

INSPECTION REPORT

WEEKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Weeke

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116242

Headteacher: Mrs Maggie Hastie

Reporting inspector: Mr Fred Riches
23235

Dates of inspection: 19 - 22 November

Inspection number: 216870

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 and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Stoney Lane
Weeke
Winchester
Hampshire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Liz Winn

Date of previous inspection: 27 - 30 September 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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23235	Fred Riches	Registered inspector	Art and design, music, religious education and English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
9528	Derek Bowers	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3764	Stephanie Lacey	Team inspector	English, history, the foundation stage, special educational needs and equal opportunities	
31046	Chris Nuttall	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology and geography	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
24019	Ken Parry	Team inspector	Science, design and technology, physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Staffing, accommodation & learning resources

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Weeke is an average size community primary school for children aged four to eleven. There are 222 pupils on roll full time, and one part-time child in the reception classes. Numbers fell from the 261 on roll immediately after 1999 inspection as a direct result of the findings. The school has worked hard and successfully to rebuild community confidence. All pupils live in the local area. They live in a mix of owner-occupied and housing authority homes. Just over six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. Almost all families have their cultural roots in the British Isles. Three bilingual pupils come from other ethnic backgrounds. Children's attainment on entry to reception classes is wide-ranging, but above average overall. Close to 27 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which is broadly average for Hampshire schools. Two pupils currently have a statement of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Weeke is now a good school. Staff and governors have shown thorough commitment in rigorously addressing and overcoming the serious weaknesses found in the 1999 inspection. The overall quality of teaching and learning is now good and includes a high proportion that is either very good or excellent. Results of tests at age 11 in 2001 already show the positive impact of improved teaching, planning and assessment in English and science, though not yet in mathematics, where pupils do not do as well as they should. The headteacher, senior staff and governing body give an excellent lead, enabling the staff to work effectively as a team. Despite current staff illness, the school is doing well and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well and reach high standards in English and science, with further examples of work of very high quality in art and music;
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good;
- The school's much improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is raising standards rapidly;
- Leadership by the headteacher, senior staff and governors is outstanding, developing a positive ethos and a sense of teamwork throughout the staff;
- There is much good and very good teaching; its quality is consistently high in the reception/Year 1 classes;
- The school's procedures for assessment are very good and it cares for pupils very well.

What could be improved

The school had already identified in its strategic planning the areas highlighted below and steps to address these were already under way before the inspection.

- Standards in mathematics by age 11;
- Consistency in teaching quality;
- Planning for the acquisition of skills year on year in foundation subjects;
- The quality of information for parents about their children's progress;
- Homework arrangements.

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 made good improvement overall since it was inspected in September 1999. There has been excellent improvement in leadership, management and assessment, which are now strengths. The impact of these improvements, and of the better teaching and curriculum planning, is shown in higher standards reached in English and science, and in the improved school ethos. The school has rigorously addressed the key issues identified and has overcome almost all. It is in a very good position to move forward further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. *Similar schools: up to eight per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	B	A	B
Mathematics	C	C	C	E
Science	D	C	A	B

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

The school is successfully raising standards at age 11 in English and science. They rose in 2001 to well above average, and above those in similar schools. Standards in mathematics are average and keeping pace with the national rate of improvement, but they still fall well below those of similar schools. Standards in the current Year 6 in English and science remain high, while mathematics standards are average. Standards in national assessments for seven-year-olds in 2001 were above average in reading, writing and science, and in line with those of similar schools. Standards in mathematics were well above average and better than similar schools.

Children meet all of the national early learning goals before the end of their reception year. All pupils in the youngest classes are making very good progress. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in the current Year 2, attaining above average standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. Pupils of all abilities in junior classes are making good progress in English and science. During the past two years, girls have not done as well as boys in mathematics tests, but the inspection found no evidence of this in the year groups currently in school. Pupils speaking English as an additional language make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets in English. Higher attainers do very well in English, mathematics and science as a result of challenging teaching. Pupils in the lower ability sets do well in English and science, but do not achieve as well as they should in mathematics. The school is doing all it can to meet the appropriately challenging targets set for literacy and numeracy, particularly through the use of booster programmes to address gaps in previous learning in mathematics. Standards in art are good, with sketching and painting of very high quality. Standards in music with both the youngest and the oldest pupils are also high, as are some aspects of religious education observed in junior classes. Standards in design and technology are below average at age 11 because pupils have insufficient experience in the subject. In most other subjects, standards are satisfactory and pupils achieve as well as they should. They have made rapid progress recently in ICT.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. In most lessons, pupils have very good attitudes to their work, are well motivated and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are generally polite and trustworthy. Behaviour at break and lunchtimes has improved considerably following the reorganisation of lunchtime arrangements.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils take on a range of whole school and class responsibilities. Older pupils show good initiative. Pupils show respect for each other and collaborate well.
Attendance	Good. Well above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall. Teaching is particularly strong in the reception and Year 1 classes and in most Year 5/6 lessons. The youngest pupils learn rapidly, catching their teachers' enthusiasm and also benefiting from very good deployment of support staff and volunteers. High expectations, clear planning and very good class management are features of the best teaching in these and other classes. Pupils make good progress in the large majority of lessons because their teachers share the main aims of the lessons and use interesting activities to make the learning enjoyable and relevant. Tasks are usually matched well to pupils' attainment levels. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and higher attainers are well challenged. Staff training has raised the proportion of good teaching and the school is giving positive support to recently-appointed, temporary and supply staff. There is still too much unsatisfactory teaching, however, although much less than at the last inspection. Weaknesses include insufficiently focused lesson planning, insecure class management, and a slow pace to class discussion sessions. There are also inconsistencies in marking. Numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily in the main, but the quick mental and oral session is not routine and pupils are not encouraged to talk through the mental strategies used in their calculations in all classes. This hampers development of mental agility with numbers. The quality of literacy teaching is mainly good, with strong teaching in Years 5 and 6 helping pupils develop reading and writing skills very successfully. However, mixed-age setting arrangements have a negative effect on the self-esteem of some Year 6 lower attainers in mathematics. Generally the quality of teaching in other subjects is good, with particular strengths in art, music, ICT and religious education.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory breadth and balance, meeting all requirements. Good provision for children in the foundation stage. Satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision for pupils with special educational needs and much improved from the last inspection.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision is satisfactory; the few pupils are all bilingual.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is all equally good. The school makes good use of the locality to develop pupils' understanding of Western culture and has made good improvement in raising pupils' awareness of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school has secure arrangements for pupils' welfare and safety. Very good, much-improved assessment procedures are being well used.

The school is working hard to rebuild parental confidence and is succeeding. Most parents recognise the considerable improvements. The Parents' Association is very supportive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher and senior staff have worked determinedly to raise standards and set a clear educational direction. They are supporting temporary staff well and looking to develop the roles of subject leaders.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	With outstanding commitment and effectiveness. Governors have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have introduced extremely effective procedures to monitor the school's performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The school has an excellent strategic plan, focused on raising standards. Governors and senior staff keep a very tight check on the impact of actions taken, adjusting these in the light of their findings and the pupils' achievements.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school uses its funding well to support training and develop resources. It applies the principles of best value very well in budgetary decisions.

Good staffing ratio and experience, though currently a high proportion of part-time temporary staff cover for full-time teachers absent owing to illness. Good accommodation and adequate resources (very good in some subjects, including ICT).

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

75 questionnaire replies were received; 42 parents attended the meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school; • They feel behaviour is good and the school is helping their children become more mature; • They feel the school is well led and managed and that staff are approachable; • They feel teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of additional activities; • The school's partnership with parents; • Information about how their children are getting on; • The arrangements for work to do at home;

The inspection team agrees fully with the positive views expressed by parents. It also agrees with parents' views on some aspects that they would like improved. The school's provision for additional, extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and improving with the introduction of several more this term, but staffing changes and other priorities have necessarily affected the range recently on offer. Information to parents on how well their children are doing has been unsatisfactory, but is also improving, with parent-teacher consultations now more focused. The school recognises the need for better reporting to parents and is addressing this appropriately, including through consultation with parents. Homework arrangements are inconsistent. The school knows these need to be clarified. With the exception of these two important areas, the school's partnership with parents is good in the main, following considerable efforts by governors and staff to rebuild confidence after the last inspection.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Starting school

1 When children start school in the reception classes their skills, knowledge and understanding are wide ranging but above average overall. There are usually a number of children who are well ahead of their peers, as well as a group who need extra support. There are variations from year to year in children's capabilities. This year, for example, children's number skills are above average and better overall than their communication, language and literacy skills. They make very good progress in the reception year and many reach the early learning goals¹ in all areas of learning² well before they reach the end of the foundation stage.

Standards in last year's national tests and assessments

2 Standards in national tests and assessments are rising again after a fall in 1998 and 1999. In Year 2 in 2001, standards were well above the national average in mathematics showing a significant improvement when compared to the two previous years. Standards in writing at age seven have been maintained from 2000 and were again above the national average in 2001. In reading, the Year 2 results from 2001 show an improvement, moving from average to above average. The 2001 performance at age seven was better than that of similar schools in mathematics and in line with similar schools for reading and writing. These results bring the school back in line with the standards seven-year-olds were achieving in 1997 and there are clear indications that the upward trend is continuing.

3 At the end of Year 6 in 2001, standards were well above average in English and science compared to national results and better than those of similar schools. However, the picture in mathematics is not so positive. Standards were in line with the national average for mathematics but well below those of similar schools. There are clear indications that the trend in mathematics standards is moving upwards, although much more slowly than in English and science. There has also been a gender issue in mathematics, as girls have under-performed in the subject. The school has recognised this and taken comprehensive steps to address it. There are currently no significant differences apparent between boys' and girls' attainment.

Reasons for the lower standards in mathematics

4 There are several reasons for the weaker standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6. The most significant reason is the inconsistent quality of teaching, partly related to staffing upheaval experienced by the school during the last three years. Many classes, particularly in Years 3 to 6, have been taught by a series of supply and temporary staff. This has resulted in a lack of continuity for the pupils and also meant that the quality of teaching was not as high as it needed to be to improve standards. The lack of experience and training, especially in mathematics, resulted in last year's Year 6 pupils having an extremely unsettled period as they moved through the junior years. This unsettled period also had a negative impact on behaviour for some pupils and their inattentive response affected learning, particularly in mathematics.

¹ Early learning goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage.

² The areas of learning are: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

Standards in work seen

5 The inspection found that standards are improving overall. Pupils in the foundation stage achieve very well, reaching good standards at the end of their reception year. In speaking and listening, reading and writing, pupils are performing well and producing high standards in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in English and science are now a strength of the school, with science being very good and English good. Pupils of all abilities are achieving as well as they should in these subjects. However, standards in mathematics are still not high enough in older junior classes as a result of inconsistent teaching of the subject. The school is working hard to overcome this problem by providing additional staffing and booster sessions, but pupils are currently not doing as well as they should..

6 In science, standards have improved considerably and they are now well above the expected levels, particularly at the end of Year 6. Pupils make good use of their mathematical skills to enhance work in science and they are achieving very good results. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are rising rapidly and are now satisfactory throughout the school. This is a very positive picture and indicates the improvements the school has made since the last inspection. Pupils are making rapid strides and the school is well placed to improve even more in future years. In art, many pupils achieve very well, reaching high standards in their work. Standards in religious education in junior classes are also high, with pupils of all abilities achieving well in discussion and in their understanding of religious concepts. Examples of high standards were observed among pupils of all abilities in both the youngest and the oldest pupils in music, with the youngest showing exceptional ability to maintain rhythms and the oldest performing their own sensitively composed pieces. Standards in these subjects have improved since the last inspection.

7 Standards in design and technology at age 11 remain unsatisfactory. This is because pupils have not experienced regular opportunities to develop the skills of designing, making and evaluating. No judgement could be made on standards in geography at age 11 because of a lack of evidence. In the remaining subjects, and in geography and design and technology at age 7, standards have been maintained since the last inspection with pupils of all abilities achieving satisfactorily overall and attaining average standards in Years 2 and 6.

Standards in literacy

8 Pupils throughout the school are confident and competent speakers. Their responses during lessons and at other times indicate a good level of vocabulary and the ability to speak in front of an audience. Phonic skills are well developed and pupils can relate what they have been taught to their own reading. Pupils read well both from 'scheme' books and their own choice of literature and they also respond enthusiastically to stories read by their teachers. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 enjoy fiction and non-fiction books. They have favourite authors and read regularly. Many high attainers read fluently and have good skills for predicting the outcome of a story. Pupils use information books well, showing confident knowledge and use of contents page and glossary in a non-fiction book. Pupils throughout the school write for a range of purposes and many examples of imaginative writing are available in their books and around the school. Standards in handwriting are generally satisfactory but presentation in books suggests some remaining inconsistency in teachers' expectations.

Standards in numeracy

9 Teaching the pupils in Years 3 to 6 in sets of similar ability has had a positive effect on the achievements of higher attainers. In these sets, teachers plan challenging tasks and the pupils respond successfully to the input and high expectations set. Unfortunately, pupils in other sets are not so well challenged and they have low self-esteem and lack faith in their own ability to succeed in mathematics. Not all teachers use the sharp mental and oral

session effectively at the start of each numeracy lesson. Also, in a number of classes, teachers do not ensure that pupils explain to each other the mental strategies they use for their calculations. The school is already using a programme of booster classes to increase the standards pupils achieve and looks well placed to continue to support pupils who are still not at the expected level for their age. Evidence was seen of several good examples of pupils practising their mathematical skills in other subjects and making good use of computers to support their learning.

Targets

10 The school has set challenging targets for pupils' performance in Year 6 tests in English and mathematics this year. It is set to meet the target set in English and, given the level of additional support planned, the school is on course to achieve its target for mathematics.

Pupils with special educational needs

11 These pupils are doing much better than they did at the time of the last inspection, when those in Years 3 to 6 were not making enough progress. A quarter of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, although half of these are only a little behind their peers. Many of the pupils need extra help with reading and writing. All achieved well in most of the lessons seen because of the good support given by support staff and teachers. Some lower attaining pupils did not do as well as they should have done in some of the numeracy sessions seen because they were not appropriately challenged.

12 Two pupils have statements of special educational need and are doing very well because of the very good support they have from learning support assistants. They tackle the same range of work as the other pupils and manage this well.

Equal opportunities

13 The school has looked carefully into reasons for the higher achievement of boys than girls in recent years, especially in mathematics, in order to analyse reasons for the difference. It has carried out extensive research into this variation and has already taken substantial action to address the problem. The inspection found that in sessions seen there was no notable difference in the performance of boys and girls overall. There is a larger proportion of higher attaining boys in the Year 3 numeracy group, but this is counter-balanced by a higher proportion of higher attaining girls in the Year 4 literacy group. There are also more boys than girls with significant special educational needs. The few pupils from ethnic minorities all speak English as an additional language fluently. They make similar progress to their peers in all subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Starting school

14 Children settle quickly into school because of the very good support given to them by the staff. They are happy to come to school and enthusiastic about learning. They listen very carefully to their teachers and respond very well to instructions and requests. They soon become very familiar with school routines. They put up their hands to ask and answer questions and line up sensibly, for example. They show some degree of independence. Most change for physical education lessons with very little help and manage well in the dining hall at lunchtimes. They work and play very well together, taking turns and sharing equipment sensibly. Their behaviour is good and all clearly know the difference between right and wrong.

Attitudes

15 In most lessons throughout the school the pupils have very good attitudes to their work. They are well motivated and concentrate well in class discussions and while tackling group

or individual tasks. Occasionally some of the pupils become inattentive in Years 2, 3 and 4, when lessons are less demanding or unstimulating.

Behaviour

16 There is good behaviour in almost all lessons and often it is very good in Years R,1, 5 and 6. The pupils are polite and trustworthy. They are fully aware of expectations and act responsibly. Behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes is very good and has improved considerably with the re-organisation of lunchtime arrangements. There have been no exclusions from the school and during the inspection there was no evidence that bullying is a problem.

Personal Development

17 There has been a substantial improvement in the pupils' personal development since the previous inspection. There are far more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and initiative and the pupils respond very positively. They successfully take on a range of whole school and class responsibilities. The recently convened school council draws from all year groups and has already had an impact in areas such as lunchtime arrangements.

18 A small number of pupils are on the school's register of special educational need because they have emotional or behavioural difficulties. They manage well in lessons because staff are sensitive to their needs.

Relationships

19 Relationships between all staff and pupils are very good. The relationships between pupils of all ages are also very good and they work and play very well together. They show respect for each other and collaborate well in whole class and group activities.

Attendance

20 Attendance is good and is well above the national average in the current year. There are no unauthorised absences. The school's attendance statistics showed below average attendance in the previous school year, but this was due to particular family circumstances and is now resolved. Punctuality is very good overall although each day a number of pupils arrive in the few minutes after registration begins.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

21 The quality of teaching is good overall. In seven out of every ten lessons seen it was either of good quality or better, including just over three in ten lessons that were either very good or excellent. The remainder includes a quarter of lessons that were satisfactory, but almost one in ten lessons were unsatisfactory. This is an overall improvement since the last inspection when eighteen per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and only eighteen per cent were very good or better. However, there is still an inconsistency in teaching across the school, with too high a proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, although most weaknesses are to be found where staff are temporary or on supply to cover for absences.

Teaching of children in the foundation stage

22 Teaching is very good in the foundation stage, as it was at the time of the last inspection. For many lessons the pupils in the foundation stage are taught alongside pupils in Year 1, although this is not the case for literacy and numeracy, when they are taught separately. In these lessons, teachers question children well and encourage them to share their ideas and feelings. As a result, children develop good social skills and extend their skills of speaking and listening. Teachers involve them effectively in discussions and encourage them to ask and answer questions. There are good opportunities for children to see themselves as writers and the teaching of reading is very good.

23 The very good teaching ensures that children achieve very well in their first few months at school. Both teachers are very talented and have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They have formed very good relationships with the children, who in their turn trust the teachers and feel safe and secure in their new classes. Teachers' planning and preparation is meticulous and provides a firm foundation for children's learning. Both classrooms are very well organised and provide a very stimulating and interesting environment. There is a very good level of adult support in most sessions, with parents coming in to help as well as the learning support assistants. This means that children are well supported when they work in small groups.

Teaching in Years 1 and 2

24 Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall and teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. One lesson seen was excellent, one in four was very good and one in five was good. Just under half of all the lessons seen were satisfactory and one lesson was unsatisfactory. Where teachers have an enthusiastic and positive approach to lessons, pupils respond and their learning is good. Pupils clearly enjoy their teachers' company and they feel valued and appreciated for their efforts. The same teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. In one literacy session, for example, pupils in Year 1 worked very sensibly on independent tasks while their teacher concentrated on teaching a small group. Teachers plan interesting work and one excellent example of encouraging pupils to participate was seen in a music lesson with Year 1 pupils, where the teacher's relationship with her pupils and her expectation of what they could achieve, resulted in a superb learning experience. Teachers work well together to plan work for parallel classes. Although mainly either good or satisfactory, the teaching in Year 2 occasionally includes unsatisfactory elements, when the pace of lessons is slow and when there is insufficient challenge for pupils.

Teaching in Years 3 to 6

25 The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent, though good overall. Two lessons seen during the inspection were excellent, with three in ten very good, almost four in ten good, one in five satisfactory and one in ten unsatisfactory. The inconsistency in the teaching in junior classes is a concern. Where teaching is good there is evidence of careful planning, tasks matched to pupils' ability and extremely effective management of pupils. In one excellent Year 6 lesson in ICT, the teacher adapted her lesson extremely well when problems arose with some computers and the pupils, in turn, remained patient and followed the teacher's new instructions without question. In some of the unsatisfactory lessons, problems arose because the work had been planned by another teacher and was not sufficiently adapted. In one lesson seen the teacher had difficulty managing behaviour well so the pupils did not progress as quickly as they should have done. The school recognises that it now needs to use the good examples shown by permanent staff to improve the quality of teaching in all classes.

Teaching of pupils with special educational needs

26 Overall, pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Teachers plan work for them carefully, with due regard to the targets on pupils' individual education plans. Pupils are 'set' for lessons in Years 3 to 6 in literacy and numeracy and this means that those who need extra help work in a group with others who have similar difficulties. This is effective in literacy and pupils did well in the sessions seen because the teachers pitched their explanations at the right level and work was suitably challenging. In numeracy sessions these pupils do not always move forward as fast as they should because the work in the activity part of the lesson is not always appropriately matched. Learning support assistants work very well with these pupils and give them sensitive support. In the introductory part of the lesson, for example, they sit close to the pupil or pupils whom they are supporting and explain and

reiterate what the teacher has said, when this is necessary. Pupils with statements of special educational need have individual attention and as a result move forward very well. Work is planned carefully to meet their particular needs and an adult is always at hand to assist where necessary, while at the same time trying to encourage them to work both independently and with a group of other pupils.

Equal opportunities

27 In sessions seen teachers treated boys and girls equally. In the discussion part of the lesson, they involved all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs. All received appropriate levels of support. Higher attainers are challenged well, especially in the literacy, numeracy and science top sets.

Teaching of literacy

28 Teaching is good overall. Pupils' skills in English are extended well in many subjects, especially in junior classes, when teachers use specific vocabulary in, for example, mathematics. The use of texts and teachers' enthusiasm for story is good in most classes. Some teachers use appropriate questioning techniques to encourage pupils to think for themselves and to develop their ideas. However, this is an area that should be developed further so that all teachers can improve their questioning skills. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss ideas and to make suggestions and, as a result, the speaking and listening skills of the pupils is well developed. Teachers have successfully improved reading by a carefully planned programme and clear teaching of phonic skills.

Teaching of numeracy skills

29 The quality of teaching in mathematics is now good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are in ability sets for mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and teachers of the higher attaining sets have planned appropriately challenging work that has enabled these pupils to make good progress. In one very good lesson for the higher attaining set in Years 5 and 6, the teacher successfully planned a challenge for the pupils to design a Leisure Park. This activity encompassed their work on area and required them to investigate the most effective design whilst working to specific areas. The quality of teaching in other sets for mathematics is inconsistent and pupils do not always make the progress they should. In infant classes the teaching of numeracy is good overall with particular strengths in Year 1, where teachers recognise the need to challenge and to maintain a brisk pace to the lessons. Teachers generally encourage pupils to explain their strategies but, again, this is not consistent and needs to be addressed.

Teaching of other subjects

30 Science is taught particularly well throughout the school and the strong teaching is having a significant impact on learning. Teachers plan well together in parallel classes and they make good use of resources to illustrate teaching points. Mathematical skills are employed in measuring activities in science and design and technology and teachers' planning often includes aspects of ICT so that pupils use computers regularly as tools for learning. The latter aspect of planning is an important development in teaching throughout the school. Teaching of ICT in Years 3 to 6 is often very good and teachers already make excellent use of the new resources to improve pupils' skills in the subject. Unfortunately, the good teaching is not consistent: there are unsatisfactory elements in the teaching of music and religious education, but there are also excellent and very good elements in the same subjects. In order to ensure that the pupils experience consistently good teaching in all subjects, the school now needs to focus on improving the skills of those teachers who have weaknesses.

Assessment of pupils' work and homework

31 Most teachers mark work regularly and there are some very good examples of positive

marking with appropriate comments to help pupils to improve. This is not consistent, however, throughout the school. Teachers regularly assess how their pupils are doing but not all use this information to plan the next stage of learning or to adapt current planning as a result. There is some expectation that pupils will undertake homework and pupils do so conscientiously. However, teachers do not always monitor what pupils have achieved in the work completed at home and parents are not clear of what is expected. The best example seen was when a teacher set a task for homework that was directly linked to the learning of the lesson so that pupils could continue the task at home.

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

32 There has been good improvement since the last inspection, when the curriculum was judged to be poor. The school now provides a broad and balanced range of curricular and other opportunities relevant to the needs of its pupils. It successfully promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them well for their transfer to the secondary phase of education. The appropriate statutory curriculum, including religious education, is in place and statutory requirements for special educational needs are well met. Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is ensured and very good use is made of the local community to support and enrich pupils' learning. However, weaknesses remain in the systematic development of pupils' skills in geography, history, music, physical education, and particularly in design and technology, where standards among older pupils are unsatisfactory.

Curricular planning

33 Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues related to the curriculum. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to deal with the considerable weaknesses identified at that time. Planning is now good in English, mathematics, science, ICT and art, but teachers are aware that there is more work to be done in other subjects. In English and mathematics, teachers' planning is based effectively on the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, which also determine the level of work to be expected from each year group. This is making a significant contribution to the better teaching seen now in these subjects. In addition, national and local guidelines for other subjects have been adopted. In some, for example music and physical education, they are supplemented by the school's own materials or by commercially produced schemes. A two-year rolling programme has been drawn up to avoid unnecessary repetition of work in the mixed age classes. This programme does not sufficiently ensure that important subject-specific skills are developed year on year as pupils move through the school, and therefore pupils do not always achieve the best they can.

The foundation stage curriculum

34 This year the reception and Year 1 pupils are organised into two parallel classes and staff have worked very hard to provide an appropriate early years curriculum for the reception children alongside the work planned for the Year 1 pupils. This has been achieved by grouping the reception children and Year 1 pupils quite separately for work in literacy and numeracy, with planning linked to the national planning guidance for the foundation stage and the National Curriculum. In other National Curriculum subjects planning has been based on the National Curriculum, with adaptations for the younger children. This has been effective but at great cost to the staff, who are spending too much time out of school hours in planning and preparation. Staff are aware that, although children are making very good progress, some adaptations to the way that the classes are organised are required. This would enable the reception children to spend more time planning and engaging in independent play and give equal access to all children to the outside area. At the moment this is only used by one of the classes.

Equal opportunities

35 Overall the curriculum provides equality of access for all. However, the school is aware of two areas where improvement is needed. One is in the reception classes, where current arrangements mean that it is difficult for staff to provide the full breadth of the foundation stage curriculum. There are good plans in place to rectify this problem. The other area is related to planning for the foundation subjects in Years 3 to 6. In these subjects both year groups in mixed aged classes work on the same tasks. There is not currently sufficiently detailed planning for the development of skills in the different year groups and this constrains the progress the pupils make.

Curriculum for pupils with special educational needs

36 Pupils with special educational needs follow the same curriculum as their peers, with a very small amount of withdrawal to help individual pupils with their reading skills. In literacy, numeracy and science sessions, work is planned to meet the needs of these pupils, although sometimes the work set in mathematics does not help them to move on sufficiently. In other subjects work is not always sufficiently adapted for lower attaining pupils. Generally teachers make good use of pupils' individual education plans to set appropriate targets for them in lessons. Pupils with statements of special educational need are supported very well. They work on the same tasks as their peers, with very effective individual help from a learning support assistant.

Extra-curricular activities, educational visits and community links

37 There are very good links with the community and, following the initiative of the headteacher, the school is actively extending these links to further enrich pupils' learning. The local vicar takes assembly regularly. His contribution to the life of the school is highly valued and he welcomes pupils into the church to worship and to learn about its history. A satisfactory range of after-school clubs and activities enhances the basic curriculum and develops pupils' intellectual, artistic and sporting interests. Teachers currently organise clubs for football, netball, guitar and recorders. In common with many schools the factors limiting the range on offer are the number of teachers and the time they have available. The school makes good use of volunteers from the local community to help with the football and is also using local expertise to introduce a pop mobility session and mini forms of lacrosse and tennis. At other times both cricket and rugby have been promoted in this way.

38 A good range of visits and visitors is used to support pupils' studies. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to Torquay, not only providing an opportunity for them to extend their learning but also supporting their personal development. Strong links with a local computer firm offer pupils very good opportunities to develop their ICT skills. Recent venues for educational visits have included Winchester Cathedral, the Tower Arts Centre and the Theatre Royal. Visitors to school have included theatre and puppet groups and musical workshop sessions, making an important contribution to pupils' cultural development.

Links with partner institutions

39 Relationships with partner institutions, including local playgroups, are good. The network of primary schools based on the local secondary school provides an effective forum for the sharing and exchange of ideas. Subject co-ordinators have established valuable links in this way through their termly meetings with colleagues in other schools. In order to assist with the smooth transition of pupils from Year 6 to their secondary schools, there is effective communication between teachers and arrangements are made for pupils to visit their new schools. In addition the school is involved in the local authority's induction of newly appointed reception teachers.

Personal, social and health education

40 Arrangements for personal, social and health education are good. A two-year cycle of topics for study by each age group is mapped out and the programme is energetically implemented and monitored. It includes teaching on health, sex and drug awareness, much of which is covered through the science programmes of study. The school also productively makes use of outside agencies, including visits by the police.

Provision for pupils' personal development

41 The school provides well for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Certificates are awarded at weekly assemblies to reward good work and behaviour. In several lessons in junior classes, teachers give pupils good opportunities to collaborate by working in pairs or small groups. This was particularly effective in science and religious education and in one music lesson in a Year 5/6 class, when the teacher very efficiently organised five groups to compose independently sections of an 'overture' based on the theme of Macbeth's Witches. Individual teachers give pupils a few opportunities to take responsibility in classes, but this area is not fully exploited, for example by introducing agreed rotas for routine organisational tasks. The recent introduction of a school council is a positive step towards involving pupils in developing a sense of community responsibility. This has already resulted in improvements in lunchtime arrangements. The introduction of the PSHE programme provides good opportunities for teachers to use 'circle time', when teachers build pupils' self-esteem by asking them to share ideas and views as they sit in a circle, with an agreed rule that everyone shows respect for the speaker's view when responding. A link with physically disabled pupils offers a valuable opportunity for older pupils from Weeke to work and play together regularly each week with pupils from Greenacres School. The area of personal development is an improving one, maintaining and developing the already positive provision reported by the last inspection.

Provision for pupils' spiritual development

42 The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. The hall is large and does not naturally provide a conducive atmosphere for collective worship, but through the use of music and visual aids, including a large candle as a focus for reflection, staff and visiting speakers overcome the rather austere environment. The thoughtfully varied arrangements for collective worship also offer opportunities for the whole school, separate junior and infant gatherings and groups of classes of the same age to meet. In one of the latter, in a Year 3/4 assembly, pupils showed considerable insight in their responses to the story read. In religious education lessons, teachers successfully encourage pupils to explore and think further about ideas and beliefs. Both assemblies and religious education lessons are well planned, although the school has not yet organised an agreed full programme of themes for collective worship. In other lessons too, teachers enable pupils to experience a sense of awe and wonder about a particular aspect of their work. Pupils in one Year 5/6 class, performing their 'Witches' music, listened in hushed admiration to each group's composition, for example. Also, the care taken to display work of exceptional quality, as in the celebration of a portrait in another Year 5/6 class near the teacher's desk, shows pupils how much teachers value their individuality and what they each bring to their sketching and painting.

Provision for pupils' moral development

43 Teachers in the reception/Year 1 classes help the youngest children understand the difference between right and wrong and provide excellent role models in the way they relate to them and the other adults in these classes. Improved implementation of the behaviour policy over the past year, especially through changes in breaktime and lunchtime arrangements, has led to a more consistent approach by all staff and a significant improvement in lunchtime behaviour. All staff are encouraged to foster good behaviour by giving praise and encouragement. Most teachers and support staff know pupils well and provide very good role models in the way they relate to pupils and each other. Their use of rewards and sanctions is fair and all pupils understand the system of certificates and cards.

From the school's fastidious monitoring of the gender issue, there is some evidence to suggest, however, that boys are receiving more attention than girls, both for correcting and for showing an improvement in their behaviour. The school's recognition of this factor is already leading to further adjustments to ensure improved practice.

Provision for pupils' social development

44 The school also makes good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils enjoy the House system, originally linked purely to sports day, but now extended to recognise effort and achievement in all areas. 'Well done' certificates are linked to the award of a shield each week to the winning House and the feedback from the school council on this has been positive. Residential visits for Year 6 pupils to Torquay and Year 5 to Wood Mill also help pupils develop independence away from home. The school also gives all pupils in Years 3 and 4 the challenge of an outward bound day course in Southampton. Older pupils take on more responsibility, helping in the library and in assemblies, for example. The recently formed school council provides a framework for pupils throughout the school to participate in decision-making and to gain an understanding of citizenship. Teachers in Year 5/6 classes give pupils good opportunities to take responsibility for own learning by organising weekly 'tutor target times', when pupils, on a rota basis, review their learning and measure their achievements against their targets. Provision for additional activities is satisfactory, and pupils who participate in recorder groups, the choir and sports activities benefit from the opportunity to work as part of a team. The school is seeking to extend this provision, through links with the Winchester Squash and Tennis Club for example. One very positive outcome of the school encouraging pupils to use their initiative is the forthcoming Blue Peter Bring and Buy sale. The pupils approached the school and then took on the task, organising their own publicity and showing considerable business flair as a result of the school's encouraging support. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills by working collaboratively in class, either in pairs or small groups.

Provision for pupils' cultural development

45 The school makes good provision for this area of pupils' development. It makes very good use of the rich historical opportunities in the locality, particularly the cathedral for educational visits. Pupils also visit the Tower Arts Centre, developing their creative skills with the support of local artists, dancers and musicians. Together with the Arts Centre, the school also organises visits from puppeteers and dance groups. These include presentations by artists from other cultures. The recent visit of a troupe of dancers from Zimbabwe involved a workshop enjoyed by all pupils. There are opportunities provided for pupils to appreciate the cultural traditions of Western Europe in literature, studying Shakespearean texts for example, religious education and art, featuring displays of portraits after the manner of Holbein and Picasso. The school also has an extensive range of musical instruments from other cultures, which pupils use fully in their own compositions. There are currently few examples of art from non-Western cultures on display, but the school is aware of the need to raise pupils' awareness of the multicultural nature of British society in a mainly white school community. In religious education, pupils study the beliefs and practices of Judaism and Buddhism as well as Christianity, benefiting from good expertise among the staff. The school enjoys ready support from the local vicar, including sharing a view of two fresh herring and five small loaves in one assembly. Pupils also enjoy visits to the local church.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare

46 This aspect of school life has been maintained and developed well since the last inspection. There is a well-established policy and set of guidelines for child protection. All

staff are familiar with these procedures and refer any concerns appropriately to the responsible officer. Health and safety and security have high profiles in the school and are underpinned by clear risk assessment and inspection procedures. All findings are reported to the governors. Regular inspections are carried out each term and there is an annual risk assessment. The caretaker is alert to potential hazards in his daily rounds and works closely with all other staff to ensure a safe working environment. There are good arrangements for handling accidents and illness and good records are kept of accidents and the actions taken.

Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development

47 The staff have very good relationships with the children and monitor their academic and personal development closely. The substantially restructured personal, social and health education programmes have significantly increased the provision and the opportunities to monitor the pupils' personal development. Throughout the school week pupils have opportunities to take responsibility and respond well to the challenges. The older pupils successfully work independently on research activities during their tutor led task review sessions. The school council is an effective forum to seek pupils' views and to enable them to influence decisions in aspects of school life, such as lunchtime arrangements.

Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour

48 Over the past year there has been substantial development of the behaviour policy and strategies for managing pupils. A particular area of improvement has been the re-structuring of the breaktime and lunchtime staffing arrangements and organisation. Close monitoring and sharing of practice has led to good consistency in the approach of all staff and a significant improvement in lunchtime behaviour. The staff are reviewing the policy on bullying although there was no evidence during the inspection from pupils or parents that this is a problem in the school.

Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance

49 The staff monitor attendance closely and always seek explanations for any absences. Punctuality is good, although a few pupils sometimes arrive a short while after the beginning of registration. There is close monitoring of any late arrivals and parents are contacted if any significant patterns develop.

Assessing pupils' attainment and progress

50 The headteacher and key staff share a very clear understanding of the purposes and uses of assessment, which is quite rightly seen as a major factor in the school's continuing efforts to raise standards. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are now very good. As a result of a well-thought-out training programme for the whole school, they are rapidly becoming firmly embedded as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. However, current staffing difficulties lead to some inconsistencies in their implementation. Although much of the hard work that has taken place is relatively recent, this represents very good improvement since the 1999 inspection, when procedures were judged to be poor. The school is already making good use of the information it gathers to plan for the whole school and for individuals. Systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance are good.

51 When children first enter the school they are carefully assessed using baseline tests to identify particular strengths and weaknesses. The information is used effectively to form groups and to plan teaching programmes. It is also used as a first step to identify pupils with special educational needs and, as a result, early action is taken to support them. As well as the statutory tests and assessments in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 6, non-statutory national assessments in English and mathematics are used in Years 3, 4 and 5, together with regular testing of reading and spelling throughout the school. In

addition, for each unit of work throughout the year, teachers identify key objectives for learning in all other subjects. Teachers carefully monitor pupils' progress towards these objectives in well-planned, half-termly tests and through their ongoing professional judgements. In Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are thoroughly prepared for the national tests and this has been a key factor in the school's drive to raise standards in English, mathematics and science.

Using assessment information to guide planning

52 The considerable amount of information the school gathers about its pupils builds over time into a detailed picture of their potential attainment, as well as their current strengths and weaknesses. Results of all tests are closely matched to National Curriculum levels, enabling teachers to develop a precise understanding of where pupils are in their learning. Governors, the headteacher and senior staff rigorously analyse the national tests and assessments in English, mathematics and science in order to make comparisons with other schools and to identify and address any areas of weakness. As a result, nationally approved guidelines, for example in mathematics and science, are thoughtfully adapted and modified to match the school's particular needs. At a whole school level it was seen that boys were achieving better than girls. In order to address this apparent weakness, the school has put in place a wide range of measures and is monitoring actions taken to see whether they are having the desired effect. Test results are also used to form teaching groups and to set challenging school and individual targets which provide a clear focus for both teachers' and pupil's work.

Assessment of pupils with special educational needs

53 Pupils with special educational needs are effectively assessed and the monitoring of their progress is improving. Records detailing assessments and individual education plans are centrally stored and better organised than they were. Individual education plans are now regularly reviewed. A shortcoming is that within individual pupils' files there is no overview sheet to provide a summary of contact with parents, outside agencies and review dates year on year. So there is no snapshot view of the provision for individual pupils. The records of pupils with statements of special educational need show that appropriate action has been taken to assess their progress.

54 Assessments of pupils with special educational needs are used to plan work for them. Individual education plans, for example, are available in classrooms for staff to refer to. Pupils' learning needs determine the groups for literacy, numeracy and science in Years 3 to 6. The school had planned to target lower attaining pupils in Year 3 with additional literacy support, but this is not yet in place.

Monitoring pupils' academic performance

55 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance are systematic and thorough. The school closely monitors the results and progress of different groups of pupils, including boys, girls, higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, to ensure that all enjoy equal opportunities. As well as recording pupils' results individually, teachers record English, mathematics and science levels on year group tracking sheets, so that the pace of progress can be reviewed and targets set for predicted levels in the national tests in Years 2 and 6. It also enables the school to identify pupils who are not achieving their true potential and to provide them with focused teaching and additional support where appropriate. A particular strength is the active involvement of pupils in the review of their targets during the weekly tutor target time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Parents' views of the school

56 Most parents are happy with the key aspects of educational provision in the school. They

feel that their children are happy with school, that they are making good progress and that teaching and management are good. They feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question or problem.

57 However, in the questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting parents expressed reservations in the following areas:

- the amount of homework their children do. Inspectors agree that there is a lack of clarity about the school's homework requirements and inconsistency in setting tasks regularly. The homework arrangements are being reviewed this year;
- the information they get about how their children are getting on. The inspectors agree with parents that the pupils' annual reports are unsatisfactory. These do not give clear indications of achievements and progress, even in the core subjects. The headteacher and governors have recognised the need to improve this aspect of communication and will be altering the format this year to provide better guidance for parents. The most recent consultation evening for parents this term gave an opportunity for teachers to be more explicit about progress and the standards achieved by individual pupils;
- how closely the school works with parents. The evidence during the inspection contradicts this view. The inspectors conclude that the school is open and welcoming and that the staff and governors have done a great deal to improve the link with parents;
- the range of activities outside lessons. The inspectors agree with parents that the school offers a rather limited range of outside activities compared with other schools, but it is satisfactory overall, given the wider staffing difficulties.

When children start school

58 Very good links are made with parents when their children start school. Children are invited to visit the school with their parents in the summer term before they begin. Teachers also visit children at home, so that they can develop good relationships with them in a relaxed setting. Teachers and support staff are friendly and approachable and this all helps parents to feel confident in the school. A good number of parents help in the reception classes during the week.

General information for parents

59 Letters and newsletters are sent home frequently. These are friendly in tone and the information is well presented. Generally, sufficient notice is given for future events and activities. Information this term has included a summary of the Action Plan. The school has kept parents fully informed of staff absences due to illness. Key information is also posted at the front entrance of the school. From next term the school will be running curriculum information evenings, starting with science or mathematics. The teachers are very accessible for consultation, particularly at the end of each school day.

Parents' support

60 Parents are very supportive of the school. A numbers of parents help regularly in lessons, particularly in the lower years, and others readily offer their expertise in areas such as information technology. The school association is very active and well supported. It arranges popular events and raises substantial additional money for school resources. There is very good attendance at consultation evenings and parents support their children's education well.

61 There is a good partnership with parents of children with special educational needs. Parents are involved, for example, in discussions about their children's individual education plans at termly parent-teacher discussions, although at the moment they are not invited to contribute to the plan or sign to say that they support it.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62 The headteacher and senior management team give excellent leadership and are ably supported by the middle management team. The development of a more open management system has been effective in creating a sense of teamwork and shared vision. Staff with management responsibilities have shown considerable commitment to the school in a time of leadership changes. During an extremely difficult period following the previous inspection, first the acting headteacher and then the current headteacher have worked very closely with the governing body. They have steered the school extremely effectively, leading staff and governors to a much deeper understanding of their roles. The school has overcome its serious weaknesses and is now in a good position to move forward. The school has made excellent improvement in the quality of its leadership and management by thoroughly addressing the weaknesses highlighted by the last inspection.

63 Systems for performance management and appraisal are in place and all staff are about to have targets set, appropriately related to the school's priorities for development. The school has implemented manageable assessment procedures for the foundation subjects and is set to develop subject leader roles and implement fully the necessary monitoring activities, in order to check current standards and set high expectations. The organisation of classes promotes good teamwork in junior classes, with three teachers working and planning together in parallel lower and upper junior classes and the two reception/Year 1 teachers planning together to ensure equality of opportunity for their pupils. The headteacher is effectively sharing and delegating responsibility to key staff.

Equal opportunities

64 The school is committed to providing equal opportunities to all pupils and this is emphasised in the school's written equal opportunities policy. The school's motto 'Achievement for all' underpins its work. The headteacher is carefully investigating the reasons for girls' apparent underachievement in the past and has found no reasons for this in the school's current provision. The inspection team confirms that the school provides equally for boys and girls. It also effectively monitors the performance of the bilingual pupils.

Leadership and management of pupils with special educational needs

65 Two staff are now sharing the responsibility for work with pupils who have special educational needs. The leadership and management of this area have improved greatly and are now good. There is now effective support for staff and procedures and systems to support the work with these pupils is much more effectively organised. A new policy has been put together, setting out basic principles. It is clear, but not sufficiently detailed to provide effective guidance for staff. Training has improved and opportunities are provided for both teachers and learning support assistants. Staffing levels are satisfactory. Assistants give very good support, using their skill, sensitivity and expertise. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is very effective and has a clear grip on provision and practice in the school. All statutory requirements are met.

66 The school's aims and values are clearly understood. The deployment of teaching assistants promotes a very positive attitude towards educational inclusion. Staff work extremely hard to involve all pupils in all activities. The special educational needs co-ordinators manage this aspect of school life in a sensitive and highly professional manner. They ensure that all teaching staff receive appropriate information, support them in planning to meet the needs of the pupils and liaise with external agencies as necessary. The member of the governing body with responsibility for special educational needs is very supportive of the school in its aim to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced education and make the best progress possible.

Governors' roles

67 Aply led by the chair, the governing body has played an outstanding role in helping the school address and overcome its previous weaknesses. Governors have worked tirelessly on behalf of the pupils and all associated with the school. They bring considerable skills and expertise to the role and play an active, consultative role in decision-making. The school has made excellent improvement in strategic planning and the monitoring of its performance, turning weaknesses from two years ago into current strengths. All staff and governors share a clear sense of the school's educational direction. The weaknesses in previous educational provision have been understood and resolutely tackled. Governors have benefited from local education authority support and training while introducing efficient procedures, developing their skills in accounting for the work of the school and acting as 'critical friends'.

Financial planning

68 The school's current strategic planning is a substantial strength. This shows excellent improvement since the previous inspection. The governors and senior staff have worked very hard with substantial support from the county to address the issues from the earlier inspections. The recent financial plans have linked expenditure very closely to the priorities in the action plans and have resulted in a raising of standards in the core subjects. The governors and staff are now planning over a longer time scale and using some of the substantial reserves, over ten per cent in the last financial year, to support good staffing levels and to enhance the buildings and learning resources. Following the installation of the ICT suite, the current year's estimated reserve is at an appropriate level of just under five per cent of the total expenditure.

Financial management and control

69 There is very good financial management and control by the headteacher, governors and administrative staff. The chair of finance is particularly active and gives very good support and advice to the staff. Monitoring is regular and well informed by the detailed monthly expenditure summaries. The most recent audit in June 2000 confirmed the good records and procedures. The school has implemented the suggestions for additional procedures. The income for special needs and the Standards Fund is used for the purposes intended and is accounted for fully. There are very good routines for the administration of the school and the staff make good use of ICT facilities to optimise procedures and data management.

Principles of best value

70 The principles of best value are applied very well in financial decision making. There is substantial consultation between all staff, governors and advisers. The parents' association discusses its fund-raising activities in detail with the staff and the parental support is targeted well to the needs of the school. They parents raise substantial sums each year for the improvement of facilities and resources.

71 The school successfully combines funding from parental support and grants to finance projects, with the parents' association readily accepting the challenge to match the grant funding. The school makes very effective use of the county service contracts and additional support to implement changes to raise standards. Good use is made of the resources of local companies and the shared experiences and resources of the local schools' pyramid.

72 Competitive tendering is ensured through the very cost-effective local authority management service contract. Good value for money is sought for all purchases. For example, the school recently conducted a thorough survey of the potential contractors for the large-scale enhancement and support of its ICT facilities before selecting the most cost-effective option.

73 The headteacher and finance governors actively analyse and use the comparative data

on similar schools, both nationally and within the local authority. Staff, buildings and learning resources are used very effectively.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

74 The school has a good number of qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of all pupils and to cover the full requirements of the National Curriculum. They have well-defined responsibilities and despite the high turnover of teachers in the past two years they work very co-operatively as an effective team. However, the current long-term illnesses among the staff have resulted in the appointment of more temporary teachers than is desirable. The school is managing the staffing problem as effectively as possible, but despite the best efforts of the school in providing strong support for temporary and supply staff, this is having a negative impact on the continuity of teaching and learning. Teachers and pupils are well supported by a good number of well-trained learning support assistants. They make valuable contributions to the work of the school and in particular to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The very efficient administrative staff, site manager and cleaners are valued team members and contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school.

75 The quality of the accommodation is good and effectively supports teaching and learning by providing all the facilities and teaching space necessary to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum effectively. A particular strength is the newly created ICT suite, which means that whole-class teaching of computer skills can now be undertaken. There is strong evidence to show that this is already leading to higher standards in ICT and is having a positive effect in other subjects. For example, in science and history good examples were seen of pupils using the computers to support and extend their learning. A spacious playground, a large adventure area and an extensive playing field give pupils plenty of space to enjoy playtimes and physical education activities. The school has identified the need to further develop the site as a learning resource. The accommodation is maintained and cleaned to a high standard and provides a stimulating learning environment for pupils.

76 Overall, the quantity, quality and range of learning resources are satisfactory. The notable exceptions are ICT and music, where resources are very good. In design and technology there are significant weaknesses that restrict the range of learning opportunities provided by the school. Overall, resources are well organised, readily accessible and generally used effectively to enhance the quality of education provided.

Value for money

77 The school's socio-economic circumstances, the pupils' attainment on entry and the unit costs are all above the national averages. Taking these factors together with the well-above-average standards in English and science, the very good personal development of the pupils, the good quality of teaching and learning, and the very good management, the school is giving good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78 In order to build on current strengths, further raise standards and improve the quality of education provided, the headteacher, governors and staff need to:

- (1) Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning opportunities for all pupils in mathematics in Years 3 to 6;
(reference paragraphs 4, 5, 9, 11, 29 and 97-106)
- (2) Rigorously address the remaining aspects of unsatisfactory teaching by monitoring and supporting staff, particularly temporary and supply staff, by involving them in joint planning and observation of lessons taken by senior staff, and by monitoring samples of pupils' work and the quality of marking;
(reference paragraphs 8, 21, 25, 28, 30, 31, 131, 144, 149 and 157)
- (3) Focus more carefully on planning for the acquisition of skills year on year in design and technology and geography especially, but also in history, music and physical education;
(reference paragraphs 7, 32, 33, 35, 76, 118-122, 123-127, 132, 144 and 149)
- (4) Improve the quality of information for parents about their children's progress, especially in annual pupils' reports;
(reference paragraphs 57, 59 and 61)
- (5) Clarify homework arrangements to pupils and their parents and make better use of homework to support pupils' learning, especially in Years 3 to 6.
(reference paragraphs 31 and 57)

It should be noted that the school has recognised each of these key issues in its strategic planning and is already in the process of addressing them.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	15	20	14	5	0	0
Percentage	5	26	35	25	9	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE(full time equivalent) for part-time pupils)	223
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12
Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	61
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.1
National comparative data	5.6

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.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	19	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	19
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	33	34	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (90)	89 (92)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	19	19
	Girls	17	19	19
	Total	33	38	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (90)	100 (92)	100 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	19	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	18
	Girls	15	11	18
	Total	32	27	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (76)	71 (68)	95 (84)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	18
	Girls	15	11	19
	Total	32	27	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (70)	71 (68)	97 (70)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	202
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.4
Average class size	24.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	144

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	539660
Total expenditure	535674
Expenditure per pupil	2350
Balance brought forward from previous year	53036
Balance carried forward to next year	57022

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9.7
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	223
Number of questionnaires returned	75

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	45	4	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	31	49	8	0	12
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	67	7	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	52	21	3	7
The teaching is good.	31	53	8	1	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	47	25	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	41	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	44	8	0	9
The school works closely with parents.	28	29	29	7	7
The school is well led and managed.	36	49	3	3	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	59	8	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	31	15	24	21

Other issues raised by parents

Some concern about inconsistency in teaching; particular concern about the amount and quality of supply cover, with insufficient information for parents about which teacher(s) would be taking their children and for how long.

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

79 The very good provision for children in the reception classes has been maintained well since the last inspection. Children start school in the September before their fifth birthday. Older children attend full-time and younger ones begin part-time. By the end of the autumn term all children stay at school for the whole day. This year the reception children are in two parallel classes with Year 1 pupils. This is a change from the normal practice of having separate reception and Year 1 classes and has been brought about by a drop in numbers rather than choice. The teachers working with these two classes have worked extremely hard to ensure that an appropriate curriculum is provided for both groups of pupils. They are constantly refining their organisation to improve provision. Currently the reception children are taught separately for literacy and numeracy activities, and with the Year 1 pupils for all other areas of the curriculum.

80 When they start school children's skills, knowledge and understanding are above average. They achieve very well in all areas of learning and many attain the goals expected for the end of the foundation stage well before the end of the reception year.

Personal, social and emotional development

81 Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because of the very good teaching in this area and the very good systems in place to ensure that they feel safe and secure. Before they begin school, children visit their classrooms and get to know the staff and this helps them to settle in quickly. Teachers also visit children and their families at home as part of this preparation for school and again this helps to build up trust and respect. Parents are very happy with all that the school does for their children in their first months at school and this confidence in school is passed on to the children. Children also adapt very well to school life because there are clear routines and they know just what is expected of them. Staff are calm and patient with the children. They explain things carefully and are consistent in the way that they respond to children from day to day. Consequently children are confident in both work and play situations. They have already adapted to school conventions, such as putting up their hands to ask questions and lining up to go to assembly. They listen very carefully to their teachers. They concentrate well and try their best. They work independently in areas like the 'Post Office' and play sensibly together. They are becoming increasingly independent in looking after themselves, when changing for PE or having their lunch, for example. They are well behaved and all clearly know the difference between right and wrong.

Communication, language and literacy

82 Children achieve very well in the whole area of communication, language and literacy because the teaching is very good. Children are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills, both in discussion in small groups and also when they talk to the whole class. All speak confidently and many use extended sentences. They do well because they know that their contributions are valued by staff. There is a good emphasis on encouraging children to enjoy books and stories. Book corners in classrooms are attractive and children have opportunities to browse and look at books. They visit the school library once a week to change the library book that they take home to share with their parents or carers. With help from the learning support assistants, they manage the computerised checking in and out system and scan their own books. Children have clear preferences for the type of books that they like and talk with enthusiasm about the stories that they have enjoyed. Teachers also read stories to the children and this helps them to extend their understanding. Phonic skills are very well taught. Meticulous preparation for each session and a very good level of adult

support means that children move forward very quickly. In a session seen, for example, pupils learnt the 'o' sound. Work on this sound was constantly reinforced during the session. Children looked for the letter in the book that the teacher shared with them, they practised writing the letter and they looked for the letter in each other's names. All children recognise their own names and many read simple texts. All understand that writing is a form of communication and are developing early writing skills. Most copy the teacher's writing carefully and some are starting to write independently. Teachers provide opportunities for children to write for a purpose. The 'Post Offices', for example, in the two home corners are designed so that children may use them to write postcards and send letters to their friends.

Mathematical development

83 Children achieve well in this area of learning because the teaching is good with some very good features. Very good attention is paid to helping children to develop confidence with numbers. Most are confident in recognising numbers to ten, with many confident to twenty. In the lesson seen, children counted on in ones and clearly understood what it meant to add one more to a number. The lesson went well because of the very careful planning and very good levels of adult support for groups and individuals. The daily numeracy session is only part of the provision made for children to develop their numeracy skills. At other times, such as registration, good opportunities are taken to help children to count and talk about numbers. In one morning session, for example, a little girl celebrated her fifth birthday. The whole class enjoyed clapping out her age, and adding another clap for a good life ahead.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84 Children achieve well in this area and are developing an understanding of the world around them. Teaching is good and planning is based on children's own experiences. They have been on a walk in the local area, for example, and used the information gained to draw simple picture maps of what they saw. They have looked at old toys and made comparisons between toys in the past and the toys that they have now. During the inspection they were learning how to use the 'Roamer' (a toy that can be programmed to move in any direction). Some quickly mastered how to programme the 'Roamer' and were delighted when it moved in the direction that they intended. Children also use the computers available in the classrooms and work on these independently, showing good control of the mouse. Children in the reception class work alongside pupils in Year 1 on these activities. Work is planned from the National Curriculum, with some adaptations to incorporate activities appropriate for the foundation stage for most of the work in this area of learning. In the present class arrangement teachers are managing this as well as they can.

Physical development

85 Overall children are achieving well in this area as a consequence of good teaching. They move confidently and use space well, both in the hall and in the outside playground at lunchtimes and playtimes. They do very well in class sessions. In one very good dance lesson in the hall, for example, children moved at different levels and used different pathways to follow an imaginary star. They listened very carefully to instructions and achieved very well because of the very good support of the teacher. Children have less opportunity to move and play independently during the course of the working day. There is an outside enclosed area for reception children, but it is quite small and only available to one class of children. Children are making good progress in developing their control of tools, such as pencils, brushes and scissors. In one session children successfully managed to thread wool around the edges of Christmas stockings. They enjoy working with large and small building blocks and construction toys, but again there is only limited time available for this presently.

Creative development

86 There was less evidence of work in this area of learning during the inspection, but in the sessions seen children achieved well because of good teaching. This was true in the dance

session seen, where children moved very imaginatively because of good guidance from the teacher. In another session children played in the Post Office and used this area well to develop their own story. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to explore colour, texture or shape using paint or other materials. In the art session seen, for example, the children developed their gluing and sticking skills, but had little opportunity to experiment. This area has been particularly affected by the amalgamation of the reception and Year 1 classes, which makes it difficult for the rooms to be organised so that there is a choice of art activities readily available.

87 The two reception teachers work very closely together and have invested a great deal of time and energy in ensuring that the provision for children in the foundation stage is as good as it can be within mixed aged classes. They are currently spending considerable time out of school hours planning and preparing for the next day and need to find ways to make this preparation less time consuming.

ENGLISH

88 Standards have risen in Year 6 national tests since the last inspection and in 2001 were well above average, with pupils doing better in reading than in writing. Pupils did better than their peers in similar schools and had made satisfactory progress since they were in Year 2. Standards were above average in Year 2 national tests in reading and writing in 2001. They had fallen in reading since 1998 but the trend was reversed this year. In writing, standards in national tests have risen over the same period. Year 2 pupils did as well as their peers in similar schools.

89 The inspection found that standards are above average at the end of Year 2 in both reading and writing. They are currently above average in Year 6, but with the good level of support that pupils receive during their time in Year 6 are well set to be well above average by the end of the year. Throughout the school pupils achieve well and do particularly well in Years 1 and 6. This positive picture marks a good improvement from the last inspection, when standards were average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6.

90 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in lessons and do as well as they can, given their capabilities. This is because they receive sensitive support by teachers and assistants.

Speaking and listening

91 Standards overall are above average and pupils achieve well. Throughout the school pupils speak confidently and clearly. Generally pupils listen very well to teachers and show that they have understood by maintaining eye contact, nodding and smiling. Most of the opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills occur within the whole class question and answer sessions at the beginning and end of lessons. Pupils participate well in these class discussions, using increasingly complex sentences as they get older. They also develop their speaking and listening skills when they work with a partner, or in a small group. There are some opportunities for pupils to work together in a more formal setting. In one Year 5 and 6 session, for example, pupils worked on a choral presentation, 'Overheard on a Salt Marsh'. They recited this to the rest of the class and all were impressed by the high quality of the work. Teachers take care to help pupils extend their vocabulary. In one lower set Year 5 and 6 session, for example, the teacher identified the following words to explain in the lesson: alliteration, metaphor, personification, phoneme and rhyme. These were successfully introduced and most pupils understood what they meant by the end of the lesson. A new speaking and listening policy sets out clear principles, but lacks details about what might be expected of pupils in each year group. Staff are currently working on a policy to underpin work in drama.

Reading

92 The teaching of reading is well organised and structured and consequently pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well. An improved book stock has also contributed to pupils' good achievements. Pupils' growing understanding and enjoyment of books goes hand in hand with the development of their reading skills. This is fostered by a good programme for pupils' individual reading development. Pupils work through a structured reading scheme and take a scheme book home, along with a library book, to share with their parents or carers. In many classes a reading diary serves as a good opportunity for dialogue between home and school. This support from home has a positive impact on pupils' progress. Most of the pupils who discussed their books with inspectors were very enthusiastic about reading. Pupils of all ages had firm favourites in terms of authors and genre. 'Harry Potter' was very popular, with classic texts such as 'Alice in Wonderland' also mentioned. Even the youngest pupils were clear about how to use the library and explained how they would find the information they needed by using contents and index pages. Good work in this area is supported by a very effective librarian. Within the literacy hour, group reading sessions also help pupils to develop their reading skills with the help of the teacher. In some sessions good use is made of a text to teach new ideas or skills; in others there is more scope for developing this further. In some sessions, for example, grammatical points are taught in isolation, with pupils working on exercises, rather than identifying the new points learnt in a text, or using them for themselves. Phonic skills are taught well and all pupils use these to help them with difficult words. They do not generally make so much use of context clues to help them with the meaning of a sentence. A new reading record is being introduced and when this is fully implemented will give a very clear picture of individual pupil's progress. The new reading policy effectively formalises the current good practice in the school.

Writing

93 Standards in writing are good and improving. Pupils of all abilities are now achieving well. Staff are working hard to raise standards in writing and the recent focus is already having a positive impact. A new handwriting scheme is being trialled and a new phonic programme is now being used with the lower attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 to help them with their spelling. They are enjoying this challenge and in the spelling session seen, pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked hard and successfully learnt the words that they had been set. Most importantly, teachers take care to ensure that the writing tasks are interesting and relevant. In Year 1, for example, pupils worked on a story plan for 'A quiet evening in'. They paid good attention to characters, action and setting. In Years 3 to 6 pupils were working on poetry writing and were given every encouragement by the teachers to produce work of high quality. In one lower attaining Year 3 and 4 group, pupils wrote the following poem based on the Pied Piper of Hamelin:

Rat drawer
Pipe player
Children taker
River bigger
Mountain opener

In a middle set Year 5 and 6 class, pupils experimented with personification. Individuals wrote lines such as:

'Night chases the evening away/ Night opens its eyes/ Night rolls up - sun rolls down/ Sun retreats into a corner and lies there quivering/ Sun closes his eyes and the night opens.'

Good links are made with other subjects, especially history and ICT. In both of these, pupils frequently extend their writing skills. In history there are good examples of letter and report writing in association with the work on Tudors. In ICT, pupils often use the computers to edit and word-process their work.

Teaching

94 The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. It is strongest in Years 1, 5 and 6. Strengths in the teaching include good planning and a good level of support for most pupils who need help. In the best lessons teachers bring particular flare and imagination, which helps pupils to become fully involved in learning. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the teacher was assisted by 'Mr Koala' to sound and write out simple words. The pupils were delighted when 'Mr Koala' wrote 'pen' for 'pan' and were very quick to correct him. In this lesson too, the pupils used their magic fingers to write words in the air and were asked 'to use your magic fingers to make it an invisible word.' High expectations are also a feature of the best lessons. In a Year 5/6 lesson, for example, the teacher had very high expectations of pupils and required them to work sensibly in pairs on the computers, while she worked with a group of pupils in the classroom. Pupils responded well to this level of trust and accomplished the task set successfully. There are some areas for improvement in the teaching overall. Marking is not consistent from class to class, for example, and does not always help pupils to move forward. In the better examples, teachers mark against the objectives set for the lesson, which gives pupils a very clear picture of how they have done. Some teachers find it hard to assess work against National Curriculum levels and this makes it difficult for them to plan the next step in their learning.

95 The new subject leader has a clear view of the strengths and areas for development in English and has a clear agenda mapped out for further improvement. She is introducing some interesting initiatives, such as the Family Literacy Project. This year she is organising the after school booster classes for Year 6 pupils.

MATHEMATICS

96 Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2001, whilst in line with the national average, are well below the achievement of pupils in similar schools. A larger proportion of pupils attained the higher level 5 and this is a result of a more focused approach for the more able pupils. However, inspection findings, supported by the school's internal assessment data, show that lower-attaining pupils made little progress during their first three years in junior classes. As a result these pupils did not achieve as high as they should have by the end of Year 6.

97 National test results at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were well above the national average. This is a significant improvement from the two previous years, when the school only achieved in line with the national average. Year 2 pupils at Weeke performed above their peers in similar schools last year. The picture is not quite so positive this year. Although Year 2 standards are above average, pupils are not all achieving as highly as they could because the teaching does not challenge them sufficiently.

98 Analysis of test results and assessments also show that girls have been underachieving in mathematics with only 11 per cent gaining level 5 last year compared to 42 per cent of boys. This is an area the school is well aware of and considerable action is taking place to address it. For example, a group of pupils from Weeke attend a weekly mathematics session at another school to work on more challenging activities and to have opportunities to carry out investigative tasks.

99 By the time they are seven, most pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of place value up to 100. They are confident in adding and subtracting numbers to 20 and many can use these operations beyond 20. Pupils in Year 1 achieved good success in their learning of subtraction, by using dice to generate numbers and then consecutively reducing their starting number by the digit displayed on the dice. The skills of estimation and measurement, particularly in length, are well developed and many pupils can identify features of two and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils in Year 2 were observed in the early stages of learning to

multiply by counting backwards and forwards in 2's, 5's and 10's. Whilst the majority of pupils improved their knowledge and understanding of multiplication in the lesson, the higher-attaining pupils were not given sufficient challenge or investigative tasks to extend their thinking even further.

100 By the age of eleven, most pupils have acquired a range of methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide and they show a good understanding of the relationships between these operations. They calculate area and perimeter with higher attaining pupils able to apply their knowledge to problem solving activities. One very good example of this was when pupils had to design a Leisure Park incorporating several features including a car park and play area. The pupils had to work out the individual areas of the components and then investigate the best way to fit these on to the given plot of land. The learning that transpired in this lesson was very good and the pupils in the group made significant progress. Pupils in other ability groups in Years 3 to 6 do not make as good progress as the more-able pupils. Many pupils have low self-esteem and feel they cannot achieve in mathematics. This is particularly noticeable where Year 6 pupils are in the same group as low attainers in Year 5. The school needs to think of ways to address this problem in order to improve the success for pupils in Year 6.

101 Across the school, pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematics is stronger than their use of this knowledge to solve real life situations and mathematical problems. The school needs to build on the success of the higher attainers working on the Leisure Park to enhance work in other groups. The use of the mental and oral session at the start of the numeracy lesson is underdeveloped and a great deal of inconsistency exists. In very good lessons the teacher maintains a brisk pace keeping the pupils alert and challenging them to calculate in their heads. Another feature of successful mental and oral introductions, is where teachers continually invite pupils to explain the strategy they have used. This is underdeveloped particularly in Year 2 and in some junior sets.

102 The school decided to set in ability groups for mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and has operated this way since September 1999. A review of the impact of this decision is due to take place this year and the main focus will be the effect on raising standards overall. The trend in attainment is beginning to improve but progress is still slower than it should be. Much of this is directly due to staffing turbulence in recent years and also to the current inconsistent teaching.

103 Teaching in infant classes is good overall, with some very good teaching in Year 1. It is satisfactory overall in junior classes, where there are also examples of very good teaching, particularly for higher attaining pupils. For example, the teacher in the Year 5/6 top set challenged pupils to brainstorm in pairs ways of tackling their investigation, before taking their understanding on further through well-focused questions, based on her thorough knowledge of their current skills and abilities. There has been some improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection but there are still too many examples of unsatisfactory teaching in junior classes. One weakness is in setting tasks without recognising the range of pupils' abilities and challenging groups at different levels within the sets. Another is in the use of poorly presented worksheets, which some of the pupils find difficulty in reading and understanding. In one lesson, the lack of challenge and slow pace resulted in pupils becoming inattentive. In another, the planning was weak and pupils became confused by the overcomplicated nature of the tasks set. In the best lessons teachers are well organised with appropriate planning, showing work matched to pupils' different abilities.

104 The quality of relationships established is frequently a major factor in the successful lessons. In these, pupils are well challenged, the pace of the lesson, particularly the mental and oral session, is brisk and pupils feel valued by their teacher. The mental and oral

session is a routine part of most, but not all, lessons. In less successful lessons, teachers have low expectations of what their pupils can achieve. In some, the activities are not well matched to what pupils know and can do. In others, pupils are held back when they are capable of achieving more. Temporary teachers have difficulty on occasions, when working to someone else's planning rather than adapting it to suit the needs of the pupils in the group. All pupils now have individual targets in their mathematics books and this has helped to focus on what needs to be taught. This initiative, coupled with the highly successful teaching observed, puts the school in a strong position to continue to improve teaching further.

105 Teachers regularly make clear to pupils what they are to learn at the start of each session and many refer back to this learning objective at the end so that pupils understand what they have learnt. Homework in mathematics is underdeveloped and only one example of linking work to be completed at home to the lesson in school was seen. Teachers do not explore ways to enhance learning through the use of carefully planned activities that link the work being covered in class. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Some teachers use marking particularly well to inform pupils what they have achieved and ways they can improve. However, there are many examples of teachers merely ticking correct answers and offering no feedback. This could be improved both to inform future planning and to help pupils' to understand their own learning. Most pupils are well behaved during mathematics, although some instances of poor behaviour were noted in a Year 3/4 group where teacher and pupils did not know each other well.

106 The subject leader provides a clear direction. She has carried out extensive analysis of data and has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Her action plan for future development is detailed and contains appropriate priorities to both increase standards and improve the quality of teaching overall. Resources have improved and planning reflects the use of ICT to further enhance learning in the subject. The leadership of mathematics is a key factor to the progress made so far and the procedures for assessment and tracking pupils' progress are particularly thorough. The subject leader recognises what the school needs to do now and she is committed in her continuing drive to raise standards for all pupils.

SCIENCE

107 In the Year 6 tests in 2001 the proportions of pupils attaining both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were well above average: Year 6 pupils did better than their peers in similar schools. The standards of work seen during the inspection in Year 6 are currently above average. However, with the better provision for higher attaining pupils and the planned additional support and teaching, pupils are well set once again to attain well above average levels by next July. These standards have risen significantly and at a faster rate than the national picture since the last inspection, when they were below average. This is because teachers throughout the school have put a greater focus on monitoring progress and have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching. The school's analysis of the Year 6 test results shows that in common with English and mathematics boys have been doing better than girls in science for the past three years. There is no inspection evidence to support an explanation. However, this has been recognised as a whole school issue and a range of strategies has been put in place to address the matter.

108 In 2001 teachers assessed the standards in Year 2 as well above average with all pupils attaining the expected Level 2. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was below average. Inspection findings show that standards in the current Year 2 are above average. They also confirm that there is often insufficient challenge in the work provided to cater for the needs of higher attaining pupils who are not achieving well enough. Since the 1999 inspection standards in Year 2 have been successfully maintained as a result of good

teaching.

109 Most pupils make sound or better progress in their lessons and as a result achieve well over time. In Years 3 to 6 this includes higher attaining pupils, who are thoroughly challenged and who benefit most from the setting arrangements in which pupils are taught in sets of similar ability. Pupils with special educational needs, for whom teachers match tasks appropriately and provide additional support wherever possible, also achieve well. Throughout the school pupils acquire good skills in experimental and investigative work so their knowledge is based on what they themselves have observed, talked about and tested. As they move through the school they make good progress in organising and carrying out tests and by Year 6 they have a good understanding that scientific ideas are based on evidence and they use suitable scientific vocabulary when drawing conclusions from their work. Many older pupils base predictions on their good knowledge and understanding.

110 In Year 2, pupils conduct a test to compare the distances travelled by toy cars. They discuss how to make this a fair test and modify their processes accordingly. They make careful observations, measure accurately and record their findings on charts. In Years 3 and 4, pupils carry out a range of investigations in an increasingly structured and competent manner. They confidently use their prior knowledge to classify materials as insulators or conductors and test their predictions by constructing circuits. In Years 5 and 6 most of them begin to develop an understanding of the need to check the reliability of their results. This is evident as they discover through a series of observations that the stretch of a spring is affected by factors such as weight, diameter of the coils and the thickness of the wire. In addition pupils build a good bank of appropriate scientific vocabulary. Teachers introduce the correct terminology at the right time and encourage pupils to repeat it in both their responses to questions and their work. In Year 1 pupils sort materials into hard and soft, using words such as rough, smooth, spiky and bumpy to describe Teddy's texture. In Years 3 and 4 they talk about insulators and conductors, circuits and components and discuss Venn diagrams as a means of recording their observations. In Years 5 and 6 they learn about balanced and unbalanced forces, friction and upthrust.

111 At the time of the last inspection teaching in the infants classes was satisfactory while in the junior classes it was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is now good throughout the school and this is reflected in pupils' improved knowledge and understanding and in their positive response and enjoyment of the subject. As a result of this good teaching, and in Years 3 to 6 it is often very good, pupils show a high level of interest in the subject and work enthusiastically, both on their own and in groups. They support each other's learning well by readily sharing their knowledge, ideas and equipment. Significant strengths are teachers' good knowledge of science and, through careful planning, their ability to ensure that pupils' learning builds systematically on their earlier experiences. They are well supported and guided in this through the consistent implementation of a structured curriculum based on recent national guidance. Teachers give clear explanations to ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and to guide and support them in successfully completing the task. They make good use of questioning to challenge and extend pupils' scientific thinking and to check their understanding. For example, in Years 3 and 4 during the review phase of the lesson, the teacher skilfully assessed pupils' knowledge while giving them a very clear indication about how their knowledge of circuits is going to help them set up future investigations. In order to further improve the quality of teaching a more consistent approach to marking and responding to pupils' work should be implemented. Too often it is in the form of ticks, sometimes coupled with praise to encourage but frequently it does not indicate to pupils what they need to do in order to improve in the subject.

112 The well-qualified subject leader gives good leadership. She has regularly monitored and supported the work of colleagues, analysed test results and led staff training to raise

standards in the subject. A particularly worthwhile initiative, although time-consuming, is the work that she is undertaking on adapting the national guidelines to match more closely the needs of the pupils. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are reviewed to identify strengths and weaknesses and to provide a clear view of standards in the subject. The subject leader has made links between science and ICT in planned schemes of work for each year group and the use of ICT is clearly identified as an area for further development in the detailed action plan for science. Indeed older pupils have already begun to use the new computer suite to support their learning by assembling the data from an earlier investigation. A very good system of focused half-termly tasks to assess pupils' progress has recently been introduced. Key learning objectives that are firmly rooted in the National Curriculum programmes of study are identified for each unit of study and used to measure pupils' progress. There is a clear and straightforward format for recording the results which could be usefully developed to inform the setting of individual targets for improvement as in literacy and numeracy.

ART AND DESIGN

113 Standards seen are broadly average at age seven and well above average by age 11. The youngest pupils and pupils in most junior classes achieve better than might be expected for their age because of the very good teaching of skills, based on a well-developed scheme of work. The school has made good improvement in the subject since the last inspection, when there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about infant standards and junior standards were described as satisfactory. At that time pupils made 'satisfactory to good' progress. They are now making very good progress overall, as illustrated by the examples of portraits by many junior pupils enhancing the appearance of the school entrance area.

114 Sketching and painting is of very high quality in most classes throughout the school. The quality of pupils' observational pencil, pastel and charcoal sketching of leaves in Year 1 is very good, showing fine attention to detail and a good use of colour. A few examples from Year 2 of observational paintings of scenes, using a frame, show good standards, but in the main standards at age seven in the current term are as expected for the pupils' age. Teachers use examples of paintings by Van Gogh and Turner to help pupils in Year 2 develop their knowledge of painters and of landscape painting. They encourage pupils to mix paints to create the effects they desire in their imaginary landscapes including a tree and pupils succeed in 'making the sky come all the way down to the ground'. One child stippled very successfully to create a carpet of autumn leaves and several show an understanding of how to create a pale shade of blue or to mix yellow and blue to create a variety of greens.

115 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make very good use of their sketchbooks. Their teachers encourage them to experiment with a variety of pencils and pupils note, for example, that 4B is the softest and darkest of their selection. They are taught a range of shading techniques and use these, including cross-hatching, to very good effect in their observational sketches of shells. During the inspection, teachers skilfully took these pupils a step further, sharing examples of pictures by Escher and asking pupils to identify the artists' techniques. Pupils then rose to the challenge of using a frame to focus on a small section of an Escher drawing and reproduce it as faithfully as possible. Teachers made very good use of overhead projector copies of prints and of the Internet to download prints onto a screen. The imaginative use of these resources, together with examples of other pupils' sketching, stimulated pupils' to comment on the artist's work and set high expectations for their own sketching activity during the lesson. Pupils then concentrated very well as they focused on the line and shade in the frame in order to make their copies. Joint planning, based on the ideas set out in the school's scheme of work, clearly supports the good teaching seen in these lessons, where teachers use an art and design vocabulary and involve pupils in doing so too.

116 Teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 is of very high quality. The school has made very good use of the high quality portraits, both paintings and sketches, to celebrate pupils' achievements and help set a tone for the whole school. Displays in classrooms, and in the new ICT suite and entrance to the school greet pupils, parents and visitors and immediately tell a story of teachers challenging pupils to do their best and showing recognition when the expectations are met. Portraits of Henry V111 and Elizabeth 1 after the manner of Holbein contrast humorously with very gaudy portraits after the manner of Picasso, showing front and side view in one. These excellent examples stem from thoughtful experimentation in pupils' sketchbooks, which show details of eyes, noses, mouths and ears, along with carefully marked positioning of features on a face. In one class, the completion of half a back-and-white poster portrait shows extremely careful observation. In another, the pastel portraits of classmates shows similar attention to detail. The sketchbooks include consideration of the effect of colours to represent emotions, to help pupils appreciate that Picasso 'painted not just what he saw, but what he felt', as a display label explains. In a third, alongside a number of very carefully sketched pencil portraits, one particularly fine example is given pride of position beside the teacher's desk, again celebrating excellence and setting standards.

117 Teaching in all lessons seen was good, but it is clear from displays and sketchbooks that teaching and learning overall are of very good quality. The subject leader has created a supportive scheme of work, which enables teachers to work in planning groups and ensure that all pupils of a similar age have equality of opportunity. The scheme shows a good balance of activities, including printing and work with textiles and clay over the two-year cycle. There was little evidence of 3-D work on record, however, other than the current careful papier-mâché modelling in the youngest classes and some delightful gargoyles created by a few pupils at the Winchester Cathedral Schools' Day. There was also little evidence of work from non-Western cultures. The school has introduced a manageable assessment system to note the quality of each pupil's response to each half term's unit of work and, though in its infancy, this is being used well. The subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118 During the inspection little teaching of the subject was taking place and only two lessons were seen. Judgements have been based also upon discussions with teachers and pupils, teachers' planning and other documents and a limited number of work samples provided by the school. It is evident that, apart from the use of recent national guidance to support the school's scheme of work, little has been done since the last inspection to develop the school's provision for design and technology. At that time pupils were not making sufficient progress and standards were below average. There is insufficient evidence to judge current standards in Year 2, while in Year 6 pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of design and technology are underdeveloped and standards remain below average. The rate of improvement therefore has been unsatisfactory.

119 Pupils in Year 1 make sound progress in learning to design and plan their work. They use their knowledge of simple levers and sliding mechanisms to create moving pictures, for example, of kites flying across the sky and Teddy's eyes. They write a brief description of what they are going to make, list what they will need and draw what it will look like. With assistance they put their plans into practice and their artefacts show that they take care to produce a good finish. In Year 2 there were no examples of pupils' earlier work available for scrutiny.

120 In Years 3 to 6 pupils do not have the opportunities to work with a wide enough variety of

materials, tools and techniques and therefore their range of skills and knowledge is not being sufficiently developed. In Years 3 and 4 teachers create effective links with literacy teaching when pupils write very detailed and structured sets of instructions with carefully labelled sketches. They go on to produce a burglar alarm making good use of their knowledge of electrical circuits gained in science lessons. However, these tasks in themselves do not allow for the necessary development of the essential subject specific skills of design and technology. For example, there was little evidence of pupils being encouraged to evaluate their work and to make modifications as their work proceeded in order to improve the finished product. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are engaged in designing and making slippers. Working as a class, several commercial products were discussed and pupils were expected to develop a design specification. Although the choice of task is appropriate for the age group, it resulted in little independent work as pupils simply responded to the teacher's over-prescriptive prompts. In discussion it is clear that their knowledge and understanding of techniques is limited and most, for example, are unable to make practical suggestions about joining the plastic or cork soles to the felt uppers. From a younger age, pupils need to be working with a wider range of materials and learn different methods of cutting, jointing or fixing to prepare them for tasks such as this.

121 In the two lessons seen teaching and learning was good in Year 1 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. In Year 1 as a result of the teacher's strong emphasis on the development of pupils' skills they made good gains in designing and making a Christmas stocking and more specifically in understanding how sewing can be used to join fabrics. In Years 5 and 6 the teacher supported pupils well, giving clear guidance and demonstrating effectively. Her strategies included a helpful and attractive display showing a disassembled slipper and helpful prompts to extend their thinking. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and describe in detail how they carry out their work. However, older pupils especially are unsure about what they have learned, how their skills and knowledge have improved and precisely what constitutes the subject. Teachers also are often not confident in their knowledge and understanding of the key elements of the subject including designing, making and evaluating.

122 Understandably, design and technology has not been seen as a major priority and, as there is currently no subject leader. A team of staff, each with other designated responsibilities, shares the management of the subject. This is a temporary arrangement forced upon the school by the present staffing situation. There have been few opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning in the subject and the assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is a recent initiative. Each of these factors helps to explain why the school has not yet formed a clear enough view of standards or of the specific nature of the weaknesses in provision. The range of tools and materials available is insufficient and there are few construction kits to support the design process. ICT is not yet being used to support and enhance pupils' design skills.

GEOGRAPHY

123 Very little evidence was available to make judgements about geography and only two lessons were observed, both in infant classes. Inspection findings are based on those two lessons, planning, and samples of previous work completed by pupils.

124 By the age of seven, pupils achieve standards in line with the National Curriculum levels relevant to their age. This shows that the school has maintained similar standards to those observed at the time of the last inspection. No judgement could be made on standards at the age of eleven, as insufficient evidence was available.

125 In Year 1, pupils acquire a good knowledge of the local area, using their visit along Stoney Lane to develop simple map-reading and map-making skills, for example. Teachers

make good use of photographs to question the pupils about the locality and to assess their recall and understanding of features seen on the walk the previous week. Pupils recognised buildings and landmarks and suggested where these should be positioned on their map. Pupils referred to road names and sites when explaining their route and discussed what they could see from certain positions. Year 2 pupils also studied the immediate locality of the school, looking at features in the school grounds that they could improve. The teacher encouraged the pupils to indicate which features in the school grounds they liked best and which needed improvement by introducing a simple key to the work pupils showed on their charts.

126 Overall, the quality of teaching seen was satisfactory. It was very good in the Year 1 lesson with the main strengths being the teacher's planning, preparation and subject knowledge. This led to confident and clear explanation of the task the teacher wished the pupils to complete. Work seen confirms that the majority of work done in geography is based on the study of the local area. Only a little work completed in the previous year was available from junior classes and there was insufficient to make an accurate judgement on teaching, learning or standards in the subject.

127 The subject leader is on long-term absence and so other staff have shared this role. This has meant that no one is clear about the current picture or plans for future development.

HISTORY

128 At the time of the inspection history was not a focus for work in the humanities in Years 1 and 2 and all lessons seen were in Years 3 to 6. It is evident that the sound provision for history has been maintained since the last inspection, with some improvement in the overall quality of teaching. Standards remain in line with national expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6.

129 One of the strengths in the teaching of history is the way in which artefacts and visits are used by teachers to bring the subject alive for the pupils. This helps them to understand the importance of primary sources in finding out about the past and also engenders interest and enthusiasm. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils are studying the Tudor period this term. Very good use has been made of the Hampshire Wardrobe Service to bring replicas of Tudor costumes into school. In several sessions these were modelled by the headteacher and administrative officer, who 'hot-seated' as Elizabeth 1 and her attendant. Subsequently, pupils wrote up what they had learnt as a newspaper report, many adapting their writing well for their perceived audience. Most were fascinated by the details of Elizabeth's life, such as her ability to speak five languages and the fact that she wore a wig. Visits are planned as part of several study units, such as the trip to Hampton Court in connection with the Tudors and Fishbourne Palace in the work on the Romans.

130 Work on helping pupils to develop knowledge and understanding about the past underpins all the studies planned. In Years 1 and 2, pupils compare the past with their own lives. Year 1 pupils looked at toys, for example, and found differences and similarities between toys in the last century and toys today. In discussion, Year 2 pupils recalled their work on late Victorian times and talked excitedly about the differences in children's lives then. They were intrigued by domestic detail like the 'gazunda' under the bed, the outside lavatory, the weekly bath and sleeping 'head to toe'. Similarities and differences in peoples' lives are also a focus of the Year 3 and 4 work on World War Two. In sessions seen they looked at the impact of food shortages on what people ate, for example, and how other restrictions affected peoples' daily lives.

131 The quality of teaching in lessons seen ranged from very good to unsatisfactory but was

good overall. This means that overall pupils achieve well. This improved teaching has not yet had a marked impact on standards. Strengths in the teaching include the very good use made of ICT in some lessons. In one session, for example, pupils used the Internet very well to research information about the Tudors. There are also good opportunities taken to develop literacy skills. Pupils are encouraged, for example, to write in a variety of forms, such as letters, newspaper reports and accounts. There are also some areas for development, even in the good lessons. These include limiting the amount of teacher talk and increasing pupils' active involvement. In some sessions the quality of photocopied photographs was not good enough for the pupils to identify features easily.

132 A new subject leader has just taken over responsibility for history. She is aware of the areas that need to be improved. These lie particularly in the area of planning, which was an area identified for development by the last inspection. The school is partly using national planning guidance as a basis for their history units. This needs to be looked at carefully so that pupils do not miss out on the development of skills. This happens when part of the programme is omitted or taught to a different year group from the one it is intended for. At the moment there is not sufficient guidance in the school's planning systems for the development of pupils' skills from year to year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

133 Since the last inspection, the quality of the pupils' work at ages seven and 11 has improved substantially and is now in line with expected levels. The school now provides many opportunities for pupils to develop confidence in using their computer skills. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and they are now well placed to achieve even higher standards in the future. Resources in the subject have improved dramatically and teachers are continually planning ways in which ICT can be used in other areas of the curriculum. The leadership of the subject is strong and a well-planned progression of skills has been developed to ensure that all pupils experience the full range required by the National Curriculum.

134 No specific lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, but there is evidence to indicate that pupils achieve well and they use the skills they have learnt to enhance their studies in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 used the class computer in literacy to assist their understanding of sound recognition. Planning also confirms that lessons are planned to teach a series of skills to pupils and to give them opportunities to practise and apply these in different situations.

135 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are learning and consolidating new skills rapidly because of the regular access full classes have to the new computer suites. Examples of high standards among Year 5 and 6 pupils include accessing the Internet and using search engines to locate web sites that answer their queries about the Tudors, and Elizabeth I. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use software effectively to support their work in symmetry. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 modify famous paintings of Elizabeth 1 as they click on buttons to brush lines, extend shapes and floodfill spaces. Pupils learn readily by working collaboratively in pairs, taking turns, making mistakes and correcting them with the very good support and encouragement of teachers and assistants. An excellent initiative linked with a local company, IBM, is enabling a group of Year 5 and 6 girls to work on a school web site and this is highly effective for the pupils involved.

136 Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they are enthusiastic users of the computers. Many pupils have computers at home and they appreciate the way in which teachers allow them to develop from what they can already do rather than being held back by those who need more support. They treat resources with respect and the behaviour observed in the

computer suites was very good. All pupils remain on task and are highly motivated in ICT. As a consequence they make good progress in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding.

137 The quality of teaching is very good and this is the main influence in raising the standards and stimulating pupils' interests. Teachers have yet to undertake their New Opportunities Fund training, which is due to commence next term, so it is especially commendable that they have made such an excellent start in their teaching of ICT. Teachers already have a good understanding of what needs to be taught and they are starting to keep a record of each pupil's progress. Planning is appropriate and opportunities to use ICT in other subjects are well developed. The teaching of word-processing skills is particularly well advanced, with pupils editing their work in English by changing the font, text, colour and style using the facilities in Word.

138 The school has significantly improved resources, including two ICT suites easily accessible to all classes. The school has also purchased two digital cameras, a video camera and several programmable turtles. It still retains Acorn machines in some classrooms and these are well used in lessons. The subject leader has identified the need for an interactive teaching screen and projector to enable teachers to demonstrate new skills and techniques when teaching whole class groups. Inspection findings agree with this judgement, as it is often difficult for all pupils to observe a small computer screen together.

139 The subject leader is extremely enthusiastic about the subject and gives a strong lead. He has been instrumental in establishing the ICT suites and encouraging staff in their delivery of the subject. He supports staff well and has organised training carefully to ensure effective provision. The school is now well placed to continue to improve teaching and learning, having demonstrated good improvement since the last inspection.

MUSIC

140 While the quality of teaching and learning varied considerably in lessons seen, the standards reached by both the youngest pupils in the school and one class of the oldest are very high. Pupils' singing throughout the school is also of good quality, with lively singing of 'The best gift' in collective worship, showing a good understanding of dynamics. The school also ensures that higher attainers and pupils with a love of music have opportunities to play recorder, guitar or orchestral instruments and to sing in the school choir or in the 'Winchester Young Voices', who meet weekly at the school.

141 The school is aware, however, that the standards achieved depend too much on individual teachers' skills. The quality of teaching includes outstanding practice, but also a little that is unsatisfactory. Despite this inconsistency, on balance, teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school and standards reached at age 11 are above, and sometimes well above average. This represents clear improvement since the last inspection, when standards were in line with national expectations and music was not linked creatively to the rest of the curriculum and lacked a variety of stimuli.

142 The youngest pupils not only learned to sing 'Late, last night' with their teacher, but cried, laughed, whispered and shouted the song under their teacher's humorous direction, following her artistic representations of each line of the lyrics. They discussed the meaning of the words and decided on appropriate emotions and dynamics. The teacher's very good subject knowledge, brisk pace and lively questioning ensured eager participation by all, in six separate groups listening to each other in turn, and as a class. The teacher then succeeded in helping the pupils to maintain a rhythm ostinato 'Fire! Fire! Fire!' while she sang the song, before exchanging roles. Pupils successfully maintained the pattern in time with the song

and kept the song going independently as their teacher provided the repeating background line. The teacher picked up on pupils' difficulties, listening and watching closely before offering effective solutions. As a result, pupils attained standards well above those expected for their age.

143 Year 5 and Year 6 pupils created group compositions linked to their literacy studies of Macbeth. Pupils had chosen a selection of appropriate instruments to create the sounds they needed and were refining the work done in a previous lesson. The excellent quality of teaching was apparent from the fully focused effort shown by each group, as they found areas to work independently and set to their tasks immediately. The teacher circulated, prompting and supporting, as one group created the setting, another a bubbling cauldron, another dragon bones, another a snake and another 'granny's false teeth'! Pupils fully understood the teacher's reference to layers and the texture of their compositions, as she referred to the learning they had acquired through their portrait painting. Their first performance at the end of the lesson, as each group took their turn, showed very high levels of collaboration, with each individual maintaining their own percussion instrumental line, using graphic scores they had created. The teacher's imaginative linking of subjects and high expectations had resulted in learning of the highest quality.

144 Within this very impressive picture, teachers lacking subject knowledge do not yet receive sufficient support with their planning to ensure consistently good provision for all classes. In one lesson the planning was too complicated and the teacher and pupils were unable to maintain the number of repeating patterns at the correct tempo alongside the song. Because the main focus of the lesson was unclear and the implications of the planned activities were not fully thought through, pupils became aware they were not achieving as they should and were unsettled.

145 During the co-ordinator's absence another teacher is temporarily covering the subject leadership role, but this position is untenable in the long term, as the teacher concerned already has considerable more pressing management responsibilities. Although the school has had other priorities, music contributes well to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. The opportunities for additional activities are good, with two recorder groups, a choir that is formed for specific occasions, around twenty pupils learning guitar, violin, woodwind or brass instruments and a small number of pupils singing with the 'Winchester Young Voices'. The school has introduced manageable and appropriate assessment procedures to check pupils' progress at the end of each half-termly theme, but the planning does not yet provide a fully comprehensive scheme of work to support non-specialist teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146 Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 have been maintained since the last inspection. They are average overall, although there are variations throughout the school in the lessons seen. For example, in a Year 1 class standards in dance are above average. Similarly, in a Year 6 class the standard of pupils' floor work in gymnastics is above average. In both cases this is as a result of the particular skills and expertise of the teachers. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and mostly attain similar standards to their peers. There is no difference in performance between boys and girls or different groups of pupils.

147 The physical education curriculum includes all the essential aspects of physical education, including athletics, dance, games, gymnastics and swimming. Swimming is taught in Years 5 and 6 and most pupils reach the National Curriculum standards by the time they leave the school. As part of the residential experience offered to Year 6, pupils are

introduced to climbing and abseiling and the school has firm plans to extend its programme of outdoor and adventurous activities. This will provide all pupils in Years 3 to 6 with regular opportunities to take part in outdoor activity challenges. However there has not yet been sufficient discussion amongst the staff as a whole about the expected development of skills in the various aspects of physical education.

148 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen it was mostly satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In almost all lessons pupils demonstrate good and often very good attitudes to physical education, developing a good understanding of the need to prepare adequately before taking part in vigorous exercise. They join in enthusiastically and this natural enthusiasm is usually channelled skilfully by teachers into effective learning. In a very good dance lesson, for example, pupils in Year 1 listened attentively and followed instructions carefully creating a variety of pathways and different levels to follow the route of a moving star. In a very successful gymnastics lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 persevered well in response to the teacher's very high expectations. Her confident, firm and knowledgeable approach was successful in enabling all pupils to be fully involved in their learning. They linked their movements into complex sequences, co-operating successfully with each other and demonstrating the precision and fluency that comes with a willingness to practise.

149 The school has already identified the lack of subject knowledge and expertise as a weakness among some teachers. As a result several are unsure about how to develop and refine particular skills. In one dance lesson, for example, the teacher missed opportunities to suggest ways in which pupils might respond more creatively and pupils simply repeated rather than improved their movements. Teachers' lack of confidence also limits the opportunities they provide for pupils to plan and then to evaluate their own performance and that of their friends in order to identify how to improve. However, a programme of whole school training has been planned to support the teaching of dance, games and outdoor pursuits. Improving teachers' confidence in this way will help to ensure the successful implementation of the very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment that are being introduced.

150 Despite the subject not being a priority for development, the school gives it a good status. The co-ordinator is a well-qualified specialist teacher, who provides good leadership and helpful advice for colleagues. She has clear views about future developments in the subject and, with the good accommodation and facilities, there is strong potential for improvement. The school makes good use of the local community to support a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151 Standards at age seven meet the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus. Standards at age 11 exceed these, because pupils express their knowledge and understanding well in a variety of media during their junior years. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when standards at age seven were unsatisfactory and at 11 satisfactory.

152 The improvements stem from recent improvements in the school's planning, introduced by a new subject leader, and from improvement in the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6.

153 Although a little unsatisfactory teaching was observed in an infant class, it is clear from pupils' written work throughout the term that the content of lessons and the quality of pupils' work is usually higher than that seen. Pupils' religious education books in both Years 1 and 2 show well-presented illustrations and brief reports and descriptions. Teachers' marking in Year 1 books is particularly effective, setting up a dialogue with the pupils. Teachers in Year

2 give pupils good opportunities to apply their literacy skills when presenting their views and opinions. Pupils present their work carefully and clearly put considerable effort into their thinking and writing. One pupil reflected, 'When I look at a candle, it makes me think of the angels that flew over the shepherds'. Another explained the meaning of a series of Jesus' parables: 'The stories tell us that God is a helpful man who helps us find things when we lose them. He also cares for us and forgives us when we do something wrong. My favourite story is the lost coin.' The teachers are successfully enabling pupils to search for ways of expressing their understanding at their own level.

154 All of the teaching observed in Years 3 to 6 was good or very good and pupils' written work, together with work on display around the school, supports the inspection judgement that teaching and learning in these years is good. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have created a membership card for their secret club, together with rules for members. They write about their ideas of what an angel is and illustrate these. They consider the meaning of signs and symbols on buildings and describe what the cross, the moon and the sickle represent. They compare the symbols of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. One pupil saw the symbol of the moon and star as saying, 'Keep living night and day'. Another explained the presence and significance of statues: 'I think it shows special people have been there'. Pupils explain the meaning of loyalty, in relation to the story of Ruth and Naomi and in their own lives.

155 The quality of discussion is very high. Teachers encourage pupils to express their views without fear of contradiction. One of the strengths of teaching is in joint planning. Several staff have excellent subject expertise and share this with others. As a result, planning is very well focused and imaginative. Teachers prepare and use resources well and generate lively and thought-provoking discussions because their planning focus is tight and they share the aim of the lesson with the pupils. Pupils in Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 classes made interesting observations as they worked as 'detectives', comparing different versions of the Christmas story. One boy in a year 3/4 class discovered for himself that the angel's message in one gospel is a warning, whereas in another the angel brings a prophecy. The teacher then helped pupils to understand the meaning of the specifically religious words as well as encouraging a discussion on the difference between angels and fairies.

156 Teachers provide pupils in Years 3 to 6 with a good balance of opportunities to learn *about* religions and to discuss and write about what they learn *from* religions. One of the main strength of the teaching lies in the way teachers encourage pupils to talk and listen to each other as they express their understanding. Teachers in junior classes also encourage careful presentation, as exemplified in pupils' illustrations of the 'four noble truths' of Buddhism and their 'If I was a tree...' writing, developing their own thoughts after hearing the 'Story of the three trees'.

157 Some marking is exemplary, creating a dialogue with the pupils in response to their thoughts and valuing what they write. A little is unhelpful, detracting from the presentation of the pupils' work and offering nothing of value. Another area of inconsistency is in the quantity of pupils' work in different parallel classes, but these are minor areas for development amidst a strong picture overall. Pupils enjoy visits to the local church and the school makes good use of artefacts to explain the symbolism and practices of other religions, though pupils do not currently have opportunity to visit or receive visitors from other religions. The subject leader is new to the school, but has already made improvements in the scheme of work and gives good support to staff. She now needs to check the quality and quantity of recorded work and to agree the purpose and value of pupils' books and how to record work in discussion, drama, art music and other responses to religious education.