

INSPECTION REPORT

COVE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Cove, Farnborough

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116140

Headteacher: Mrs Hannah Dunn

Reporting inspector: Mrs Stephanie Lacey
3764

Dates of inspection: 17 - 20 September 2001

Inspection number: 217179

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Fernhill Road Cove Farnborough Hampshire
Postcode:	GU14 9SA
Telephone number:	01252 542941
Fax number:	01252 516644
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Carol Lloyd
Date of previous inspection:	11 October 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3764	Stephanie Lacey	Registered inspector	Art Geography History	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13828	Ron Ibbitson	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?
23235	Fred Riches	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Music Religious education	
30618	Paul Story	Team inspector	Maths Information and communication technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23812	Carol Slade	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs Science Design and technology	

The inspection contractor was:

Primary Focus
22, Church View
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX16 9NB

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The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cove is a large community junior school with 277 boys and girls on roll. Numbers have fallen since the last inspection, which has led to a reduction in the number of classes this term. Almost all of the pupils live close to the school in owner occupied or local authority housing. Fewer than eight per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. Most of the families have their cultural roots in the British Isles, with almost two per cent of the pupils coming from other ethnic backgrounds. Four pupils speak English as an additional language. Most pupils transfer to Cove Juniors from Cove Infant School, with about a third coming from other schools. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is broadly average. Thirty-three per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which is above the average for Hampshire schools. However about three quarters of these pupils need very low levels of support. None has a statement of special educational need. At the time of the inspection pupils in Year 3 had only been in the school for eight days.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Cove is a fast improving school where pupils work hard and achieve well. The school now provides a sound education for pupils, with many good features. The very effective new headteacher has been supported well by the committed team of staff and governors. There is a very clear direction for the way forward. Teaching has improved and standards are rising. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are high in English by the time that pupils leave the school.
- Higher attaining pupils are challenged particularly well in older pupils' classes.
- The school successfully encourages pupils to behave sensibly and work and play well together.
- Teaching is good overall; it is good or better in two thirds of lessons and is particularly strong in the older pupils' classes.
- There is a very clear vision for the future development of the school shared by hardworking staff and governors.
- Very good leadership by the new headteacher has accelerated the pace of improvement.

What could be improved

The school has already identified most of these areas for improvement

- Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT), although improving, are not as good as they should be.
- There are still a few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching from class to class.
- Planning for the newly revised National Curriculum is not yet completed in all subjects.
- Time spent in lessons is below national recommendations and so time is squeezed for some subjects.
- Subject managers are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring standards and pupils' progress.
- Pupils have limited awareness of the rich diversity of cultures within Great Britain.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1999, when it was found to have serious weaknesses in leadership, management and teaching. This is no longer the case. The new headteacher provides a very good lead and the overall quality of teaching has improved. The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection two years ago. Staff and governors, supported by the local education authority, worked very hard to address the identified weaknesses, which also included standards, planning

and assessment. The positive ethos and commitment of the staff mean that the school is in a 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.

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

Key

Well above A
 average above B
 average C
 Below average D
 Well below average E

Similar schools are those with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. Cove is at the very top of the 0% to 8% band.

The table shows that standards were well above average in statutory tests for English and science in 2000 and average in mathematics. Pupils did better than their peers in similar schools in science, matched them in English and were well behind in mathematics. Care needs to be taken in making these particular comparisons. It would only take two or three more pupils with free school meal entitlement to take Cove into the next 'similar school' band, which would give much more favourable comparisons. (Mathematics would rise to 'C', for example). Overall standards are rising at Cove in line with the national trend. National comparisons are not yet available for 2001, but early indications suggest that overall standards at Cove have been maintained in English, improved in mathematics and fallen slightly in science. Higher attainers have continued to do well in all three subjects. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for the 2002 national tests.

Inspectors made the following judgements about standards in Year 6. Standards are high in English and music and pupils also do very well in religious education. Standards are above average in science. They are average in mathematics, geography, history and physical education. There was limited evidence of pupils' work in art, design and technology; what was seen was average. Pupils' skills in ICT are not yet as good as they should be in some aspects of the subject.

Throughout the school pupils make at least steady progress in all subjects and are now making good progress in mathematics. Higher attainers do well. Pupils in older classes move on more quickly than the younger ones in most subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language also make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are positive about their work. They work hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are very sensible both in classrooms and in the playground. Two pupils were excluded for bad behaviour last year, but these were isolated incidents.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on well with each other and their teachers. They take on extra responsibilities eagerly.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average, although a

	few families take holidays in term time. Most pupils are punctual at the start of the day.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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. In lessons seen the teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory, with almost two thirds good or better. Teaching is stronger in Years 5 and 6 and as a result pupils move on more quickly in these classes. All pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Strengths in teaching include good teacher-pupil relationships, challenging questioning, very clear explanations, interesting tasks, good levels of challenge for higher attainers, tasks matched well to pupils' attainment levels and well-organised resources and equipment. There is some inconsistency from class to class. Four out of the 52 lessons seen were unsatisfactory. Weaknesses in these and in some of the satisfactory lessons include lesson planning, questioning, slow pace, marking and classroom environment. Numeracy skills are taught well and the teaching in mathematics lessons seen was good or better. This ensures that pupils make good progress. This improvement is already having a positive impact on standards. There is more variation in the quality of literacy teaching, with very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 helping pupils to develop their skills successfully. Pupils make sound progress in Years 3 and 4 in reading and writing because of the satisfactory teaching of skills. Within literacy and numeracy lessons the school caters well for the needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, as are pupils learning English as an additional language. Generally the quality of teaching is not as good in the other National Curriculum subjects as it is in English, mathematics and science. However, the very good contribution of a teacher with musical expertise ensures that pupils do very well in her sessions.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Literacy and numeracy strategies in place. Planning of revised National Curriculum is still being developed for some subjects. Teaching time is below national recommendations and not enough time is spent on some subjects. Visits are used well to enrich learning experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Most of the pupils with special educational needs require help with reading and writing. Pupils are well supported in both literacy and numeracy sessions, especially in Years 5 and 6.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. There are only a few pupils who are learning English as an additional language and their class teachers support them very well, with additional support if this is necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Very good provision for pupils' moral and social development and good provision for their spiritual development. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Some attention is paid to Western cultural traditions, especially music. Pupils are not taught sufficiently about the rich diversity of cultures within our society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are cared for well and the school is a safe environment. Their personal development is very well monitored and supported. Assessment of academic progress is improving and is now satisfactory.

The school has a good partnership with parents. Most are very happy with all that the school does for their children. The Parents' Association is very supportive and raises large amounts of money for the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher provides very effective leadership. She has the trust and support of the staff and governors. Subject managers are developing their roles, but at the moment most are not sufficiently involved in monitoring pupils' attainment and progress.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors work very well in the best interests of the school. They have a good range of experience and expertise, which helps them to support the school very successfully. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is undertaken very well. There are effective systems in place to evaluate both the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress. Staff and governors also evaluate the progress towards objectives in the school improvement plan on a regular basis.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses the funds available well to promote good learning. Principles of best value are satisfactorily applied.

The school has an adequate number of suitably qualified teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The building has been well maintained and together with the very good grounds provides a good environment for learning. The school is well resourced.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
The staff are approachable. (92%) Children are happy at school. (90%) The school expects children to work hard. (90%) Behaviour is good. (89%) Their children are making good progress. (86%) The school is well led and managed. (81% - 17% don't know)	The range of activities outside lessons. (28%) Information about their children's progress. (17%) The amount of homework set. (15%) The closeness of the links with parents. (13%)

Parents of pupils in Year 3 had only had two or three days' experience of the Oschool when they filled in the questionnaire before the inspection. Understandably there was a high proportion of 'don't know' responses.

The inspection endorses all the positive views expressed by parents in the left-hand box. Inspectors looked carefully into parents' concerns. They found that overall the range of activities outside lessons is satisfactory, although the number of out-of-school clubs is more limited than it was two years ago. However, there is a reasonable range of clubs organised and, within the school day, lessons are enhanced by educational visits. Information given about pupils' progress is good, both in written reports and in opportunities for discussion with teachers. Term-time homework arrangements are also good, with clear guidance on what is expected. Some parents are unhappy with holiday homework arrangements, which the school is now looking into. During the inspection warm and friendly interchanges were noted between staff and parents and there was every indication that the school welcomes parents as co-educators. The school is aware of the concerns highlighted in the right hand box and is anxious to allay parents' worries in these areas.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Starting school

1 When pupils start school at Cove in Year 3, information from their Year 2 statutory tests and assessments together with an informal assessment early in the September term indicates that their attainment is broadly average. There are slight differences from year to year. Overall, within each year group, there is a high proportion of higher attaining pupils, together with a large group which is slightly below average. At the time of the inspection Year 3 pupils had only been at Cove Juniors for eight days.

Standards in national tests

2 Since the last inspection in 1999, standards have risen in national tests in English and mathematics and been maintained in science. This improvement is partly a result of the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and partly a result of the school's drive to raise standards in mathematics following the last inspection. The report includes tables of pupils' performance in the 2000 national tests because 2001 comparative data is not yet available. When considering how well pupils did at Cove in comparison with schools in the same free school meal band (0% to 8%), it needs to be born in mind that Cove is on the cusp of the next band. A further two or three pupils with free school meal entitlement would mean that pupils at Cove would be doing much better in comparison with similar schools than the present table indicates. The reality is that standards are rising consistently and pupils are making appropriate progress.

English

3 Standards have improved in Year 6 national tests since the last inspection. In 2000, the school's performance was well above the national average and in line with those of similar schools. The improvement was sustained in 2001; with over four fifths attaining and two fifths of pupils exceeding the standard set for eleven-year-olds.

Mathematics

4 Results of national tests in 2000 show that overall standards were broadly average. However, this generalisation masks the range of attainment levels within the year group. Less than average reached the expected level 4, with well above average reaching level 5. In comparison with similar schools nationally these results were well below average. However if only two more pupils had been entitled to free school meals standards at Cove would have matched those of similar schools. Standards have steadily improved since the last inspection and results from the recent (2001) test indicate a ten per cent increase in pupils attaining the expected level or above. The difference in performance between boys and girls has diminished and there are now no significant variations.

Science

5 The latest national comparative figures are for the year 2000, when results for Cove were especially good. Then achievement was well above average with a significantly higher proportion than normal of pupils achieving at the higher standard of Level 5. Overall when compared with schools of similar social context attainment in science was above the national average. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. This year pupils have not done quite so well overall, though the percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 remains similar to the year 2000 and one pupil has achieved a first

Level 6 in science for the school. Information showing national comparisons has not yet been published for this year.

Target setting

6 Over the last few years the targets set for pupils in English and mathematics in national tests have not as been as challenging as they might have been. There were several reasons for this, including low expectations of what pupils could achieve, inaccurate assessments and to some extent a conservative approach to the process. This is no longer the case and targets set for the current year are suitably challenging.

Inspection findings

Overall improvement in previously weak areas

7 The inspection found that overall standards are improving. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve the progress of all pupils in mathematics. Setting by attainment within year groups has been a successful strategy here. Pupils are also improving their ICT skills, although they are still not as good as they should be because many older pupils have a good deal to catch up. There is still a difference in the rate of progress between pupils in Years 5 and 6 and those in Years 3 and 4, although it is not as marked as it was. Pupils in the younger classes are making steady progress, with good progress in mathematics. In Years 5 and 6 pupils move on more quickly in English, mathematics and science than the younger ones, because teaching is more thorough and effective. In other subjects these older pupils make sound progress overall and do very well in religious education and music.

Literacy

8 Standards are well above average in Year 6. Throughout the school higher attaining pupils are doing well. Pupils make steady progress in Years 3 and 4 and move on more quickly in the older classes. Although standards were above average at the time of the last inspection, not all pupils were achieving as well as they should in Years 3, 4 and 5. While there is still room for improvement, in teaching and monitoring of standards, the improved standards are the result of better teaching, planning and assessment. Teachers, pupils and parents know what needs doing in order to make progress. Improvements in lesson clarity and the setting of clear learning targets, particularly in writing, lie behind the improvements. Pupils frequently use their writing skills effectively in history, geography, religious education and science. Handwriting and spelling standards are very good, as a result of regular, well-organised teaching and homework.

Numeracy

9 Standards are now broadly average in Year 6 and throughout the school pupils are making good strides in their learning. Older pupils are still not doing as well in mathematics as they are in English because they made slower progress when they were younger.

Other subjects

10 By the time pupils reach Year 6 standards in science are above average. They are well above average in music and more than meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Standards are average in geography, history and physical education. Limited evidence of work in art and design and design and technology indicates that standards are average in the work undertaken. In ICT pupils' skills are not as developed as they should be in some aspects of the work, but they use the skills that they have well in other subjects.

Progress of pupils with special educational needs

11 Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress. They benefit significantly from the support they receive in their target groups during literacy and numeracy lessons, especially in Years 5 and 6. Attainment in other National Curriculum subjects is less consistent where additional support is not available and where work is sometimes insufficiently tailored to meet a range of learning needs.

Progress of gifted and talented pupils

12 Gifted and talented pupils do well, especially in Years 5 and 6, where they are particularly well challenged. The grouping of pupils by ability in numeracy sessions, and by age in literacy sessions has helped teachers to target these pupils well.

Progress of pupils learning English as an additional language

13 The very small number of pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress as a result of well-focused support.

Boys and girls

14 Boys have done better than girls in statutory tests in recent years. The inspection found that there was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, but noted that both boys and girls work equally hard.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15 Most pupils enjoy coming to school, have good attitudes to their work and acquire values that aid their personal development. The positive picture painted by the last inspection has been maintained.

Attitudes

16 Most pupils have good attitudes to their work and to school in general. In their lessons most pupils show a sustained concentration on their work and even in subjects in which they have no special interest they show a willingness to learn. A Year 6 girl said 'I am interested only if it is a fun lesson but where it is not I still pay attention and do my best'. Another Year 6 girl indicated at the start of a football lesson that she was not really interested in football but was seen to join in with great enthusiasm when the lesson started. There are many pupils whose brothers and sisters were previously at the school and they show a loyalty towards it.

Behaviour of pupils in lessons.

17 The behaviour of most pupils in lessons is very good and this standard has been maintained since the last inspection. They listen carefully to their teachers and respond well where teaching is enthusiastic. Very occasionally, when the lesson is not so well managed, a few pupils are not as attentive as they should be.

Behaviour around the school.

18 The behaviour of pupils as they move around the school, at assemblies, at lunchtimes and at play is very good. In assemblies children listen attentively and join in the singing and prayers. They responded sympathetically when told of the life of Martin Luther King and showed an understanding of the injustices he suffered.

19 Lunchtimes are well organised and pupils understand the routines established by the school. They queue sensibly for their lunch and make their way to tables with minimal supervision. Pupils seated at communal tables enjoy chatting to friends as they eat their meals and obviously see lunchtimes as a social occasion.

20 In the extensive and interesting playground pupils keep to the areas designated for particular activities. Boys and girls of different ages play well together. They enjoy playing with the various games provided by the school, playing on the activities marked on the playground surface, kicking a ball or just talking with friends.

21 Although there were signs of previous vandalism and graffiti in the school, it is understood that both were caused by outside youths who often break into the school grounds and sometimes into the buildings. There were no indications of school pupils being involved.

Oppressive behaviour

22 There were no signs of aggressive behaviour during the inspection and pupils appeared to get along well together at all times. Pupils have a good understanding of the school rules, which they have a part in formulating, and are fully aware of the rewards for good behaviour and the sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.

Exclusions

23 During the year under consideration there were two appropriate exclusions for unacceptable behaviour, one of which was permanent and involved discussions with the governing body.

Relationships

24 The very good standard of relationships among pupils and with their teachers and support staff has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils co-operate well together in lessons and when playing games. Boys and girls mix well together in the school and in the playground.

25 Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. They give visitors a cheery greeting when passing in the corridors and are eager to speak to them in the playground to talk about school life.

Personal development

26 The personal development of pupils is very good. They learn through school routines the importance of organisation in their lives and how this is necessary to achieve things. The school's ready praise when things are well done raises pupils' self-esteem and prompts them to further improvements. Children in all years are given jobs to encourage their initiative and sense of responsibility and they accept these jobs cheerfully. Year 6 pupils are busy taking their turns as prefects during assemblies and at lunchtimes. They take their responsibilities seriously and derive satisfaction in carrying them out. In Year 4 children act as 'buddies' to new Year 3 entrants, showing them round the school when they first start and helping them to fit into the school routines.

27 Through the raising of funds for charity children develop an understanding of others less fortunate than themselves. Through subjects and activities children gain a greater understanding of the world outside of the classroom and their place within it.

Attendance

28 Most pupils attend school regularly and punctually and the overall attendance rate is above average. Some parents take holidays during term time. Pupils settle down quickly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and are ready to begin lessons promptly after registration.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

29 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall. In lessons seen the teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory, but with almost two-thirds good or better. Two years ago one in three of the lessons were less than satisfactory and this has been successfully reduced to one in thirteen. (At the time of the inspection one of the class teachers was absent for most of the week and so the focus was on the teaching quality in only eight of the nine classes.)

Improvement

30 This improvement has been brought about by a clear school focus on improving teaching skills. This has been particularly successful in mathematics, where all of the teaching seen was good or better. This is beginning to have an impact on standards in this subject because pupils achieve well in lessons and move forward quickly. Other factors that have contributed towards improvement in teaching include the appointment of new members of staff and the support given to less experienced teachers.

Teaching quality through the school

31 The strongest teaching is in Years 5 and 6, as it was at the time of the last inspection. All the very good and excellent teaching was observed in these classes and no unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Teaching in English, mathematics and science seen in older pupils' classes was all good or better. Consequently pupils make good progress in this part of the school, especially in these subjects. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make satisfactory strides in English and science because of the sound overall teaching in these subjects and move on more quickly in mathematics, where teaching is good. A third of the teaching seen in these younger year groups was good. Four unsatisfactory lessons were seen and weaknesses in these were linked to teachers' subject knowledge, slow pace and inappropriate planning.

Strengths in teaching

32 Good relationships between teachers and pupils are evident throughout the school and this contributes to the pleasant working atmosphere in most lessons. In the best lessons the following characteristics are evident:

- Very good questioning which challenges pupils to reflect on what they know and use this knowledge to move forward.
- Very clear explanation of new techniques or skills. In one mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher explained clearly so that pupils understood that $3 \times 70 = 7 \times 30$.
- Appropriate and interesting tasks. In one writing session, for example, the teacher used a modern retelling of 'Macbeth' to fire the pupils' imaginations.
- Good level of challenge for higher attainers. In one numeracy session, for example, a higher attaining boy was invited to show a group how to multiply a two-digit number by another two-digit number and responded well to this challenge.
- Tasks matched well to pupils' attainment levels. In one literacy session, for example, pupils wrote descriptions of a given character's first day at school. The teacher supported lower attaining group and provided different levels of written guidance for the other groups.
- Well-organised resources and equipment. In numeracy sessions, for example, equipment is organised for each group and so pupils lose no time in hunting for what they need.
- Teachers' individual expertise. Some teachers have particular gifts. One teacher, for example, is a dedicated and enthusiastic musician and this contributes to high pupil achievement in her music sessions.

Areas for development:

33 Within the context of an improving situation there are some areas for development. Some of these weaknesses were identified in both satisfactory and unsatisfactory lessons.

- Planning in the foundation subjects does not always take account of the learning needs of all pupils. In these lessons there are always pupils from two-year groups. Frequently they are set the same task in the activity part of the session. This means that pupils are not always building on previous learning. For some the task is too hard and for others not challenging enough.
- Questioning is not always as effective as it should be. In some lessons teachers' questioning is a token activity, with teachers inviting pupils to guess what they are thinking. Pupils' responses are not valued or used to move learning forward.
- Pace is too slow. In some lessons teachers do not keep the momentum of learning going until the end of the session.
- Classroom environments need improving. Classrooms are tidy and generally well organised, but some displays could excite more interest and participation. There is a general lack of stimulating areas within classrooms. Some book areas are underdeveloped, for example, although the lack of space makes this difficult in some rooms.
- Consistency in marking. The quality of marking varies from teacher to teacher. The best practice gives pupils encouraging written feedback, with clear pointers for improvement.

Teaching of literacy and numeracy skills

34 There has been a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching in these areas since the last inspection, especially in mathematics. Overall literacy skills are taught satisfactorily, with some much stronger teaching in Years 5 and 6. Numeracy skills are taught consistently well, again with some stronger teaching in older classes. Planning from the literacy and numeracy strategies has been made easier by grouping the pupils in single year groups. Setting in numeracy sessions has also helped teachers to plan work more easily to match pupils' learning needs. This improved planning has had a positive impact on pupils' achievements. A feature of the better lessons is the care taken to base work on interesting and relevant activities that capture pupils' imaginations and engage them in learning.

Teaching of pupils with special educational needs

35 Pupils with special educational needs usually make effective progress in their learning for several reasons.

- Teachers are sensitive and know pupils well.
- Good assessment systems are in place for diagnostic purposes.
- Where appropriate, effective individual education plans are prepared and suitable learning targets set within them to address identified difficulties. However, pupils with special educational needs are insufficiently involved in setting and evaluating their objectives in their individual education plans.
- Target groups for literacy and numeracy provide opportunities for well-matched learning of basic skills so that pupils with special educational needs progress at a suitable pace for them and maintain interest and self esteem.
- Very effective learning support and classroom assistants are well prepared, experienced and aware of pupils' needs. They have a good understanding of the nature and level of support that is required and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language

36 Teachers give close support to the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. They learn well because their teachers have identified their needs and strengths, matching work accordingly.

Homework

37 Teachers use homework tasks well to move learning forward. There are clear guidelines given to pupils and parents about the work required each week. Holiday homework is also set. Parents are not so happy with this arrangement and the school plans to review the amount set.

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

Balance and breadth of the curriculum

38 Overall the school satisfactorily provides a broad curriculum that is relevant to the needs of pupils and is now more balanced than it was at the time of the last inspection, although there are gaps in the development of older pupils' ICT skills. Throughout the school appropriate emphasis is placed on the development of literacy and numeracy. However, the time allocated to subjects is not yet fully balanced and expectations for different year groups in subjects taught in mixed aged classes are not explicit enough. 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 is well provided for all pupils by the curriculum. Good use is made of links with other schools and institutions to support pupils' learning and to prepare pupils for entry to the school and their transfer to the secondary phase of education.

39 Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues relating to the curriculum. However, as the school is aware, the length of the teaching week is currently below that recommended for junior pupils. This reduces the overall time available for subjects and results in some subjects receiving less time than planned. Lengthy sessions each side of lunch means literacy lessons often extend and further time is lost.

Strategies for teaching numeracy and literacy

40 The literacy and numeracy strategies have been well introduced and are now being effectively used as the basis for the English and mathematics curriculum. The clear guidance they provide on progression and expectations for each year group is being used well to raise standards in these subjects. Teachers are making good use of these strategies to ensure that pupils across the year groups are making the expected progress in understanding and skills development. Use is being made of ICT to support work in these subjects. Although literacy and numeracy skills are being employed and developed through other subject areas this is not yet firmly established across the curriculum. The use of research skills in homework and topics is helping to support this, but is not yet part of a systematic approach. The correct focus on numeracy skills to raise standards has meant that pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding have not received the same attention through practical tasks and investigations. These skills are used as occasions arise, particularly in geography, for example in mapwork or to chart rainfall on graphs.

Other subjects of the curriculum

41 The new locally agreed syllabus for religious education provides a good basis for work in the subject. Assemblies follow a programme of planned themes and there is a good collection of ideas for teachers to follow them up in class. The school has reviewed its cross-curricular topic approach to teaching science and the other subjects of the curriculum and is moving to a more subject-orientated approach to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding of each subject are being properly developed and that new curriculum requirements are met. Approved national guidelines give teachers guidance as to

expected levels for each age and examples of activities. However, their use varies from subject to subject. For example, in ICT it largely forms the basis of plans whereas in physical education it is used alongside existing ones. Whilst this represents satisfactory progress since the last inspection these arrangements are not yet secure.

42 In subjects other than English and mathematics pupils largely follow the same programme of study whether part of the older or younger age group. In the past insufficient attention was paid to ensuring that pupils developed the expected skills and understanding for their age. The school has recognised this and is now focusing on detailing these expectations as part of its assessment arrangements. It will now need to ensure that its curriculum plans provide clear guidance for teachers on what these expectations are and how progress should be made towards these goals. Teachers draw well on long term guidance to plan the units of work for each term but the format and detail of these varies between subjects. There has been a tradition of sharing termly curriculum plans with parents and the format of this is currently being reviewed to increase its effectiveness. Homework is regularly set and well used to support and extend work undertaken in class and parents are advised of the arrangements for this.

43 The new ICT suite allows the school to plan and teach the full programme of study for ICT and to develop pupils' skills in the subject as expected. There has been a good tradition in the school of using ICT to support work in other subjects and this is both continuing and being developed with regular sessions for literacy and numeracy in the suite. Good use is made of the school grounds for planned and focused gardening activities and the children's kitchen is well used for regular cookery sessions. A range of visits and activities are well used to support the curriculum. These include the Ashmolean museum for history, local areas like Odiham for geography, the celebration of Eid for religious education and Book Week. Older pupils can participate in a residential visit, most recently to the Isle of Wight.

Equal opportunities

44 The school's commitment to equal opportunities is good and is well embedded in its curriculum documents. Booster classes for literacy and numeracy are well used to raise standards, as is the intensive additional literacy programme. All pupils, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, are well catered for through sets in mathematics and ability groups in English and receive good support. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Staff are good role models and pupils have open access to sport and out of class activities including a wide range of musical tuition.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

45 Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. By targeting extra support on basic skills and raising attainment in literacy and numeracy the whole curriculum becomes more accessible, particularly to pupils with special educational needs. Sometimes minor modifications have been made to the building or special equipment has been acquired, such as a lap-top computer, to meet a pupil's particular needs. The school makes good use of outside agencies in seeking advice about how best to support pupils.

Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language

46 The curriculum for pupils speaking English as an additional language has rarely needed adapting. Class and setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy offer appropriate planning for these pupils. The local education authority agency offers good support in individual situations to plan and resource for pupils at an early stage of learning English.

Personal, social and health education

47 The school makes sound provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and sees this as an important part of its work. It has incorporated best practice from the past in terms of sex and drugs education, circle time and links with the police into its newly formulated plans for PSHE (personal, social and health education) and citizenship, which it has begun to use this term.

Activities outside lesson times

48 The school provides a satisfactory range of additional activities outside lesson times. This includes a wide range of clubs provided by conscientious staff to enrich the curriculum both at lunchtime and after school. They have included mixed gender football clubs, summer games, netball, country dancing, homework, instrumental tuition and some competitive sport. Following staff changes, and out of a desire to broaden this range and respond to parental requests, the school intends to use a volunteer parent and local football clubs to offer football coaching and to arrange competitive sport fixtures, including athletics, with local schools on a more regular basis. Visits related to work in history and geography also enhance pupils' learning. These include an annual residential trip.

The community and partner institutions

49 The school makes sound use of its community links to support learning. Visits from the local vicar and to the local church for Christmas celebrations and by the police contribute to this. The school becomes part of the community as parents' association events are well attended by local people and the school participates in local events like 'Rushmoor in Bloom'. It has good links with partner institutions. Close relationships with the feeder infants school ensure that prior to admission pupils and their teachers will have visited and information been exchanged. Both schools are currently planning joint staff training sessions. More developed arrangements exist with the local secondary school. In addition to visits by pupils and teachers prior to secondary transfer, a Year 7 teacher participates in the Year 5 and 6 residential visit and there are planned bridging activities begun in Year 6 that are continued in Year 7. The local cluster of schools provides strong support. It has curriculum link meetings in English and mathematics, for example, and is restarting these for science.

Provision for pupils' personal development

Changes since the last inspection

50 The school has improved its overall provision for pupils' personal development since the last inspection. Moral and social development were good and are now very good. The improvements are a credit to the staff and new headteacher at a time when so many other weighty issues faced the school. The school has maintained spiritual development at a good level. Pupils' cultural development remains satisfactory, but the weakness highlighted from the last inspection remains. The school does not do enough to promote pupils' understanding of cultural diversity and help prepare them for life in Britain's pluralist society. The school provides appropriate sex education and drugs awareness. It is currently developing a comprehensive programme of personal and social education, with regular timetabled sessions for all classes, including weekly 'Circle Times', when pupils meet together in a planned programme of activities that promotes self-confidence, social skills and self-esteem.

Spiritual development

51 The good provision for pupils' spiritual development stems from well-planned acts of collective worship. Following a pattern of weekly themes, teachers encourage pupils to be reflective. The use of Evelyn Glennie's percussion music in the first assembly of the week, for example, helped pupils focus on 'determination'. Samples of work from religious education, particularly those collected in class books and on displays, show teachers

encouraging pupils to express feelings of thankfulness, concern for others and an appreciation of beauty and significance in natural and made things. In lessons observed, teachers used art and music to encourage pupils to respond thoughtfully and creatively to the composers' and artists' creations. Music is also used effectively in collective worship, to set the atmosphere and to support songs of thanks and praise. The school's focus on its grounds, by involving pupils in caring and tending various areas, also helps develop a sense of care and awareness of natural beauty. Although the school does not have a planned series of opportunities for developing pupils' spiritual awareness through curriculum subjects, the examples given show positive opportunities taken within arts activities.

Moral development

52 The school offers very good moral development for all pupils. Teachers display school rules in every classroom and agree additional class rules with pupils at the start of the school year, helping pupils take responsibility for making and keeping the community's rules. Teachers reward good behaviour and positive working attitudes by giving house points and marks on personal achievement cards. Pupils' achievements are noted in the school 'Positive Book' and celebrated in weekly assemblies through the award of certificates. As a result of the thoughtful and consistent arrangements, pupils respond well and the clearly defined sanctions for unacceptable behaviour are not often needed.

Social development

53 The headteacher and staff also provide very good opportunities for pupils' social development. In many lessons, teachers organise group activities. The use of response partners is particularly effective. The school also gives pupils a range of responsibilities in class and around the school, which they gladly accept, carrying out their tasks conscientiously. Year 6 pupils act as prefects, preparing the hall for collective worship and supporting supervisory staff at lunchtimes, for example. 'Helping hands' arrive a little early each day to help the teacher in each classroom prepare resources for the day. The school is considering developing a school council. In the meantime, the headteacher seeks to develop pupils' initiative by asking for pupils' suggestions on how to change the school for the better. A series of persuasive letters brought about effective arrangements for picnic lunches last summer. Pupils have also written pages for inclusion in the school brochure. A buddy system encourages pupils in Year 4 to welcome and support new Year 3 pupils at the start of the autumn term. Letters welcoming the new year group are displayed in one class and this is an idea worth sharing across all Year 3 and 4 classes. A personal 'credit card' helps pupils develop a sense of personal responsibility for homework, games kit and reading books. Activities such as orchestra and choir help pupils develop social skills and recognise the value of every individual's contribution to a community. There is room for further development of opportunities for team activities in sport.

Cultural development

54 Annual activities such as the school musical concert and book week contribute positive cultural experiences. The use of Macbeth and David Copperfield, for example, as texts for use in the literacy hour gives pupils insight into the English literary tradition. The school's strong orchestral tradition gives a good proportion of pupils knowledge of their Western musical cultural heritage. Teachers plan a few contributions from other world cultures, through music and religious education, to help broaden pupils' views of British and world cultures. The use of African singing to introduce the collective worship theme on Martin Luther King is a good example. Overall, the school helps pupils appreciate their own cultural traditions, but does not give sufficient emphasis to promoting pupils' awareness of world cultures and of the richness and diversity of British society today. The headteacher is

aware that the school needs to address this issue. It was noted as an area for development at the last inspection, but other priorities have taken precedence.

Community links

55 The school's links with the local community make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. The local police contribute to the school's teaching about personal safety. Christian church leaders visit the school and the school leads a concert or provides the music for a service at Christmas or Easter each year in the local Anglican church. Teachers plan local area studies as part of the geography curriculum and the school participates in local community events and competitions, winning recognition for its contributions to 'Rushmoor in Bloom' for example. Arrangements for pupils transferring from infant schools and on to local secondary schools are satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

56 Cove Junior is a caring school and the good standard of care mentioned at the time of the last inspection has been maintained.

Child protection

57 Procedures for dealing with child protection matters are good. The headteacher is the named person for child protection and ensures that records of child protection issues are maintained and safely secured. When necessary the school does not hesitate to contact outside agencies, such as social services, for assistance. All staff are aware of the need for vigilance to ensure that pupils in need of support receive it promptly. The vigilance of teachers was demonstrated during the inspection when a boy, seen by another boy on his way to school, had not arrived. The school was quick to follow this up and soon discovered through telephone calls that the boy had returned home feeling sick.

Pupils' welfare

58 The school's arrangements for pupils' welfare are good. The school follows the Hampshire County Council's regulations on health and safety. Suitable records are kept of all tests, such as emergency drills, and of the servicing of the fire alarm and fire fighting equipment. The conducting of risk assessments, however, is informal and appropriate records for these were not available at the time of the inspection. Discussions with pupils revealed that they all felt safe in school and thought adults in the school to be caring and kindly. The school cares well for pupils speaking English as an additional language. Staff liaise closely with their parents and with the local education authority support agency to assess pupils' abilities and offer appropriate additional support where appropriate.

Attendance

59 There are very good procedures for the monitoring of attendance. Registration is taken promptly at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions and registers are accurately marked. The school uses an electronic means of recording attendance that enables it to analyse absences accurately and quickly. All unexplained absences are followed up.

Behaviour

60 The school's promotion of positive behaviour is very good. Pupils help to decide upon a code of behaviour for their class and this helps them to manage their own behaviour. The school's behaviour policy is well understood by staff and consistently implemented. There is a carefully graded system of rewards and sanctions for good and poor behaviour of which all pupils are well aware. A book in which positive behaviour is recorded helps to reinforce the behaviour policy and increases pupils' self esteem. There are policies for

tackling bullying and other oppressive behaviour and when incidents of unacceptable behaviour occur they are dealt with effectively.

Pupil development

61 Strategies for pupils' personal development include opportunities for them to participate in helping others and assisting in the school. A 'buddy' system enables Year 4 pupils to help new Year 3 pupils. A scheme called 'helping hands' enables some pupils who arrive early at school to help teachers prepare classrooms. A prefect system enables Year 6 pupils to help in supervising pupils and assisting with equipment used in assemblies. All pupils take turns in these and other opportunities offered by the school to increase their sense of responsibility.

Assessment

Improvements since the last inspection

62 The school's assessment procedures have improved considerably since the last inspection and teachers are using their information particularly well in literacy and numeracy to set targets for classes, groups and individual pupils. The school is also beginning to make better use of the results of annual tests in these subjects to predict future attainment and check that pupils are reaching their potential. The headteacher, deputy and governors are setting increasingly challenging targets for pupils' attainment at age eleven, recognising that previous targets have regularly been exceeded. Until recently there had been a tendency to 'play safe' and teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment levels were often lower than the statutory test results. The school is about to enter all of its data from optional and statutory annual assessments into a database that will allow it to make sophisticated comparisons more easily.

Developing manageable procedures

63 The headteacher, deputy and subject managers have been working hard to develop simple, manageable assessment procedures in other subjects. They have created a bank of statements, against which to measure pupils' achievement in the current term. These will be developed termly, with a view to building a picture of each pupil's and each class group's levels of achievement in all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The statements are appropriate for most subjects and music, for example, is very clear. A few are too precise and detailed and look set to become unmanageable unless simplified. The variable quality of marking in different classes and for different subjects reveals a lack of recent review of this aspect of assessment. Teachers need to look afresh at the purposes of marking in each subject and agree systems of positive marking that will help pupils move forward.

The use of assessment information

64 The school is now much better at sharing information with parents than it was at the time of the last inspection. It has begun to send annual reports home in February, at a time when there can be useful conversation between parent, child and teacher about progress so far and next steps. Parent-teacher consultations also include the sharing of targets and a clear picture of the child's levels of achievement in English and mathematics. The school now needs to ensure that subject managers keep an overview of standards across the school to support each teacher in maintaining the check on the progress of pupils in their class in all subjects. For this to be achievable, the assessment recording sheets must be consistent and be kept as simple as possible.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65 The school's partnership with parents is good and improving.

Parents' views of the school

66 Following the last inspection there was a loss of confidence in the school by some parents but improvements in the school since that time are restoring this and now most parents have positive views about the school. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting felt that the headteacher and staff had put a lot of effort into improving the school and this was having a positive effect. All parents spoken to during the inspection were pleased with the school and with their children's progress.

Parents' questionnaire

67 In responses to the parents' questionnaire there were concerns about the amount of homework, the information given to parents, the links with parents and the range of activities available outside of school hours. The inspection found that the amount of homework set by the school was generally appropriate to children's age and ability. The school has acknowledged however that work set over the summer holidays should be rearranged to make it more manageable. The quality of information to parents about their child's progress is good and the links with parents are good and improving. The inspection revealed that the amount of activities provided by the school outside of school hours was satisfactory.

Information to parents

68 The quality of information given to parents is good. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are informative, well-presented and meet statutory requirements. In the case of the annual report, however, the section on the school's provision for children with special educational needs should be more detailed. Newsletters on a general range of school topics are sent out every half term and there are many other letters on particular subjects, all of which help to keep parents well informed.

69 Pupil reports are sent out annually in the spring term and parents felt this to be an improvement to the previous summer term. The reports meet statutory requirements and enable parents to know their children's academic progress and personal development over the year. Parents have an opportunity to comment on the reports and later to discuss the reports with the class teachers. The school provides parents with opportunities each term to discuss their children's progress but in addition appointments can be made at other times to see teachers. Most of the parents who replied to the parents' questionnaire said they were comfortable about approaching the school with concerns about their children.

70 Pupils have a home-link book in which parents can communicate with the school and teachers can reply. All parents also have a copy of the home/school agreement that enables them to see their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the school. A notice board in the school reception area contains information for parents such as, recent letters, future visits, a notice 'Can you spare time to help in the school?' and general information about the aims of the school.

The impact of the parents' involvement with the work of the school

71 Most parents help at home by listening to their children read and taking an interest in their homework. A few parents, however, show little interest in their children's learning and this limits their children's development. Some parents come into school to help in various ways, and the school would welcome more. There is an effective parents' association that raises funds for the school and has made significant contributions towards such areas as the computer suite. In addition, the events arranged by the association, such as the

summer fair, form a useful social function and are well supported by parents, grandparents and children, as well as school staff. Parents of the small number of pupils learning English as an additional language give their children and the school good support and the school communicates well with them. Teaching staff are accessible and keep parents appropriately informed about the progress of their children including those with special educational needs. Formal meetings with parents are arranged termly. Individual education plans are regularly shared with parents, who are asked to sign them. However, there is not an assumption written into the plan that parents too will have a regular role to play in helping their children to reach the current targets. Where behaviour problems are being monitored contact between school and home is usually frequent.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

An improving school

72 At Cove, staff and governors are improving the provision for the pupils and successfully driving up standards. The school now provides a sound education for pupils, with many good features. At the time of the last inspection, two years ago, the school has serious weaknesses in leadership, management and teaching. Other aspects of provision also had identified areas for development. Since that time staff and governors had worked hard to improve the situation and the school no longer has serious weaknesses. Satisfactory progress has been made overall, with the rate of progress accelerating after the appointment of the new headteacher in January.

73 There are several reasons for the move forward. These include:

- The commitment to improvement and hard work of staff and governors;
- The contribution made by the acting headteacher;
- The support of the local education authority, especially in staff and governor training;
- The appointment of a dynamic, yet sensitive, new headteacher.

74 It is to the school's credit that this improvement has been achieved in the face of some difficulties. Most notable has been a period without a permanent headteacher. Now, with the appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher, the leadership of the school is more stable. The school is in a good position to move forward further.

Planning for the future

75 There is now a very clear vision for future improvement, shared by staff and governors. This is formalised in the school's very good strategic plan. This includes key priorities for development, action plans for work in all subjects, a management plan to identify regular management and assessment actions as well as a buildings and environment plan. The plan is closely linked to the budget and sets clear and measurable objectives.

Impact of the new headteacher

76 Good systems are being established for measuring how well the school is doing. The headteacher has been closely involved in monitoring and supporting teaching and has a clear view of the strengths and areas that need improving in classroom practice. She has gained the respect of staff and mutual trust has provided a firm foundation for development. She is aware of the need to enable teachers to focus their energies on work in classrooms and to limit the amount of unnecessary paperwork.

77 There are also good systems now in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. These are being used increasingly to analyse what pupils know, understand and can do in order to plan for future learning.

Role of subject managers

78 The role of subject managers is developing, but staff are not all as effective as they could be in developing their subjects in the school. There are several reasons for this:

- Some staff have very recently taken on new subject responsibilities and so are still getting to grips with a new area of work;
- Some staff are not well matched to their subject responsibility and have more expertise in another area;
- Generally staff are not sufficiently involved in monitoring pupils' work and progress through the school.

Work of the governors

79 Governors are involved well in the work of the school. They have been very involved, with the local education authority, in supporting recent improvements. Much of their work is undertaken in small committees, which report back to the full governing body. There are now better school systems in place to measure how well the school is doing and so governors are better informed than they were two years ago. This means that they are able to contribute well to planning the way forward.

80 There is a good balance of experience and expertise on the governing body. Some governors, such as the effective chair, have supported the school for many years. Others are more recently appointed and bring a fresh eye to the work of the body as a whole. The governing body effectively fulfils all its statutory responsibilities.

Leadership and management of special educational needs

81 The leadership and management of special educational needs are good. The special needs co-ordinator is an able teacher and a very good role model for the teaching of pupils with learning difficulties. The governing body is well informed about the status of special needs. Thorough systems enable the school to benefit fully from the local education authority's special needs audit system which forms the basis for funding. Well-qualified learning support staff are effectively deployed to provide the maximum benefit possible for needy pupils. There are some very good software resources in use on the computers in Years 5 and 6, which provide pupils with successful, multi-sensory experiences to enhance their learning. The special needs co-ordinator also keeps an appropriate overview of planning and liaison for the small number of pupils learning English as an additional language.

Equal opportunities

82 The school's provision for equal opportunities is good. Its aims bear witness to the importance it attaches to this concept. It has a varied, explicit and successful range of strategies in place to ensure that everyone has the same opportunities. The governors have recently reviewed the school's policy and comprehensive guide lines were issued to subject managers to ensure that equal opportunities permeate the life of the school. At the moment there are no male role models in any capacity on the school staff with whom boys may identify. The school is going some way towards addressing this new situation for Cove by involving good male role models from outside the school, such as football coaches, police liaison officers and an ICT adviser. The ethnic minority pupils are well integrated and generally have equal access to the curriculum. The school goes to considerable lengths to adapt its facilities so that all pupils including those with physical disabilities can benefit fully from their provision.

Efficiency

83 The financial management of the school is good. The governors' strategic and planning committee meets regularly, monitors expenditure against budget forecasts and reports back to the full governing body. The governors ensure that budgets are set to take

account of educational priorities and that expenditure is planned to meet these. Specific grants are used correctly for the purposes intended. The headteacher allocates money to all curriculum areas according to planning priorities. The governing body is very effective in planning and monitoring expenditure and there are good procedures for the control of finance. The efficiency of the school has improved since the last inspection and is now good.

Day-to-day management of finance

84 The school's administrative assistant, with advice and assistance from the local education authority, conducts the day-to-day management of finance, which is good. Administration procedures are documented and adhered to. There are sound procedures for purchasing and for the checking and keeping of invoices. The school maintains an inventory of all equipment in the school.

Staffing

85 The school has sufficient, appropriately qualified teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. One teacher does not have a class commitment but is used effectively to lead additional learning sets during literacy and numeracy lessons. She also teaches classes through the school, so that subject managers can give time to their co-ordinator roles. The special needs co-ordinator has received training for her role. She is also a class teacher but receives adequate non-contact time to carry out her special needs work. Staff training has been a major focus since the last inspection. All teaching staff have received high levels of monitoring, support and professional training to improve their general classroom skills. More specific subject training has also occurred, particularly for mathematics. Training is planned for the near future in ICT to raise teachers' skills and confidence in this subject.

86 Newly qualified teachers receive good induction support through the local education authority's programme. Good day-to-day help in school is provided by an effective mentoring system. The local authority is to extend its induction programme to include a second year of support and the eligible teacher on the staff will participate in this new initiative in the coming year.

87 There is a sufficient number of well-qualified learning support assistants and classroom assistants. They are knowledgeable and committed members of the teaching team who provide well for the pupils with special educational needs they support.

Accommodation

88 Accommodation provision is good overall. The building itself is satisfactory, with some good features, while the grounds are very good. The site is well maintained by a very committed caretaker and has its own detailed two-year development plan. The early 20th century building has interesting historical features and architectural character. However, some classrooms are small and do not provide sufficient space for adequate book corners. Sound insulation is poor between some classrooms and shared access to the upstairs class is not ideal. The new headteacher is concerned that her upstairs office may distance her from parents and children. There is a well-designed, attractive food technology room and a special needs room where individual or small group work can take place. The grounds are attractive, spacious and well developed so that there are large spaces where organised sports can be played and smaller areas for quieter outdoor activities. There is a secure pond and wildlife area for use during environmental studies and life science activities. The library accommodation is currently unsatisfactory. It shares space with the computer suite but neither library nor computer accommodation is well served by the

arrangement. Plans are already under way and funds allocated to develop a new library next year.

Resources

89 Generally there has been an improvement in resources provision since the previous inspection. Resources are now good overall. The shortfall in resources available for the teaching of mathematics has been remedied and the computer suite is up and running this term. There are only eight computers in it at the moment but all of these are linked to the Internet. Subject areas are generally well resourced. Book provision is satisfactory, but some library books need replacing. There are not enough books representing the wide diversity of world cultures.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

90 In order to build on recent improvements, the headteacher, staff and governors need to:

- (1) Raise standards in ICT by:
 - Implementing the new school planning document;
 - Completing the 'New Opportunities Fund' training;
 - Look towards increasing the hardware.

(Reference paragraphs: 10, 141 - 146)
- (2) Raise the quality of all teaching to match the best practice in the school by:
 - Consistently planning activities to match the learning needs of pupils of different attainment levels, especially in foundation subjects;
 - Improving teachers' use of questioning;
 - Increasing the pace in some lessons;
 - Improving classrooms so that they are exciting places to learn in;
 - Improving consistency in marking.

(Reference paragraphs: 31, 33, 99 & 119)
- (3) Complete planning for all subjects, ensuring that due attention is given to the development of skills from year to year, especially in the context of mixed age classes.

(Reference paragraphs: 41 & 43)
- (4) Review and increase the length of time spent in teaching and learning in the light of national recommendations and readjust the timetable to allow sufficient time for all subjects.

(Reference paragraphs: 38 & 39)
- (5) Involve all subject managers in the further monitoring and evaluating of standards and pupils' progress on a regular basis.

(Reference paragraph: 78)
- (6) Widen pupils' awareness of the rich cultural diversity within the United Kingdom by:
 - Reviewing and developing further the current provision for multi-cultural education;
 - Adjusting subject planning to incorporate due reference to cultures beyond Western European;
 - Providing pupils with first hand experience of cultural diversity through display, literature, art, music, visits and visitors, for example.

(Reference paragraph: 54)

The headteacher, staff and governors might like to consider the following minor areas for improvement for inclusion in their development plan:

- Improving the library accommodation and separating it from the ICT suite. *(Reference paragraphs: 88 & 145)*
- Completing risk assessments. *(Reference paragraph: 58)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	7	23	16	4	0	0
Percentage	4%	13%	44%	31%	8%	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll	277
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	20
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	91
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	31	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	20	30
	Girls	34	25	37
	Total	61	45	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (75)	64 (59)	96 (81)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	24	30
	Girls	29	30	37
	Total	56	54	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (70)	77 (66)	96 (82)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	272
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	31

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

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

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	587389
Total expenditure	590725
Expenditure per pupil	2030

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	277
Number of questionnaires returned	133

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	40	50	6	0	5
My child is making good progress in school.	27	59	5	2	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	62	3	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	55	12	3	13
The teaching is good.	21	58	5	1	15
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	50	13	4	13
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	48	2	1	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	50	2	1	8
The school works closely with parents.	20	58	11	2	9
The school is well led and managed.	30	51	2	0	17
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	26	56	4	0	14
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	45	17	11	14

Percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number and may therefore not total exactly 100

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

ENGLISH

91 Standards are well above average by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils are still achieving better in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4. This is mainly to do with a closer match of tasks to pupils' abilities in older pupils' classes. Higher attainers are very well challenged and pupils with special educational needs receive excellent support in the present Years 5 and 6. While pupils do better in reading than in writing, the difference is far less pronounced than nationally. The school's focus on writing has had a positive impact.

92 Overall pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. This is because pupils identified as needing support throughout the school are set for daily literacy lessons and receive high quality teaching and additional assistance. Teachers plan work well suited to pupils' capabilities and deploy a range of imaginative support techniques, including very good use of ICT programs. Higher attaining pupils are extremely well challenged in Years 5 and 6, with extension tasks regularly prepared to take them a step further if they achieve initial tasks set. The school has few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, but tracks these pupils' progress carefully to check that they are achieving as they should. These pupils, including the very small number who speak English as an additional language, are achieving well. The difference between boys' and girls' attainment is less marked than nationally because the school's ethos encourages boys to strive to do their best academically.

93 Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are well above average by age eleven. They are good throughout the school and improve as a result of teachers' focus on these skills. Pupils listen well to their teachers. In Years 5 and 6 pupils speak confidently. They are urged to do so by their teachers, who listen carefully to their comments and respond individually to them, modelling good discussion skills. Pupils in a Year 6 class, for example, read very clearly their written first impressions after reading an excerpt from 'The Secret Garden', before commenting more directly during a shared review of Mary's character. Drama is a regular feature of the timetable and pupils make good use of opportunities afforded in circle times to listen with respect to each other's viewpoints and express their own sincerely.

94 Standards in reading are high by the time pupils leave school. On entry to the school they are already above average, although one in five pupils is below the level required. These pupils still require carefully focused teaching of phonic skills and receive this in carefully targeted lessons. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in their reading skills. Reading scheme books are used to structure pupils' individual reading in all year groups, as well as regular guided reading sessions during literacy hour group times. Pupils do not always benefit as much as they could from the guided reading sessions, especially when reading a page at a time and then following for five.

95 A few parents are unhappy with their children's choice of books. Teachers promote structured choice appropriately from within colour-coded sections and from a limited range of 'free readers', but the school continues a tightly structured use of the reading scheme to the detriment of pupils' knowledge of authors and choice of fiction. The school needs to explain the systems for developing pupils' skills and breadth of reading matter more clearly to parents, so that they and their children can make best use of the opportunity to enjoy good children's fiction at home together. One highlight of the last school year was book

week, which did much to promote pupils' knowledge of authors and characters, with invited authors visiting the school and reading their work. The school needs to build on this kind of event by developing more attractive book corners in classrooms and setting up changing displays of various authors and genres.

96 The range and quality of books available in classes and throughout the school is limited, as the school chose to spend its allocated literacy funding on big books and multiple copies for classroom use, leaving insufficient funding to provide breadth in its choice of fiction. Each pupil also chooses an information book from the school library regularly, but these are not allowed outside the school. The quality and quantity of non-fiction material is also limited. The school recognises that the current siting of the library and computer suite together in a cramped space makes it difficult to develop pupils' research skills successfully. There are plans to relocate both.

97 The use and format of home-school reading diaries or records is inconsistent and this does not help parents develop a clear picture of the school's policy and approach. In the literacy hour, some teachers use books or extracts very successfully to raise pupils' enthusiasm for reading. More able pupils are developing firm favourites. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils talked enthusiastically about the work of JK Rowling and Jacqueline Wilson.

98 As a result of the school's concerted efforts to raise standards in writing, more pupils than average reach the expected level 4 in writing by age eleven and a higher than average proportion achieve beyond. In Years 5 and 6 there is a good balance between providing pupils with opportunities to write independently and originally as well as setting exercises and tasks to help them to consolidate their spelling, comprehension and handwriting skills.

99 Pupils are making steady progress in the development of their writing skills in Years 3 and 4 and then very good progress in Years 5 and 6. Staff are using the national literacy strategy well to guide their planning and pupils are benefiting from the systematic approach to teaching about the structure of language, spelling and handwriting. Another strength in the school's approach is the use of 'response partners', with pupils working in pairs to check and comment on each other's drafted work. There is still room for development in pupils' use of computers to draft and edit their work. Teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation are higher in Years 5 and 6 and the quality of marking is consistently higher in Years 5 and 6.

100 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but it is very strong in Years 5 and 6, where pupils of all abilities receive consistently high quality support and appropriate challenge. As a result, pupils make very good progress in these years after satisfactory progress through Years 3 and 4. In lessons seen, the quality of teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. Of 11 lessons observed, one was excellent, three very good, three good, three satisfactory and one unsatisfactory. The change of organisation has been a positive factor in the school's improved provision and standards. Most pupils in each year group form two parallel classes, with two targeted classes of pupils needing support forming mixed-age sets and receiving a high level of staffing support. Teachers in parallel classes either plan together or share lesson ideas together in pairs, ensuring that pupils in the same year groups cover the same work. Tasks are designed well to meet different pupils' needs and teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to raising the attainment of pupils with special educational needs.

101 In the very good and excellent lessons, teachers' thorough organisation and calm manner, coupled with enthusiasm and humour, give pupils a clear picture of the focused working atmosphere expected. Both boys and girls achieve well because they enjoy answering the teachers' probing questioning, knowing they will be listened to and their ideas or comments welcomed and developed. In one Year 5 session, pupils responded extremely thoughtfully in the activity part of the lesson, discovering how to define characteristics through use of dialogue, description and actions. In one Year 3 and 4 session, despite conscientious planning and preparation, the teacher had overestimated pupils' capabilities early in the year, with the result that tasks were too difficult for them and they made little gain in their learning.

102 English has developed well since the last inspection because of teachers' developing confidence in the use of the literacy strategy. Planning structures are consistent throughout the school and teachers are making much better use of assessment information to set targets for their classes and for individuals. Sharing these with parents and children is also having a positive effect. This development has been more effective in Years 5 and 6, where teachers have more experience of knowing what to do to move pupils' learning on in order to reach the standard level 4 or higher. Teachers in Years 3 and 4 need more practice at recognising what to look for in writing and reading in order to challenge and support pupils appropriately. The introduction of writing assessment books would help this process, helping teachers to track pupils' progress more closely. The school also needs to ensure that the quality of marking is consistently as good as the best and that pupils develop greater breadth in their reading. At the moment the literacy hour is often preceded or followed by a shorter English lesson, which is not conducive to good concentration. The role of the subject manager needs to be more tightly focused on monitoring the consistency of marking and planning, developing the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 and ensuring all teachers track closely the progress of pupils' speaking and listening, reading and writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

103 Attainment in mathematics has been steadily improving since the 1999 inspection and pupils are now attaining standards that are broadly average. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and there are currently no significant differences in performance between boys and girls. Higher attaining pupils make good progress and over a quarter of all pupils are working at levels above those expected for their age. However, although overall standards are satisfactory in Year 6, they are not yet as high as they should be. This is largely because of the low expectations and high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching when this year group was in Years 3 and 4, at the time of the last inspection. The school has recognised this and has set, and continues to set, challenging targets for improvement. As a result of the school's decision to set pupils by age and ability for mathematics and improvements in the quality of teaching pupils throughout the school are now working in their lessons at least at levels expected for their age and are achieving well in their numeracy work.

104 By Year 6, pupils in the upper set quickly make calculations in their head, show good recall of their tables and understanding of the relationship between fractions and decimals. They use written and mental techniques to estimate answers to everyday problems and to check the validity of calculator answers. In the middle set, most use recall of number facts to at least 20 in their mental calculations although their ability is less developed and few have secure recall of all their tables. They estimate answers to multiplication problems before using written methods to multiply and add numbers to 1000. Those in the target group have a basic knowledge of addition and subtraction facts that they use in the mental

doubling and halving of numbers up to 20. The current Year 6 was found by the last inspection, when they were Year 4, to be working at levels well below that expected for their age. They have clearly made good progress over the past two years and most pupils are now generally working at or above the expected level.

105 In all sets pupils are working at tasks that provide a good level of challenge and build well on their numeracy skills. Year 5 pupils in the upper set make good use of their knowledge of strategies and their tables to mentally solve sums such as 3×70 or 5×40 and use informal pen and paper methods to multiply numbers to 100 by single digits. Those in the middle group mentally double and halve numbers working to at least 1000 before using calculators to double larger numbers and check their answers. Progress is much better and standards are now close to expectations in Years 3 and 4 as a result of the improvements in the quality of teaching. In Year 4 pupils in the upper set mentally add numbers to 100 and to 1000 in written form with some going beyond this. In the middle set they sort two-dimensional shape by properties and know how to present this data in different forms. Year 3 upper set pupils make good use of their knowledge of number facts to 20 to prepare statements about addition and subtraction up to at least 40.

106 At this early stage of the school year the range of pupils' current work is limited but from viewing work from the previous year it is possible to see that in all classes an appropriate emphasis is being placed on the development of numeracy skills. Pupils are developing their knowledge of number, space, shape, measures and data handling at the expected rate.

107 Throughout the school there are examples of pupils using their mathematical skills to solve practical situations in other subject areas. Pupils use them when weighing in cookery sessions, measuring materials in design technology and Years 3 & 4 have recently encountered them in mapwork. However, this is not consistently developed and there are very few examples of pupils undertaking investigations into mathematical concepts or ideas that would extend their knowledge and understanding. Use is to be made on a regular basis of the ICT suite to support mathematical work and this will provide opportunities for pupils to consolidate and develop their skills.

108 The quality of teaching is never less than good. In Years 3 and 4, it is consistently good and in Years 5 and 6 it is good or better and in one instance excellent. This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection when over half the lessons seen were unsatisfactory, all in Years 3 and 4. Since then teachers have worked hard to address the concerns raised and to implement the numeracy strategy. It is this improvement in the quality of teaching, supported by the school's introduction of ability setting in largely single age groups, that has led to the more consistent gains in learning and the rise in standards across the whole school. Teachers' well-informed expectations and improved subject knowledge ensures that tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities and that all now consistently make good progress.

109 Teachers carefully plan and prepare tasks and activities that challenge and develop pupils' thinking. Throughout the school pupils are introduced to a variety of mathematical methods and encouraged to solve problems in their own way. By sharing the methods they have used with the rest of the class they clarify their own thoughts and stimulate those of others. Year 3 pupils in the upper set work together in groups to create statements of addition and subtraction working with numbers up to 50. By sharing ideas and methods they recognise that different approaches are equally valid.

110 Good use is made by teachers of the three-part format of the numeracy strategy as the basis for their lessons and of its detailed progression and exemplification to plan for the next stages of learning. Following much professional training and support from local authority advisers, they are confident and secure in its use and their subject expertise has developed. As lessons begin they are careful to share with pupils the purpose of the learning and to leave the objectives displayed on the board during the lesson to reinforce this. They make good use of the introductory quick-fire mental and oral sessions to consolidate and extend the speed of pupils' reasoning. This is most effective where all pupils are directly involved in offering answers, as for example in the Year 3 upper set, where pairs of pupils displayed on whiteboards their solutions to addition and subtraction questions. A brisk pace captures all in the spirit of the learning, as in the Year 6 middle set, where all quickly chanted and clapped the 8x table before writing the multiples on grids. In some lessons, however, it is all too brief and the opportunity to capitalise on the development of quick responsive mental processes or to illustrate a range of strategies is lost. During these and the main sessions, repetition and reinforcement through questioning of selected mathematical vocabulary ensures pupils develop and extend their use of the correct terminology.

111 Teachers use well-prepared tasks in the main activities that practise and extend pupils' skills. These are well matched to their abilities, yet provide a good level of challenge and therefore move learning forward. Good use is made of resources and where learning assistants are present they are well-briefed and deployed to support pupils. Teachers generally make good use of praise to encourage their pupils, are careful to correct misconceptions and effectively use questioning to check their understanding and guide thinking. Consequently pupils are usually eager to participate, are fully occupied and feel a sense of achievement.

112 The plenary session is well used to revisit and confirm the purpose of the lesson and to assess pupils' level of understanding. Only occasionally is it used to share with pupils the next stage of learning or to prepare them for it. Teachers are careful to take note of information from formal and informal assessments when planning for pupils' next stages of learning and are making better use of it to predict what pupils should achieve. Marking is more variable but in the best practice it is carried out in lessons with pupils and indicates to them how they could improve. Homework is regularly set and well used to practise and consolidate skills, knowledge and understanding, whether by learning tables or practising work from lessons. Pupils take evident care in the presentation of their work, listen carefully to their teachers, are eager to participate in activities and offer responses to questions.

113 Although ICT has been used to support work in mathematics, its use has not been systematically developed and pupils' experiences have been variable. All numeracy groups now have timetabled access to the ICT suite and this, together with the classroom computers and a range of software, will provide opportunities to support and extend pupils' mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding.

114 Since the last inspection the school has worked hard, with local authority advisory support, to implement the numeracy strategy, provide staff training, develop and analyse assessment data and identify areas for improvement. The governing body has been kept well informed and the numeracy link governor has been closely involved in this process regularly working in classrooms alongside teachers. Guidance and help have supported the subject manager in her role and developed her subject expertise. Classroom observations and reviews of pupils' work and teachers' planning have been used to check implementation of the numeracy strategy and identify areas requiring support. This now

needs to be developed into a programme of systematic monitoring of teaching and learning that assesses quality of provision, identifies strengths and weaknesses, celebrates success and informs the setting of future targets for improvement. Although teachers within each year group plan together, the school needs to maintain a clear view of the level of work in each set to ensure that standards in each age band continue to improve. The school will also need to review the role of the subject manager in this process and consider how her experience can be used to best advantage.

SCIENCE

115 There has been an overall improvement in standards in science since the last inspection to a point where they are now above average.

116 A significant and consistent relationship of teaching to learning was apparent during the inspection. Whilst the quality of both was good in Years 5 and 6, it was generally satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language overall make good progress within their abilities in their science learning.

117 In Years 3 and 4, science teaching expertise has improved since the last inspection to a generally satisfactory level. Pupils' development of their scientific knowledge, skills and understanding are also satisfactory. Teachers provide interesting investigations about electricity. Pupils clearly enjoy their 'hands-on' science. There is a satisfactory balance between practical work and the appropriate writing up of experiments but the quality of teachers' marking is too varied. Teachers share the objectives of the lesson with pupils who evaluate their achievements against them. They use effective questioning skills to help pupils to think logically about what they have observed and to draw reasoned conclusions. In one lesson, in particular, good use was made of examples of pupils' previous ideas by the teacher as she demonstrated the effect of adding simple non-standard switches to a battery powered circuit. However, teachers do not always give sufficient thought to the organisation of their classrooms for maximum visibility by all pupils during introductions to investigations. There is a satisfactory emphasis by teachers on pupils' learning and use of accurate scientific vocabulary and of their knowledge and understanding of safety aspects of electricity. Appropriate use is made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in their science learning but work is not consistently matched to pupils' abilities.

118 In Years 5 and 6, good learning in science is supported consistently by good teaching. Teachers enthuse their pupils using their own confident knowledge and interest in science. In pupils' studies of the Earth in space the careful choice and use of resources make a significant contribution to the good quality of pupils' learning of some difficult ideas. In one lesson seen, pupils worked very well together with enthusiasm, using hanging globes and lighted torches in the darkened classroom as they simulated the sun's rays on the spinning earth and internalised a deeper understanding of night and day, using correct scientific terms. Well-chosen video film was used effectively for teaching and learning about the scientific aspects of the lunar cycle. This was juxtaposed with a mystical story, traditional to native North American Indians, about how the relationship between the sun, Earth and moon arose.

119 Teachers' high expectations are reflected in pupils' written work, which is usually neat and well organised. Good use is made of mathematical learning during investigations in helping pupils to explain observations accurately and good standards of literacy make a significant contribution to the quality of learning achieved in science. The standard of

teachers' marking is variable and does not always give pupils sufficient information about how they can improve.

120 The subject manager makes a positive contribution to the good standards achieved in science. She has completed a position statement, which shows her clear overview of the subject and the areas for immediate development. She regularly monitors test results and pupils' work books and participates in teachers' planning meetings in Years 3 and 4. The final readjustments to planning for the revised National Curriculum are still to be completed for Years 3 and 4. Her management of the purchase and organisation of resources is efficient. She has identified the need to extend the bank of software for science now that the computer suite is functional. Well-chosen teachers' support materials are a valuable resource of ideas for coverage of the science curriculum. Pupils' resources for whole class investigations are sufficient and equally well organised. The school grounds include wild areas and a safely enclosed pond site. They are a rich resource for the study of life processes and environmental science.

ART AND DESIGN

121 Evidence of pupils' work in this area was limited, partly because the inspection took place at the beginning of the school year. Based on the evidence from pupils' sketchbooks and two lessons in Years 5 and 6, pupils' skills in drawing are average by the time that they leave the school. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. It was not possible to make a judgement about work in other media, although a sample of work presented from last year shows that pupils have experience of painting, printing and collage.

122 Throughout the school pupils use sketchbooks for observational work. This includes work undertaken on school visits, often in connection with a history or geography project. (The highlight for one pupil was the day his friend's book was dropped in a river!) In the two lessons seen, older pupils were using their sketchbooks to draw a still-life representation of a fruit or vegetable. They worked carefully and achieved well because of the good emphasis that both teachers placed on the development of skills. However, work in sketchbooks indicates that insufficient attention is paid to skills development in some classes and that pupils have not always made the progress that they should have done. To some extent this is linked to low expectations of what pupils can achieve. A strength in the work in this area is the use of good quality sketchbooks and pencils.

123 In Years 3 and 4 this term, pupils are working with paint to mix colours. An attractive display of coloured balloons in one class celebrates pupils' achievements. This is a worthwhile activity, but again there is a lack of skills development. Year 4 pupils, for example, explained that they had undertaken the same activity when they were in Year 3.

124 Samples of work, especially paintings, show that pupils are looking at the work of famous artists as a basis for their own compositions. A striking display of paintings in the style of Mondrian brightens the hall and work samples show other work in the style of Beryl Cook. There are also many reproductions of artists' work in the corridors. However, in conversation, pupils in Year 4 could not recall the work or names of any artists that they had studied.

125 In the lessons seen the quality of teaching was good in one and very good in the other. Both were well organised and moved at a good pace. Much was achieved as a result. However the level of pupils' skills development and understanding indicates that teaching is satisfactory overall.

126 There are three main reasons why work in this area has not moved forward as fast as it might have done:

- There has not been a permanent subject manager until this term and so monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress has been limited.
- Planning for the subject does not sufficiently indicate the development of skills in different areas.
- Staff lack confidence in teaching the subject.

There is now a very clear plan for the way forward this year, which should ensure improvement.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127 It was not possible to see any design and technology lessons during the inspection. Limited evidence was available from discussions with pupils, a few completed items from the last school year, the school's planning documents and completed pupils' design planners from the developing portfolio of their previous efforts. Discussions with the subject manager were also a helpful source of evidence, as was analysis of her manager's file and resources available for the teaching of design and technology. Although only a small sample of work was seen it was of at least a satisfactory standard.

128 Teachers provide pupils in Years 3 and 4 with a more varied range of experiences than do those in Years 5 and 6. This is because design and technology is carefully built into topic planning. Thus during a history study of The Greeks pupils design interesting Greek salads. It is apparent that teachers' expectations are good in the sample evaluated and that they provide pupils with some motivating learning experiences. Pupils gave clear verbal descriptions from memory of how they constructed miniature houses from card even though they had made these some months before the inspection. Whilst the joining workmanship of these was neat and painstaking, they were of uniform size and shape. The interior decoration was far more creative and original. Pupils made lively individual wallpapers using computer-aided design. They carefully constructed inventive furniture from a variety of rigid and soft materials. Then, to complement their learning about electrical circuits in science, they neatly built in a wiring circuit and bulb to illuminate the interior. A planning sheet shows how pupils have followed a systematic design process, which includes the evaluation of their work.

129 High expectations of pupils' making skills are apparent in the quality of finished work samples in Years 5 and 6. Pupils had designed and made cloth bags to meet a defined need. They too planned carefully, making a paper pattern before cutting out their bag shape. Seams were joined with painstaking stitching and pupils used several ideas for closures. One pupil made an effective drawstring seal whilst another carefully stitched on a press-stud to join an envelope flap. Lively decorative fabric painting added the finishing, individual creative touch.

130 The subject manager is conscious of the increased pressures on the timetable, which have led to the lower time allocation for design and technology. She attends training courses and feeds back on these to the rest of the staff. One such, which is to take place soon, will extend expertise in computer-aided design. She attends Years 3 and 4 planning meetings and has begun to put together a portfolio of completed work conceding that photography will be a useful tool in extending this archive. A varied range of resources which meet curriculum needs are well organised and stored accessibly in the school's 'dungeon'. A dedicated, well-planned and resourced food technology room enables pupils to experience some enjoyable cookery as part of their design and technology learning.

GEOGRAPHY

131 Pupils make sound progress through the school and standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. This is a slight drop in standards from the time of the previous inspection.

132 There are several factors that have culminated in satisfactory rather than good progress, and these are also pertinent to other foundation subjects:

- Planning, although developing, is not yet securely in place for the revised geography curriculum;
- Within lessons, teachers plan the same activity for pupils of different ages and abilities. This means that work is either too hard or too easy for a good proportion of the class.
- Teachers have been sensibly focusing their attentions on improving standards in mathematics and ICT and so geography has had a lower profile.

133 Mapwork has a high priority. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are studying Cove this term and are beginning by looking at aerial photographs and maps of the local area. Holiday homework, in which pupils in the present Year 4 drew a map of their journey to school, was a good basis for this. In the lessons seen, most pupils successfully identified important features in the Cove area, such as the motorway, railway and the school. Older pupils did not do significantly better than the younger ones, because they were not sufficiently challenged. In the lessons seen in Years 5 and 6, pupils were learning about the difficulties of representing a globe on a flat map. Some understood that the shape or size of countries alters to some extent. Some pupils knew the names and positions of the continents, but a significant minority found it hard to identify these correctly.

134 Work from the previous year shows that pupils successfully complete a good amount of work covering a range of themes and localities. This included work on Malawi in Years 3 and 4 and a local study on Odiham in Years 5 and 6. Standards in work seen were in line with national expectations. However there was little difference in the work achieved by pupils in different year groups within the same class.

135 In the lessons seen the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to unsatisfactory, and is satisfactory overall. Strengths include planning for interesting activities, including fieldwork, which makes the work relevant for the pupils. An interesting example of this was the use of oranges and satsumas to help pupils to understand that it is very difficult to transfer a globular skin into a rectangle. The experiment was not entirely successful, but added interest to the lesson. Resources are generally used well and are well organised. Teachers also have high expectations of pupils' written presentation. Areas for development include:

- planning for appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils;
- questioning in order to take pupils' understanding forward.

136 Currently the role of the subject manager is developing. She is developing an interesting planning document, but is at the early stages of monitoring pupils' progress and attainment.

HISTORY

137 History was not the focus of work in the humanities during the inspection and no lessons were seen. Based on an analysis of pupils' work from last year, together with

discussions with pupils, pupils make satisfactory progress through the school and standards meet expectations by the time pupils leave in Year 6.

138 Pupils have a good understanding of chronology. Older pupils, for example, found it easy to order the periods that they had studied and used chronological language well. Pupils are also developing a knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past. Pupils in Year 4, for example, enthusiastically described the differences between education in Ancient Greece and today. Pupils in Year 6 were equally clear about the effect of the Roman invasion on the British Isles. They felt that the Romans' impact on British language and their civilising influence were most significant. Recorded work shows a good coverage of appropriate study units. It also indicates that pupils use secondary sources to find out information. Pupils are not so confident in the use of primary sources to find out about the past. Their work shows little reference to these, even though field study trips are included within most topics. Work in the area of historical interpretation is also more limited.

139 Teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. A good amount of work is planned for each unit of study and teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of amount undertaken and presentation. Visits to relevant places and visitors into school also enhance the work. In relation to the topic on Ancient Greece, for example, some actors spent a 'Greek day' with pupils. This was a highlight of the term and the pupils talked enthusiastically about what they learnt. Older pupils have visited a Roman villa recently and again this helped to bring the past alive. History is taught to mixed-aged classes and it is evident from the work that all pupils, irrespective of age or ability, undertake the same tasks. This is not always appropriate and means that teachers are not clear about standards that might be expected from different year groups.

140 Nonetheless, work in history is moving forward well. This is because the well-qualified subject manager has a clear vision for future developments. Planning for the different study areas is well under way, for example. A high proportion of the staff have studied history at an advanced level and this subject expertise is evident in teachers' planning. At the moment the monitoring of standards and progress is at an early stage. Resources are generally adequate, but sometime the match of books to pupils is not appropriate. Books about Ancient Greece in the library, for example, would present a considerable reading challenge to pupils in Year 3.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

141 Pupils' work shows that in the aspects of ICT seen standards are in line with expectations for all but the oldest pupils. Although overall standards are still below those expected, this is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection. The school is beginning to make progress in addressing the key issue of raising standards in the subject. This term the school has begun to implement an outline curriculum for ICT that is based on carefully linking approved national guidance to the school's planned topic curriculum. This will ensure that ICT continues to be used to support learning in other subjects, whilst pupils' ICT skills are systematically developed. In the past, controlling, monitoring and modelling, in particular, have been under-represented and pupils have not been taught the full National Curriculum programme of study.

142 The opening of the ICT suite of eight new computers, paid for by national funding, and the commencement of staff training as part of a national initiative, mean that the school is well placed to move forward. This should quickly raise standards through the direct

teaching of ICT skills. It is evident from viewing teachers' planning, talking to pupils and looking at the limited work available from last year that pupils are quickly making progress in their ability to use information technology. However, its use to support work in other subjects varies from class to class although good examples were seen of its use to support literacy. Year 5 pupils, as part of their research on authors, make good use of an Internet site on Roald Dahl. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use a personalised program to learn spellings, whilst Year 3 pupils practice the use of speech marks.

143 Most pupils use home computers as games machines. Many are able to word-process and some use them to download information for topics from the Internet or a micropedia, although few go beyond this. Year 4 holiday topics on Churches and the Year 5/ 6 ones on Space and the Planets contain frequent examples of this expertise.

144 At this early stage of the term pupils are being re-introduced to the ICT suite but it is clear that many Year 6 pupils are not yet confident users of ICT and have poorly-developed keyboard skills. Teachers plan activities carefully that will develop and extend their skills. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn how to interrogate a database on birds to find matches to specific requests. They are generally confident in their use of the mouse to open menu screens and select tasks from the tool bar and input search criteria. However, they often have to search the keyboard for the letter they require. Their teachers carefully guide them through the process to ensure success and until they learn to refine their search. In Years 3 and 4, pupils experiment with changing the size, style and colour of fonts to create calligrams of words that convey their meaning such as 'BIG'. Most know how to save their work to file and to send it to the printer. They are generally competent in their use of the mouse to select, control and instruct. Throughout the school there are examples of how pupils last year used the digital camera and scanner to collect and record images of events and to combine pictures and text to record, for example, a Year 3/ 4 Ancient Greek workshop and scenes from 'Book Week'.

145 In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory or good. In the better lessons teachers are careful to share the objectives of the lesson at the outset with pupils so that they understand the purpose of their learning. Through careful preparation and planning they ensure that instructions are clear and pupils are carefully guided through the steps necessary to achieve success. A brisk pace to the learning means that pupils quickly gain in confidence and skills and questioning is well used to direct and extend their thinking. In a few lessons the pace slows as teachers need to turn their attention to the remainder of the class and in all lessons the fact that there are only sufficient machines available for half the class at a time is not ideal. Plans are in hand to enlarge the ICT area and relocate the library to address this. In mixed age classes pupils are taught the same skills. As competence develops teachers will need to ensure that expectations are appropriate to the age of the pupils.

146 The good quality support and advice that the school has received from the local education authority and adviser has helped the school identify areas requiring improvement and prioritise its action. The enthusiastic subject manager has worked hard to move the subject forward. The development of the outline planning document and the early stages of assessment further support this.

MUSIC

147 The school's provision for music remains one of its strengths, contributing strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to the whole school ethos. Standards in music are well above national expectations at age 11 because of the strong

leadership of the subject, some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6, regular, focused singing practice for the whole school and very well-organised additional provision.

148 The last inspection found pupils making good progress. This remains true overall, with pupils of all abilities making very good progress in Years 5 and 6 after satisfactory learning in the main in Year 3 and 4 classes, where standards are also satisfactory. The music subject manager is quick to recognise talented pupils and the school ensures that these pupils are challenged well, both in class music lessons and through the provision of instrumental tuition and choral activities. The school has done extremely well to maintain such high standards over the last two years. It has continued to offer stimulating opportunities for all pupils to enjoy music and develop musical skills and talents at a time when the school has needed to channel energy into other priorities.

149 Amid this mainly strong picture, there are areas for attention. Teaching is mainly good, with a little that is very good, but not all teachers are confident in the subject and there has been no time to monitor teaching quality in this subject. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching remains in Years 3 and 4. To address the lack of confidence and skills, the subject manager has refined the two-year rolling programme of planning, organised in-service training and invited a professional singing teacher to visit and work with all pupils, while observed by staff. These measures are appropriate. They show the school is not content to rest with current strengths, but determined to improve still further.

150 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show well above average ability, in maintaining their own rhythm line against others, alongside an agreed pulse, for example. In each lesson observed, all pupils showed their ability to follow notation symbols, maintaining a steady beat and listen to other parts. As a result of teachers' high expectations and clear instructions, pupils focus eyes, ears and minds. They are aware of how to sit or stand. They learn very successfully, responding to the high demands alertly and with enthusiasm, clearly enjoying the brisk pace of the lessons.

151 Pupils in one Year 5 and 6 lesson made striking and sensitive comments about excerpts from Holst's Planets Suite, recognising the different moods and characters created by the composer for Mars, Jupiter and Venus. A further positive aspect of teaching is the way teachers successfully link other subjects, such as religious education, with music, playing a sea symphony as a stimulus to thought and writing about the natural world and creation, for example. Pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class also worked hard to capture the atmosphere of a church by using percussion instruments, recognising that music can represent aspects of the church and its atmosphere. Teaching and learning were not so successful in another lesson, where the pace was slow and pupils sat too long listening to and making high and low sounds.

152 The school is well resourced with instruments and teaching materials and has a good range of different types of music for pupils to listen to, including music from several cultures. African singing set an appropriately moving atmosphere for an assembly about Martin Luther King instance. These wide cultural resources will be valuable as the school sets out to plan more thoroughly for pupils' cultural development. Pupils' singing during acts of collective worship is tuneful and during a brief weekly hymn practice, the subject manager develops singing skills and musical knowledge. Pupils varied the dynamics of their singing very successfully to express the meaning of the words in 'Spirit of Peace'. They paid close attention to the conductor and used the '*p*', '*f*' and crescendo and diminuendo signs well.

153 Many pupils benefit from recorder and instrumental tuition. The school has reviewed the use of its music budget and pupils who wish to play an instrument and show some talent now have to pay for the opportunity to learn strings, woodwind, brass or keyboard. Arrangements are made for those families who are not in a position to make this contribution. The school benefits from very effective and supportive tuition and the subject manager liaises well with tutors and parents to organise examinations, concerts and performances. A choir is formed to perform at alternate years' Christmas or Easter services in the local church. The school's CD, video and audio-cassette collection shows the full orchestra performing proficiently at annual summer concerts. The school greatly appreciates the support of parents, who transport equipment, attend events and help their children sustain regular practice. The whole school benefits from this parent-school partnership, including the PTA's funding for musical instruments and equipment, which helps maintain the high profile of music in the curriculum and in the school's community life.

154 The school is in the process of initiating a common approach to assessment and developments in music are particularly good, with clear statements showing pupils' intended achievement in music lessons by the end of each term's unit of learning. This is set to be a useful and manageable tool, as there has previously been no way of keeping track of all pupils' progress. The subject manager will now need to evaluate the success of teachers' implementation of the planned curriculum by seeing how many pupils meet or exceed the set objectives.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

155 Overall standards in physical education are average, which is similar to the position found in the last inspection. There is no difference in performance between boys and girls and the curriculum is blocked so that pupils work on both indoor and outdoor activities at the same time but will experience all the strands during the year. Classes are working this term on gymnastics and games skills. Swimming is scheduled for Years 3 and 4 at a nearby pool later this academic year and is currently organised on a biannual basis.

156 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 work enthusiastically at developing and refining their games skills. They show increasing control as they pass the football accurately using both the inside and outside of their foot. In gymnastics they work hard to link their balancing positions together, seeking to improve the range and quality of their movements and to create a fluent sequence. Several pupils show well developed and refined gymnastic moves as they perform springs, stands and balances. All work to improve their performance, although the repertoire of many is less developed. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 improve their ball control well as they dribble along defined paths in playground grids, concentrating well on improving accuracy rather than speed. In the hall they work hard to refine the way they travel between movements and create a fluent sequence that includes twists and turns. Some are beginning to work with a partner and a few extend this well to create a sequence of mirror moves.

157 Throughout the school pupils and teachers are well aware of safety issues. Equipment is moved and used safely and sessions begin with warm-up activities and end with cool downs. Pupils and staff are all suitably attired for the activities and most pupils choose to work barefoot in the hall which improves the sensitivity and quality of their work. Although pupils are aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies, opportunities are not often taken in the lessons to draw their attention to this or to extend their knowledge and understanding.

158 Teaching ranges between good and unsatisfactory and most is good. Lessons are carefully planned to take account of what pupils are already able to do and to ensure that skills are progressively developed. Good reference is made to what pupils have done before and teachers are careful to use this as the starting point for their lessons. Teachers generally make good use of their pupils to demonstrate techniques and those who feel confident in their own ability show pupils how it should be done. In the better lessons they make good use of their subject knowledge to coach and guide pupils in the finer points of movements and use praise well to make them try harder. Most lessons move briskly through well-planned activities that allow opportunities for pupils to observe the work of others. When this occurs pupils comment sensibly on the work of their peers and in the better lessons offer constructive suggestions for improvement. This reflection allows pupils to consider their own performance and identify how they can improve. In less successful lessons pupils do not have these opportunities or there is insufficient time for them to practise in the light of them.

159 The new subject manager is very enthusiastic about developing the range of out-of-hours coaching activities and is looking to develop regular inter-school competitive sport. Plans are already in place for football coaching to be provided by two local clubs and also by an interested parent. There are currently no formal arrangements for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subject and arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' performance are at the early stages of development. Recent national guidance is being used to identify levels of expectations for pupils in each year group and to inform the setting of objectives for lessons, since these are not included in the current planning document. It is this exemplification of pupil performance that is required for each year group if standards are to be raised, skills progressively developed and tasks made suitably challenging for each age group. A good range of resources for games is well stored and in good condition. However, although all of the large gymnastics apparatus in the hall is in sound condition, some is old, heavy and cumbersome and restricts the range of learning activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

160 Standards of pupils at age eleven more than meet the requirements of the Hampshire agreed syllabus, marking an improvement since the last inspection, when they met requirements. The exercise books of pupils in Year 6 last year and this year reveal a very clear understanding of aspects of Christianity, Judaism and Islam studied. They also show pupils thinking about the meaning and significance of religious events and customs, comparing these with examples of allegories in modern children's literature, for example, and developing deeper understanding through such pursuits.

161 A well-planned curriculum secures appropriate coverage of the subject and teachers' choice of activities makes the subject relevant to pupils. A few unsatisfactory recording activities within the planning for pupils in Years 3 and 4, involving colouring in or using undemanding worksheets, need changing. Teachers and pupils can benefit from the example of the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils' books. These pupils respond to their teachers' consistently high expectations by recording their understanding and ideas with a care in presentation that clearly shows a pride in their work.

162 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have good opportunity for personal reflection while learning about 'Joseph the Dreamer' and describing from personal experience 'The day I had to say sorry'. Another piece of work, entitled 'Don't bother me now', again offers pupils the chance to express their emotions and thoughts. Pupils know about the use of symbols in baptism and, in their learning about families, they make interesting studies of Jewish family

life, comparing this with their own. They understand what a special day is and know all about Shabbat and the Seder meal. They understand the Jewish and Christian practices of prayer and their uses of commandments, comparing these with their own school and class rules and making up their own prayer. The work recorded includes an over-emphasis on Christianity, but the worksheets and activities used in this context need monitoring, as some do not take pupils' learning forward and encourage a careless response. Many of the activities chosen provide interesting starting points for pupils' thinking and expression, but the quality of marking is inconsistent across Year 3 and 4 classes and requires monitoring. Teachers have not carefully considered the purpose of marking or the value to be placed on pupils' recording. Also, there is currently no way of pupils or teachers keeping a permanent record of other responses to lessons, through discussion, art, music or drama, for example. Some of these, such as the sharing of a Passover meal in the school hall, are highlights of the school's planned provision and well worthy of a record through photography or a brief, word-processed note.

163 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good knowledge of a few aspects of Judaism and Islam, as well as Christianity. They appreciate the differences and look at the similarities between these three world faiths. They know that each has sacred scriptures and special places for worship. They understand the significance of rites of passage, such as confirmation and Barmitzvah. They compare the practices of Jewish and Christian weddings. They understand the daily prayer patterns of Muslims and know that prayer is one of the five pillars of Islam. They prepare questions about prayer and discuss these with a visiting local Christian vicar. They compose their own personal prayers. A display of these in the school hall includes some thoughtful reflection linked to favourite parts of the school that are special to the writer.

164 Two of the best examples of learning through religious education are in pupils' comparison of the Christian story of Jesus' resurrection with C.S. Lewis' story of Aslan in 'The Lion, the witch and the wardrobe and in the completion of a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences between Matthew's and Luke's Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth. These show pupils applying thought to their work, locating information in the comparative texts and presenting their findings clearly and succinctly. The use of a contents page in the front of pupils' exercise books shows that the book is intended as a personal record. As a result, pupils respond very well to the extra demand for care in their presentation of each piece of work.

165 Teaching was of good quality in the four lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers plan and prepare their lessons thoroughly and make very good use of resources. In a lesson on creation, pupils in Years 5 and 6 listened to a sea symphony, looked at artists' and photographers' images of the sea in different 'moods' and used shells to smell and listen into, while attempting oral and then written personal responses to creation. The teacher's questioning and reception of comments alongside this array of stimuli succeeded in creating a reflective atmosphere, conducive to pupils sharing thoughts and respecting each other's ideas. In another Year 5/6 lesson, pupils built on the series of lessons about creation by creating an artistic response. In this lesson, the strength of the teaching lay in the careful organisation and management that enabled thirty pupils in a small classroom to choose from pastels, paint, charcoal and pencil to create a personal response to the concepts of infinite variety and diversity. Teaching in a Year 3/4 lesson was also of good quality, as pupils recollected and then recorded their knowledge about features of a church, following a visit to the local church the previous week. The use of a lit candle and church music provided meditative background to pupils' recording, but the nature of the task, which involved cutting, sticking and labelling, could have been more imaginatively planned.

166 The leadership of the subject is good. The subject manager has redrawn the school's annual planning in line with the new Hampshire syllabus, successfully addressing shortcomings from the last inspection. The recorded evidence from pupils' books last year shows that there is still room to develop a better balance of coverage of the three chosen religions, but the plan looks set to address this. Opportunities for monitoring the standards of work and quality of teaching and learning have been limited while the school addressed other priorities. The school needs to address the inconsistencies in standards of pupils' presentation of their work and teachers' marking. Resources are good and the school makes good use of local visits and visitors. There remains a need to attract visitors to talk about Judaism and Islam, but the school has a good selection of video material to overcome the lack of first-hand experience and discussion. The subject makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development and the revised plans offer a positive opportunity to promote pupils' understanding of the variety of cultures in British society today. The school is in the process of introducing simple and manageable assessment procedures to help teachers keep track of pupils' progress against agreed statements for the end of each term's unit of work.