has successfully implemented the national numeracy strategy. It has been appropriately adapted to suit the specific context of the school; for example, most teachers regularly use the guidelines for the term ahead, thus ensuring a good level of challenge, which fully extends pupils' learning and progress.

SCIENCE

69 Pupils achieve good standards in science. Attainment has improved since the last inspection, when standards were average. In particular, good progress has been made in teaching pupils how to investigate and to conduct simple experiments and this has led to better results.

70 Building on the early scientific ideas they acquire in the foundation stage, pupils make good progress through the school. In Year 1, they enjoy studying everyday things, such as comparing how humans and animals grow. Pupils learn to identify the parts of plants such as the petals, stem and leaves. They draw labelled diagrams, sometimes using the computer to put together parts of a plant into the correct graphic sequence. By the age of seven, most pupils develop a fuller understanding of life processes and living things through the further study of plants and seeds. They plant bean seeds and predict that the root will grow first. They use their numeracy skills to carefully measure and record growth. Pupils are encouraged to use their senses when learning about the human body and investigate flowers using touch, sight and smell.

71 Older pupils look at different materials and know that glass is used for windows because 'you can see through it'. They draw things that need electricity in order to work and know that some, such as a torch, need batteries. They draw simple electrical circuits and describe how the bulbs light up. Pupils sort different kinds of paper, when learning about the properties of various materials and classify these by describing them as rough, shiny or smooth. Pupils have good knowledge about keeping healthy and collect information from others in the class, making up appropriate questions for their survey, such as 'Do you brush your teeth twice a day?' and 'Do you eat fresh fruit every day?' They produce charts to show the results of their surveys. Pupils learn to carry out experiments and investigations, such as when they test different materials to find out whether they are waterproof and record their results. They know about some elements of 'fair testing'. For example, after blowing a piece of paper through a straw, when learning about forces, they knew that to make it fair they should blow with the same force.

72 Teaching is good and at times very good. Teachers know the subject well and make lessons interesting with effective use of resources, which encourages pupils to remember what they have learned. The teaching is most effective when the teacher clearly outlines the learning objectives of the lesson, makes good use of questioning to find out what the pupils know and work is appropriately matched to the understanding of the pupils. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy various activities about the life cycles of butterflies and frogs, including sequencing a life cycle on a

computer program. They rise to the challenge of drawing different types of flow chart to present their findings and confidently use scientific vocabulary such as 'cocoon' and 'chrysalis'. Teachers often set up group work, which calls upon pupils' co-operative skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 looked at an artificial plant and a real plant and sensibly discussed their similarities and differences.

73 The science co-ordinator manages the subject well and the scheme of work ensures that curriculum coverage is very good. Excellent assessment systems are in place to help teachers to develop pupils' skills as they move through the school.

ART AND DESIGN

74 No lessons were observed during the inspection so evidence has been collected through an analysis of work, looking at displays and talking to staff and pupils. This indicated that standards in art and design are in line with those expected of pupils of this age.

75 In Year 1, pupils make Chinese paper lanterns when learning about the Chinese New Year and carefully draw different fruits and vegetables, taking notice of the different textures. The pupils' skills improve as they reach Year 2 and they observe the patterns on corn on the cob carefully as they draw them, learning to use different shades with their pencils. They use pastels effectively when sketching spring flowers that they have seen in the school grounds.

76 Planning shows that pupils are introduced to a good range of techniques and use a variety of media, giving them experiences to enrich their learning. A very effective assessment system is in place so that each term, teachers can look at the progress that each child has made. Since the last inspection good progress had been made in planning; the school has developed a new scheme of work and there has been effective training for staff.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

77 There was no direct observation of teaching of design and technology. However, discussion with pupils about their previous work and a scrutiny of their workbooks indicates that the quality of teaching is good and enables them to achieve standards above those expected for this age.

78 Year 1 pupils cover a good range of 'design and make' activities. These include designing a new bathroom and making a winding mechanism for a windmill. Through a carefully planned sequence of activities involving food, pupils created their own fresh fruit salad, linking this to their work on healthy foods in science. They compared these dishes to tinned products. Design and technology provides good opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their literacy skills; written work includes instructions, the use of bullet points, labels and tables. Numeracy skills are also developed as pupils measure and cut materials – for example when designing and making puppets and wheeled toys in Year 2.

79 A nationally recommended scheme of work has been adopted and provides good guidance for teachers. Pupils' skills are assessed at the end of each unit of work; this enables teachers to plan the emphasis needed in subsequent units and allows the co-ordinator to monitor the attainment and progress of each year group. Examples of pupils' plans and designs are kept in a central file and some are carefully annotated by the teacher to indicate the context and level of support the child needed to complete the work. This system enables teachers to assess current work against National Curriculum levels and to keep good records of individual progress. This could be further extended to include photographs of finished products to provide exemplars for staff – especially teachers new to the school - of the complete design/make/evaluate process.

GEOGRAPHY

80 The school has maintained the good standards which pupils achieve by the age of seven, with higher attaining seven-year-olds demonstrating geographical and mapping skills which are above national expectations. For example, when using the *World Explorer* CD-Rom during self-chosen activities, pupils identified and located different countries, capital cities and features such as oceans and rivers. Most pupils are able to compare and contrast different types of habitats. Using their developing numerical skills, they make good attempts to discover how long journeys might take between two different locations, travelling by different types of transport. All pupils make good progress in developing geographical skills.

81 Year 1 pupils are able to identify some of the human and physical features of the local area such as the shop, the pub, the school and the park. Higher attaining pupils can locate their own homes on a map of the local area when the road names are added and have a good understanding of direction. All pupils make determined efforts to produce their own simple maps and can locate significant places and features when questioned, showing a clear understanding of the purpose of maps.

82 Although no lessons were taking place in Year 2 during the inspection. Evidence from the standards of work achieved and the observation of lessons in Year 1 indicates that the quality of teaching is good. Lesson planning is good, and there is an appropriate focus on fieldwork enquiry when pupils walk through the local area identifying the human and physical features of the local environment. Good use is made of local photographs, and teachers use appropriate questions to focus discussion on features recalled from the visit and to develop geographical skills. Long-term planning is good and takes due account of the requirements of the National Curriculum.

83 The headteacher is currently overseeing the co-ordination of the subject with great efficiency, until a member of staff can be appointed to undertake this role. Resources for learning are good, although there are not enough reference books available in the library to allow pupils to follow up their independent interests more fully. The school places much emphasis on first-hand visits to develop geographical skills, knowledge and understanding, and to enhance pupils' experience. As well as local visits, pupils experience and investigate appropriate contrasting locations when they visit Winchester and make a trip to the seaside at Southsea and Portsmouth.

HISTORY

84 No judgement can be made on standards achieved by the age of seven, as the history teaching in Year 2 takes place later on in the year and there were insufficient samples of work from last year available for scrutiny. However, the work seen in Year 1 indicates that standards are appropriate for pupils of this age.

85 Photographic records show that pupils have rich opportunities to undertake first-hand visits, which extend their understanding of life in the past. Good use is made of the Search museum, which is part of the Hampshire Museum Service, to enable pupils to dress in Edwardian clothes and to explore what life would have been like in the past. A visit to the parish church, which dates back to Tudor times, is exploited well. The youngest pupils enjoy investigating the contents of a Victorian Gladstone bag loaned from the museum. Year 2 pupils make a visit to HMS Victory at Portsmouth and are fascinated by the recreation of a Victorian Christmas by the sailors. They also investigate the significance of Remembrance Day during their study of the Great War. Such work enables pupils to develop a sense of chronology and an understanding of why people behaved as they did in past times.

86 Year 1 pupils write with genuine interest about the lives of their grandparents, some of whom come into school to talk about their childhood. "They didn't have teabags like we do, and they used to put real tea into something and stir it." They compare photographs of baby clothes during the past century and discuss how these have changed over time, with the higher attaining pupils demonstrating a good understanding of timelines. The story of Guy Fawkes is used to develop understanding of events in a sequence of time linked to cause and effect, and Year 1 pupils' lively writing and illustrations of the events show a good grasp of the essential elements of the plot.

87 No lessons took place during the time of the inspection. However teaching is clearly effective and excellent tracking and assessment procedures monitor pupils' progress over time. Very good annotated samples of work contribute to this assessment.

88 The headteacher is currently overseeing the co-ordination of the subject both efficiently and effectively. Resources for learning are good although the range of reference books library is limited

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

89 Standards are securely in line with expectations. As a result of good teaching, most pupils successfully build on the early computer skills they learn in the foundation stage. They have good general skills, such as using the mouse and pointer to select programs and options from on-screen menus, opening and closing windows, and saving and retrieving their work. Pupils enter text confidently, albeit slowly, and use the editing keys to locate mistakes and correct them. Higher attaining pupils can choose a font and change its size and colour, and use the toolbar to centre or justify text.

90 Pupils' use of ICT to communicate is extended as they create images using a paint program. Most use the basic facilities well and the older pupils can select the *auto shape* tool and *fill* options to create their own pictures. They have a good grasp of how ICT can provide rapid access to information. This is clear in their use of CD-ROMs to research hot and cold climates in geography. Pupils use computer simulations to develop their problem-solving skills. At an early level, this involves moving pictures around the screen to show the life cycle of a bean and using a *pictogram* database to create graphs about food, pets or hair colour. Older pupils create sequences of commands to move a floor robot in various directions. Most pupils in Year 2 can save and retrieve files independently; they were keen to discuss their progress and to demonstrate these skills. They have used email to send messages to each other and to schools overseas, and recalled using the Internet to explore *Santa's Grotto*.

91 Teachers include ICT activities in day-to-day work. For example, pupils make graphs relating to their science topics, tackle mathematical games linked to number and shape work, and use a graphics program when exploring symmetry in art and mathematics. Only one class lesson was observed during the inspection, but the evidence in the ICT portfolio, in pupils' folders and on display around the school indicates effective teaching. Computer programs are used effectively to reinforce learning and to raise the self-esteem of pupils with special educational needs.

92 The co-ordinator manages the subject well. Recent staff training has increased teachers' skills and confidence and the carefully structured scheme of work helps them to ensure full curriculum coverage. The well-designed assessment system enables progress to be tracked and any gaps in pupils' experience to be noted. Resources are adequate. The school has put in a bid for further central funds to equip each classroom with three computers. This will be a welcome addition, as the current equipment means that pupils' access to ICT is rather limited so that progress is steady but not as rapid as it could be.

MUSIC

93 Standards are satisfactory. Pupils sing with confidence and most have a good sense of rhythm. Building on the nursery rhymes and songs they learn in the reception, children's pitch and timing improves during Year 1. The quality of pupils' singing continues to develop so that most of the older pupils sing tunefully and with expression. This was evident in lessons and assemblies when pupils interpreted the meaning of songs with sensitivity. More than half the Year 2 pupils are in the choir. The choir practice provided further evidence of good quality singing as pupils rehearsed pieces with quite complicated rhythms and some difficult intervals between notes. They sang with great gusto and with obvious enjoyment. Year 2 pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder and this adds to their musical knowledge. Thirteen children attend the recorder club. They have made very good progress in the few weeks they have been learning; they are familiar with standard musical notation and can read and play simple melodies.

94 Pupils obviously enjoy music; they co-operate well and appreciate one another's efforts. They are invariably keen to join in the activities. This enthusiasm was evident in a Year 1 lesson. Through a good balance of singing and rhythm work, the teacher sustained pupils' attention. She built successfully on their increasing knowledge of music, asking them to choose instruments for their tonal qualities and suitability to represent parts of the *Three Little Pigs* story. Pupils' positive attitudes are the result of the enthusiastic approach of the specialist teachers. They use their subject knowledge to good effect to refine pupils' singing and playing skills and encourage everyone to take part and to contribute ideas. Because visiting specialists do most of the music teaching, classes in each year are often combined. While this is generally effective, it means that pupils have less chance of playing instruments than if classes were taught singularly. However, the overall quality of teaching is good.

95 Music is imaginatively planned around familiar stories. Activities that introduce pupils to all the music elements – such as, pitch, dynamics, texture and timbre – are built into the programme and pupils' progress in various musical skills is carefully recorded at intervals during the year. Using a straightforward assessment system, teachers note how pupils are doing and use this to review and modify the units of work.

96 Although the comprehensive scheme of work includes all aspects of music, it was not possible to observe pupils learning early composition skills or performing for a larger audience than their own class. However, they made sensible comments about the music played in assemblies and seasonal concerts offer opportunities for children to perform for their parents and residents of a nearby nursing home.

97 Music plays an important part in the life of the school. Visiting musicians, such the recent performance by a South American band and the workshop run by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra broaden pupils' experience. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by such visits and their awareness of music from other cultures is supported by events such as the celebration of the Chinese New Year and the forthcoming visit of an Indian dance company.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

98 Good standards are achieved in this subject. Most pupils show good control and body awareness; they are aware of the space that they are using and of the other pupils in the class. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson using large apparatus such as window bars, a ladder and a balance beam; pupils landed well and balanced carefully and moved sensibly between different group activities. The teacher asked individual pupils to demonstrate what they were doing and others paid careful attention and tried hard to improve their own performances. In a lesson using bats and balls, the teacher was a good role model for the pupils so that they could improve their own techniques. The majority of pupils controlled the balls well with their bats and good progress was made during the lesson.

99 The quality of teaching is good. Although only two lessons were observed, they were both very successful; the standards demonstrated by pupils also indicated consistently effective teaching. Lessons are well organised and pupils have timely reminders about safety from their teachers. Resources are laid out beforehand and - because of good class management - pupils behave well and are obviously used to the routines of the lessons. This means that time during lessons is used well for pupils to improve their skills.

100 During the spring term, lessons concentrate on games and gymnastics but planning shows that all aspects of the subject are covered during the year. Appropriate attention is given to fitness and health, with appropriate 'warm-up' sessions as part of each lesson. The subject is very well managed and a highly effective assessment system is in place to help teachers to develop pupils' skills as they move through the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

101 No lessons were observed during the inspection so evidence has been collected through an analysis of pupils' work, looking at displays and talking to staff and pupils. This indicates that standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were found to be broadly average. A further improvement since the last inspection is the amount of recorded work in pupils' books, which was previously described as limited.

102 Progress is good through the school. Pupils in Year 1 think about special things such as their teddy bears. They write about the 'Lost Teddy' and think about how they feel when it is lost. This helps them to understand the Bible story of 'The Lost Sheep', which they consider later. They think about 'special friends' and this helps them to understand the qualities of friendship. Older pupils in Year 2 know that the Bible is like a library of many books and that it took 'hundreds of years to write it'. When they were told about Judaism and made Torah scrolls, pupils learned that it is not only Christians that read the Old Testament. This practical activity helped them to remember what they had learned about Judaism, as did a visit to a synagogue, where they enjoyed the experience of having a Shabbat meal.

103 The co-ordinator provides good leadership and supports colleagues well. She has written units of work which meet the requirements of the agreed syllabus and is putting together a useful collection of ideas for teachers relating to each unit. She has monitored lessons in order to give further guidance to colleagues. Assessment is very effective; each term pupils are assessed on the work that has been covered, which helps further planning.