

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HIGHBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cosham, Portsmouth

LEA area: Portsmouth

Unique reference number: 116196

Headteacher: Diana Morrell-Glenister

Reporting inspector: Raymond Jardine  
7428

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2002

Inspection number: 221500

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Dovercourt Road Cosham Portsmouth
Postcode:	PO6 2RZ
Telephone number:	023 92375404
Fax number:	023 92380462
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Lyn Sutherland
Date of previous inspection:	24/01/2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7428	Raymond Jardine	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9880	Anthony Comer	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
24805	Alison Cogher	Team inspector	Art and design Physical education Foundation Stage	How well are pupils taught?
20614	Donald Kimber	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Religious education	
21650	Gail McLean	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Music	How well does the school care for its pupils?
29371	Paul Hodson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology History Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Full Circle  
35 Trewartha Park  
Weston-Super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 2RT

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Highbury Primary is a mixed community school that serves the mainly residential area of Cosham in the north of Portsmouth. The headteacher is new to the school from January 2002. There are 342 pupils on roll between the ages of four and 11 years. Although most pupils come from the immediate locality, some come from other neighbouring areas. The school aims 'To create an atmosphere of success in which pupils develop their skills as independent learners and achieve excellence'. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. Of the 102 pupils (29.8 per cent) on the register of special educational needs, a significant minority have moderate learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties and four pupils (1.2 per cent) have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Three pupils (0.8 per cent) have English as an additional language. There are 37 pupils (10.8 per cent) eligible for free school meals (broadly average). Almost all pupils are white UK heritage. Although the pupils come from a broad range of social and economic backgrounds, a significant minority are socially disadvantaged. Pupils' standards on entry to the school are quite variable across the different areas of their learning. They also vary from year to year but overall, they are broadly in line with those expected for their age.

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

Highbury Primary is an improving and effective school. The school's standards have been improving because there is close teamwork throughout the staff and a determination to succeed that has resulted in good improvements to the school's provision, especially teaching. Pupils achieve well in a secure and caring environment for learning. The teaching is good; it is closely monitored and supported and the school reviews its performance rigorously so that it is well placed to improve further. In relation to the school's relatively high spending per pupil, it provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils like school. They are encouraged to take responsibility in class for their learning and around the school in a way that promotes their self-esteem, personal development and relationships.
- Provision for the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs throughout the school is very good so that they achieve well.
- Teachers use questioning in class to very good effect in challenging pupils to think, explain and apply what they have learned and the teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good.
- Pupils are given clear targets and expectations of their achievements, they are monitored closely in key areas and parents are provided with good information on their children's progress.
- The strategic management team and key staff monitors the school's performance and takes effective action focused on raising standards.

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

- Standards of pupils' writing throughout the school, with a particular focus on pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- There are gaps in the school's provision for information technology and it is not yet used effectively within some subjects to raise standards.

*The above two priorities feature in the current school's development plan.*

- The accommodation for some classes adversely affects teaching and learning and there is no provision of large play equipment for pupils in the Foundation Stage.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 2000. Since then, the staff and governors have worked hard to address the weaknesses identified. Good progress has been made on all the issues. The school now monitors teaching and pupils' progress closely, rigorously reviews its standards and takes action on priorities through its development plan. Teaching quality has improved substantially as a result. The provision for information technology is much improved with the acquisition of a new suite recently that is already having an effect on standards, although there are still weaknesses in the curriculum in this area. Provision for religious education and pupils' standards have improved substantially. The governing body monitors the school more effectively. Overall, good progress has been made despite considerable staffing instability in the last two years that has now been addressed. The school is now well placed to sustain its own improvement.

## 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
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	D	C	C
Mathematics	E	C	C	D
Science	D	C	C	C

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

The table above shows that the school's standards have been rising in recent years at a rate above that nationally. By the age of 11, pupils' standards in 2001 were in line with those nationally in English, mathematics and science, and they were mainly in line with those of similar schools although mathematics dipped a little in 2001. The school did not quite meet its targets for English or in mathematics last year. The targets for next year are ambitious.

Inspection findings show that standards in all these subjects remain about average compared to those nationally but there are signs of further improvements in Years 3 to 5. Between the ages of seven and 11, pupils are achieving well, and those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, achieve well throughout the school.

Children in the reception year classes are achieving well because curriculum planning and organisation are very good and the leadership is very good. Most children are likely to reach the nationally expected levels in all areas of their learning by the end of their reception year. By the age of seven, pupils' standards in reading are about average but their writing standards are below. Standards in mathematics are broadly in line with those nationally and pupils' achievements by the age of seven are satisfactory. In most other subjects, pupils' standards are about average throughout the school compared to those nationally, including science and information and communication technology, but in history and art their standards are good. There are no subjects where standards are unsatisfactory.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like school and they take part in school life enthusiastically.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The great majority of pupils behave well in classes and around the school, but a small minority exhibit unsatisfactory behaviour that affects the learning of others.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form good relationships with each other and with adults. They learn to co-operate productively in groups and are encouraged to take initiative and personal responsibility in class and around the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There is very little unauthorised absence and most pupils arrive at school punctually.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is good with some very good features, especially in reception and Years 1 and 5. There is very little unsatisfactory teaching. Where it does exist, it is mainly due to unsatisfactory management of pupils resulting in interruptions to the flow and pace of lessons. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and pupils learn well, especially in Years 3 to 6. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively and teaching is now closely monitored and improvements supported where necessary. Teaching and learning in the reception year classes are particularly good. Teachers' planning for this year is comprehensive, very good use is made of assessment to guide the teaching and teachers provide a rich variety of learning experiences for pupils. Many teachers throughout the school make very good use of questions to remind pupils of their previous learning and challenge them to think, explain and speculate. Consequently, most lessons are challenging for pupils. Teachers take care to ensure that lessons are inclusive of pupils of different abilities and teaching assistants provide effective support for those pupils needing specific help. Resources and time are used effectively and lessons are conducted at a good pace. Marking is generally good, and homework appropriately set, particularly for older pupils in Years 5 and 6. The accommodation for Years 1 and 3 presents considerable constraints on teaching and affects pupils' learning, but teachers of these classes plan very well together to minimise these difficulties.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provision for the Foundation Stage is very good. Pupils' personal, social and health education is good and the school makes good use of the wider community to enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good throughout the school. Teaching assistants are very effective and skilled, resources are plentiful and individual education plans are closely focused through clear targets and actions. The provision is very well managed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few pupils who have English as an additional language are fully involved in lessons and achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own and other people's beliefs. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong, consider the needs of others in and around the school and work co-operatively and productively on shared activities. Teachers and support staff provide very good role models that pupils respect. Pupils explore and appreciate their own and other cultures in a number of subjects and the school makes effective use of the community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils' progress is closely assessed and monitored in English and mathematics and the information is used effectively to guide planning and teaching. Pupils' personal development is supported well. Procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory and under review.

The school works well with parents. Good information is provided about their children's academic progress and about the curriculum. Parents are kept informed through regular newsletters and parents know that they can approach the staff if they have concerns.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The strategic management team and key subject managers have clear roles. They work closely as a team to monitor and manage the school's provision effectively. The school has a clear educational direction focused on raising standards guided by the strong leadership of the former headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have worked hard to improve the range and flow of information about the school and understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body is well organised and led and carries out its statutory duties well.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The strategic management team and key managers contribute to a rigorous evaluation of the school's standards and provision, especially teaching, that guides the school's priorities for development. Actions taken to improve weaknesses have been effective in a number of areas.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Financial control is good. While the governing body has directed major resources to key priorities such as improving information technology provision, financial resources are not targeted clearly and closely enough to other school priorities in the current development plan.

Staff are well qualified and appropriately experienced for their roles. There has been a high turnover of staff for a variety of reasons with the majority of teachers new to the school since the last inspection. Arrangements for the performance management of staff are good and the school has effective arrangements for induction of staff new to the school. The school makes very good use of the available accommodation but is working at its limits and the shared classrooms for Years 1 and 3 are unsatisfactory. Learning resources are good for most subjects and particularly the newly acquired information technology suite and the library provision. The school has embraced most of the principles of best value. It compares its performance, competes to achieve good value and challenges what it does but does not consult sufficiently widely on important decisions to promote a shared vision for its future.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like coming to school.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress and are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents find the school approachable.</li> <li>• The school is helping children to mature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The behaviour of a small minority that can disrupt the learning of others.</li> <li>• Some parents would like more information about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Homework is thought too much by some and not enough by others.</li> <li>• Closer involvement of the school with parents.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views about the school. They also think that the school can do more to eliminate unsatisfactory behaviour on the part of a small minority of pupils. The school provides about the right amount of homework for pupils and information provided for parents in their children's reports is of good quality. The school works hard to provide newsletters and information for parents about the curriculum but would like to strengthen its ties with those parents less involved in the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children are assessed on entry into reception classes in September using the local authority's baseline assessment scheme. These and other assessments and observations show that children's attainments on entry vary both from year to year and within the various areas of learning. The attainments of pupils in the current year are broadly in line with those expected for children of their age. Their attainments in handwriting, writing, reading and counting and pattern work are below those expected for children of their age while their use of information technology and their handling of small objects are above expectations. Children of all abilities in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all areas of learning because the provision made for them is very good and a strength of the school. Daily activities are imaginative and rich in variety. They are focused well on specific areas of learning and guided by structured schemes to ensure that pupils build on their skills and knowledge progressively. Most children are likely to achieve the nationally expected levels for all areas of learning by the end of their reception year.
2. The school's standards in the national tests for seven year olds have fluctuated considerably over the past few years from well below the national average to above, especially in pupils' reading and writing. Pupils' standards in the mathematics tests have been consistently higher than in reading and writing over time. In 2001, standards were below the national average in both reading and writing but standards in mathematics were above average. The school's results for seven year olds dipped in 2001 compared to 2000 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, these pupils' attainments on entry to the school were also significantly lower than those of the previous year. In relation to that in similar schools in 2001, the pattern of results was similar with the exception of standards in writing that were well below average. Taken over three years, the school's standards have been broadly average for reading and writing and have exceeded the national average in mathematics. There has been no significant pattern of differences between the achievements of boys and girls or of pupils of different abilities.
3. The school's standards in the national tests for 11 year olds have been rising steadily over the past three years at a rate above the national trend, particularly in English and in science. Standards in the 2001 national tests were in line with the national averages for English, mathematics and in science. In relation to those in similar schools, pupils made the progress expected in English and in science but their progress in mathematics dipped compared to the previous year and was below average. The school's standards were also in line with those in similar schools (based on eligibility for free school meals) in English and in science but below in mathematics. The school almost met its targets for English and mathematics in 2001, particularly English. While boys appear to have achieved better than girls in English and science in recent years, there have also been considerable imbalances in the numbers of boys and girls in the year groups, particularly in 2001, so that these differences may not be significant. The school is aware of these differences and continues to monitor them.
4. Inspection findings confirm that the school's standards by the ages of seven and 11 are being maintained and are at least in line with the national average in English, mathematics and in science by the age of 11. Pupils' reading standards are higher

than their writing, especially by the age of seven years. There are also signs that the school will improve further because many pupils are achieving well, including those with special educational needs and those in Years 3 to 6. The prior attainments of pupils in the current Year 6 class are lower than in other years and pupils in Year 5 are already achieving similar standards to those in Year 6 in English and in mathematics. These improvements have come about for a number of reasons. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented well as a result of close monitoring of teaching and adjustments to the school's provision. Pupils are regularly and carefully assessed in English and mathematics in relation to targets set for them and teaching assistants are used well to provide extra support for pupils where it is needed. Subject managers in key areas are more effective, and curriculum plans and resources to support teaching have improved. These improvements have also been achieved during a time of considerable changes of staff. While there have been disruptions to pupils' progress because of the use of temporary staff at times, there have also been some good new appointments of teaching staff who have settled quickly into a team that is determined to succeed.

5. Pupils' literacy skills are improving but standards of reading are better than their writing, especially in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn the basic skills of phonics to decode words using a variety of strategies. By the age of seven, most are reading simple texts accurately and with understanding and their achievements are at least satisfactory. Many enjoy reading, use the school's library regularly and they have favourite authors and books. By the age of 11 most pupils love reading and have achieved well. They discuss likes and dislikes and talk about how themes and plots are developed by authors. Pupils' skills in reading are carefully assessed by teachers and their assistants. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read at home.
6. Improving pupils' writing is a current priority for the school and there are signs that this is having an impact on standards. By the age of seven, standards of writing are below the national average, although pupils are making satisfactory progress since entry to the school. Many pupils write in narrative and non-narrative forms and are developing their vocabulary well because teachers highlight new terms as they arise in many subjects as part of their routine teaching. Pupils' punctuation is developing and simple words are spelt correctly and letters formed accurately. At Key Stage 2, pupils' work is well presented, neat and tidy and draft books are used well to help them reflect on and improve their work. Grammar, spelling, vocabulary and punctuation are developed further so that most pupils reach at least the expected standard by the age of 11. Pupils learn to write for different audiences and purposes, partly because teachers encourage them to apply these skills across many subjects.
7. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. They speak freely and confidently, for example, in class discussions. They are encouraged to use descriptive vocabulary in different contexts, for example, some Year 6 pupils practise reading aloud stories they have composed and constructively criticise each other's work.
8. Pupils' standards in mathematics by the ages of seven and 11 are about average compared to those nationally and many are achieving well as they move through the school, particularly in Year 5. By the age of seven many pupils have a sound understanding of place value and many use mental strategies to solve problems in real-life situations, for example, involving working out change when buying from a shop. Many know how to multiply by two and by ten and they can order numbers up

to 100. They can name and describe two-dimensional shapes and are developing their mathematical vocabulary. Most can use correct units of measure for length and mass and can read scales. By the age of 11, most pupils can use the four operations accurately and their mental strategies for efficient calculation develop well, for example, when adding or subtracting two or three digit numbers by partitioning them. Higher attaining pupils have good skills in ordering fractions and negative numbers.

9. Standards in science are about average for seven and 11 year olds. Pupils are achieving well in most aspects of their science, particularly in Key Stage 2, because teachers plan from a supportive scheme of work and are focusing more attention on developing pupils' skills of enquiry. Even so, some skills in evaluating evidence and suggesting improvements to experiments are not developed sufficiently for older and more able pupils in Years 5 and 6, neither is information technology used sufficiently to promote pupils' investigative skills.
10. Pupils' standards in information technology have improved since the last inspection, and particularly for pupils up to the age of seven years. This is in part due to the installation of a new computer suite. Standards are now about average for both seven and 11 year olds in most respects, although there are still gaps in the school's provision; for example, using sensors to gather and process information. There are no subjects where pupils' standards are less than satisfactory. They are achieving above average standards in history and in aspects of art throughout the school. Standards have risen in several subjects since the last inspection two years ago, particularly in English, information technology and religious education.
11. Pupils with special educational needs and those few pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because their individual education plans have very clear targets. Pupils are assessed and their progress is reviewed regularly and teaching assistants provide effective guidance to enable them to work effectively in lessons. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls or the achievements of pupils of differing abilities.

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

12. The pupils' attitudes to school are good. They enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastically involved with the school's life and parents have expressed similar views to inspectors. Parents also feel that their children are encouraged to work hard and do their best, and that the school helps them to become mature and responsible. The inspection evidence supports these positive views. A minority of parents are concerned about the behaviour of a small minority of pupils, including incidents of bullying. The school takes incidents of bullying very seriously and acts quickly to address them. There was no evidence of oppressive behaviour during the inspection.
13. Overall, the behaviour of pupils is good. There are however, a small minority of pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviour and who do not realise the impact that their actions have on others. The school has formed a behaviour support unit and appointed a co-ordinator who is effective in quickly isolating some instances of challenging behaviour. The school regularly reviews its approach with guidance from a local authority consultant. Occasionally, where teaching does not gain pupils' full attention, or where the classroom shared accommodation such as that in Year 1, affects pupils' concentration, their behaviour has an adverse effect on teaching and learning. Around the school and in the playground, behaviour is good, although

some pupils have a tendency to run rather than walk in the school corridors. Pupils play happily together and are polite and courteous.

14. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are good. The range of educational visits, visitors and after-school activities, as well as the emphasis that the school places on personal, social and health education, contribute significantly to pupils' personal development. Pupils are encouraged to show initiative and to take responsibility through a variety of initiatives including the school council, the setting of personal learning and development targets and the 'buddy' system for pupils with behavioural problems.
15. Overall, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils make a positive contribution to their learning and to standards achieved having been maintained since the last inspection.
16. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, being broadly in line with the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence and most pupils arrive at school punctually.

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

17. Overall, the quality of teaching is good with some very good features. The last report found that the quality of teaching was a serious weakness, with almost one fifth of lessons judged less than satisfactory. Considerable effort has gone into improving teaching through the careful appointment of teachers, and the implementation of rigorous monitoring procedures. This has led to significant improvements, which have addressed the serious weaknesses identified in the last report. Almost all teaching is now satisfactory or better, and there is very little teaching that is unsatisfactory. Teaching is good or better in two thirds of lessons with almost one third of all lessons very good, and there is some excellent teaching. Overall, this represents an improvement since the last inspection.
18. The quality of teaching has improved as a result of a number of significant factors. Planning now identifies specific learning objectives, which build on what pupils already know. These objectives are clearly communicated to pupils. In addition, they are given individual targets for improvement and they work hard to achieve them. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and plan activities that are stimulating, and appeal to pupils. Competency in the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills has improved, and is now good overall. Pupils are almost always managed well, which leads to productive lessons that move at a good pace. Teachers plan together within year groups to ensure consistency for all pupils. Improved assessment procedures give teachers the information they need to plan lessons that meet the learning needs of pupils. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are good overall. Teachers also use a range of teaching strategies. For example, they demonstrate specific skills, and use open-ended questioning very effectively to guide pupils' thinking. Well-briefed and skilled teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs. Resources are well prepared and used effectively.
19. Teaching across the school is good in all subjects, except music and design and technology, where it is only satisfactory. Variations in the quality of teaching between Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 to 6 do exist. For example, in English, teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, but good in Years 3 and 4, and very good in Years 5 and 6. In Information and communication technology and history teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, but good overall in Years 3 to 6.

20. There remain some areas for improvement in teaching. In a small minority of lessons, the teachers' management of pupils is unsatisfactory. Opportunities to develop children's spirituality and cultural awareness are sometimes missed in lessons, and are insufficiently planned for across all subjects. In a few lessons there is a lack of challenge for more able pupils in their group work, for example, in history and in mathematics.
21. The impact of improvements in teaching has been that pupils generally learn well in lessons and make good progress in a number of subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well, through their individual education plans and the help they receive from adults. As a result they make good progress.
22. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and children learn very well. Teachers' planning is comprehensive and clearly identifies what children are expected to learn. Very good use is made of ongoing assessments to ensure that activities are well matched to children's learning needs. The teaching of basic skills is very good. Teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn and provide a rich variety of activities to ensure that all children have good learning experiences. The two classrooms are organised in an imaginative way to cover all areas of learning, and encourage children to work independently. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to support all children. Time and resources are used very well.
23. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and there are some very good features. In a small number of lessons, teaching is unsatisfactory. This is entirely due to the unsatisfactory management of pupils that cause lessons to be interrupted in flow and the pace to slow. Within each year group teachers plan together to ensure consistency between classes. In the best lessons, in addition to the sharing of objectives, pupils are also made aware of how they, and their teacher will know whether the objective for the lesson has been achieved. For example, in a Year 2 art and design lesson, pupils knew exactly when they had achieved the objective of using tools to roll clay into a slab of even thickness. In most lessons teachers manage pupils well and expectations are high. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively. Despite the organisational difficulties created by the sharing of a single teaching space between two classes, the teaching of pupils in Year 1 is consistently high. Through tightly co-ordinated planning, teachers do all they can to overcome these difficulties. However, inspectors noted the negative impact this accommodation arrangement has on pupils' learning in several lessons.
24. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. Positive common characteristics of lessons include good planning and pupil management, and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. In addition, the effective use of assessment information, time and resources and teaching assistants, results in some very productive lessons. There is some very good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6, with some excellent features in Year 5. In the best lessons, the teacher's excellent use of questioning challenges pupils to recall, think and explain. Teachers use a range of teaching strategies and make very effective use of the plenary session so that pupils consolidate their learning very well. All of these excellent features were evident in a Year 5 history lesson, where pupils were able to imagine vividly what it must have felt like to be an evacuee in Britain during World War 2. Teaching in Year 3 is consistently good. This year group experiences the same accommodation constraints as Year 1 classes. Teachers in these classes



are very skilled, and work collaboratively to do what they can to minimise the disruption each class causes to the other. Even so, inspectors again noted the negative impact this accommodation arrangement has on pupils' learning.

25. Both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been fully implemented throughout the school. These areas have been a particular focus of monitoring and training for teachers. As a result the teaching of these subjects has improved, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and standards are rising. The setting of pupils for literacy and numeracy is having a positive impact on their learning overall.
26. Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are good. As a result, pupils respond with interest and enthusiasm in the majority of lessons. Most pupils work hard, are able to complete tasks independently and concentrate for sustained periods of time. They take pride in their work and are productive in lessons.
27. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is generally good. It is used effectively as an ongoing assessment tool and teachers provide useful comments for pupils on ways of improving their work. Suitable use is made of homework to support pupils' learning. Pupils throughout the school take reading books home to read to their parents and carers. Regular additional tasks are set for pupils in Years 1 to 6 to complete at home.

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

28. The school provides a curriculum that is broad and balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and it is good throughout the rest of the school. The weekly teaching time allocated for seven to 11 year olds is at present below the national recommendations by half an hour but it is being reviewed and adjusted by the new headteacher. Statutory requirements are met for all subjects and there are effective strategies in place for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The provision of religious education is good and this marks an improvement since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. There has also been an improvement in the provision of information and communication technology in all year groups and it is used effectively to enhance some subjects like art and history. But there are gaps, for example, for developing skills in monitoring and controlling events and in modelling and it is not used effectively in some subjects such as science and design and technology as a result.
29. There are schemes of work for all subjects. These vary in quality, although most are good. In the best examples, such as history, there are detailed Programmes of Study, lists of key skills, expectations for each learning section and tracking of pupils' progress as they work through the units of study. In others, such as design and technology, insufficient guidance is provided on how skills in the subject can be built on as pupils move from year to year.
30. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these are having a positive impact on standards across many subjects in the curriculum. A good example of this is the use of plenary sessions in all subjects. The last report noted that teachers occasionally left insufficient time to sum up what was being learned in literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers now use the last few minutes of each lesson more effectively to involve the pupils in their own assessment

by asking them to show whether they have achieved the objectives set or whether they are still unsure. The teachers have given all pupils targets to work towards and when questioned, pupils are able to describe these and say how they are progressing. Information and communication technology is also used more effectively in literacy and numeracy lessons.

31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school and pupils make good progress. Teaching assistants are very effective and skilled, offering very good support for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Teaching assistants working with pupils with behavioural difficulties use strategies well in order to gently lead them into better patterns of behaviour. The special educational needs manager, who meets with the teaching assistants at the beginning of each week, manages the provision very well. All support staff feel valued and they are encouraged to contribute to training and lead meetings. All statutory procedures are in place and all pupils on the special educational needs register have detailed individual education plans. These show targets, which are shared with the pupils and parents each term. Parents and pupils are heavily involved with the assessment of progress towards these targets. There has been an improvement in the quality of individual education plans since the last inspection. Very good use is made of the special educational resources area. Resources are plentiful and of a very good quality. The area is well stocked and used as a haven at break times for pupils who have emotional or behavioural problems. The governor for special educational needs has an excellent understanding of the provision throughout the school and she plays a major role in arranging resources and staffing. The special educational needs manager has excellent subject knowledge and a very clear view of the direction forward and she understands the value of good assessment procedures, which can be used to inform future planning for all pupils.
32. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Good examples of pupils' developing personal and social skills are found in 'circle time', pupils taking responsibility for their own learning through target setting and their involvement in the formulation of class rules and with the school council. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of health issues and are aware of choices relating to their health. Year 1 pupils investigate and explain the needs of a human baby and describe the need to keep items clean and medicines in safe places. Year 6 pupils identify various germs and describe ways of preventing them from spreading. The school has a clear sex education policy that describes the years in which elements are to be introduced and pupils study drug-related issues in science and in personal, social, and health education lessons.
33. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils regardless of gender, religion, race and ability. It is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities, including music, French, drama, astronomy and sports clubs. Music specialists visit the school each week and provide effective tuition for pupils who can develop their skills in the school orchestra. Visiting football coaches from Portsmouth Football Club run weekly coaching sessions for boys and girls. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by visits to places of interest and by visitors to the school. For example, the history syllabus involves visits to the school by actors who play the roles of famous people such as visiting Roman soldiers. Teachers dress in costume to add impact to their teaching and visiting drama groups perform to enliven history and English studies. Visitors from local religious groups talk to pupils in religious education lessons and parents and ex-pupils of the school are asked to contribute. Parents of Year 1 pupils bring in their old toys and bears to help pupils understand how toys have changed over a short period of time.

34. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This maintains the standards observed during the last inspection.
35. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their own and other people's beliefs within the curriculum for religious education. Year 2 pupils share their thoughts about forgiveness, and Year 3 pupils express some of their feelings when, in 'Dear Diary', they write about 'What Christmas means to me'. In assemblies too, there are good opportunities for pupils to reflect quietly upon their feelings and personal values. For example, Year 6 pupils and teachers led a whole school assembly and contributed to an atmospheric occasion in the blacked out hall. Music, dance, and drama, very imaginatively drew upon an incident from 'Harry Potter' about good overcoming evil, and led into a short prayer read by a pupil emphasising the need for all to work together. Collective worship, with time for prayer, is common within other assemblies such as a Year 2 class assembly and a Key Stage 2 singing assembly. In lessons, teachers show that they value pupils' ideas and often lead class discussion well to ensure that all pupils are drawn in.
36. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. In addition to helping to agree school rules, pupils have opportunities to discuss and publish in the classroom their own class rules. Sometimes these are couched deliberately in positive ways. Pupils are helped to distinguish right from wrong in various ways, such as through stories told in assembly, and in class; and through the day-by-day fostering of values of fairness and respect for others. These values feature strongly in personal, social and health education lessons and in the well planned 'circle time' sessions.
37. Pupils' social development is equally good. From the Foundation Stage the school makes strong efforts to help build relationships between pupils, and between staff and pupils. This is a strong feature in many lessons with, for example, the careful organisation of 'co-operative' groups. Teachers and support teachers are good role models. Monthly themes, such as co-operation and teamwork, are introduced to provide a focus. Pupils are encouraged to take more responsibility, such as in the school council, as door monitors, and as library assistants. The school also supports pupils' social development well in other ways, such as in residential visits, and the provision of a Lunch Hour Club. All these opportunities effectively help promote pupils' self esteem.
38. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils gain insights into the beliefs and cultures of other peoples. They learn about Florence Nightingale's contemporary, the nurse Mary Seacole, in history. In geography they are helped to think what life would be like as a child growing up in St Lucia. The good contribution of religious education to cultural, social and moral development, was demonstrated when a small group of Year 6 pupils were talking. Ending a discussion about their religious education (RE) in school, they were asked 'What do you think you have gained from your RE?'. Replies included 'Everyone is different – we should listen to their views', 'Respect for who they are, not what they are like', 'Different cultures – all are different, all are valuable', 'Knowledge – not just our God, but a Muslim God', and 'Learnt respect for people in all different ways'. Music lessons in Year 4 include Indian music and Australian music, and Jewish music is used as part of the RE study of the Passover. Pupils are helped to appreciate their own culture with activities such as a visit to the Nuffield Theatre, and the school's Arts Week. There is room to develop further pupils' perception of Britain today as a multicultural society.

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

39. The school has very effective practices to identify how well pupils are progressing in the core subjects of English and mathematics. This is a strength of the school. Outcomes of assessments, including baseline assessments, are recorded carefully and used successfully to guide the work of teachers and teaching assistants.
40. Analysis of teachers' assessments and test results is systematic, thorough and well documented in English and mathematics. The rate of progress made by pupils is regularly measured and compared with forecasted levels of achievement and targets. The outcomes of the school's tracking system are evaluated and the information gained is acted upon. Indeed, assessment is increasingly forming a natural part of teaching and learning in these subjects. Teachers know their pupils well and the school makes appropriate changes to meet the needs of individuals, groups or cohorts of pupils. Changes include making alterations to the curriculum, adjusting methods of teaching and when necessary, involving the expertise of outside agencies.
41. In English and mathematics, teacher assessments are accurate and reliable. Members of the strategic management team have ensured that systems enable results to be checked for validity and agreement is reached on the standard of work required for each national curriculum level; especially in writing. This effectively ensures consistency in assessment within year groups and across the key stages. Analysis of past test data revealed that boys were achieving higher standards than girls. However, the school's tracking system which considers gender and background differences, showed that the statistics were influenced by the imbalance between numbers of girls and boys in any particular cohort. Inspection findings confirm that there are no significant differences between the progress made by different groups of pupils. Girls and boys, pupils of different abilities and backgrounds achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
42. In English and mathematics, pupils are fully involved in agreeing individual targets for improvement. All pupils spoken to during the inspection were able to discuss their targets and explain what they had to do and by when. The targets are included in each pupil's annual report to ensure that home and school can work together to support and encourage each child. The school's policy and procedures comply fully with the special educational needs Code of Practice. Individual education plans are in place. They are used systematically to guide work in lessons and pupils' progress is shared regularly with their parents.
43. Assessment procedures in other subjects are satisfactory. Except for history, they are not as systematic or embedded as those employed for English and mathematics. Work is currently underway to improve the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress in science and in information technology but progress made by groups of pupils or individuals is not monitored and evaluated as thoroughly in some foundation subjects. Neither, at present, does the school identify any gifted or talented pupils, for example, in sport, music or art to ensure their needs are appropriately met.
44. The school has rightly focused attention on the key areas of the curriculum and now has very good models on which to base future developments in assessing and monitoring pupils' academic progress in other subjects. Overall, the school's work in relation to assessment, especially in English and mathematics, has played a significant role in bringing about much needed improvement.

45. The support and guidance that pupils receive, both formal and informal are good and parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and problems. Teaching and support staff know the pupils well and respond to their needs. The under-fives, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language receive very good support.
46. School policies and procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are effective and there is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. The 'cabin' and the work of the behaviour support co-ordinator provide a beneficial environment for the minority of pupils with behavioural difficulties. Where pupils display challenging behaviour, for example, in Year 1, extra teaching assistance has been deployed to bring improvements. The school receives good support from the local education authority and other outside agencies to improve behaviour. The anti-bullying policy is currently being reviewed.
47. Policies and procedures for promoting health and safety and for dealing with child protection issues are good. However, some windows with rotting framework in the classrooms for Years 3 and 4 present a potential health and safety risk. The 'fruit scheme', that makes a piece of fruit available daily to infant pupils, is an excellent initiative for promoting healthy eating.
48. Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance are very good. The 'Time is Precious' leaflets that are sent to parents are particularly relevant. However, the school is continuing to focus on both attendance and punctuality as a priority.
49. Overall, procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Staff are updated on the range of policies and procedures through the staff handbook and through in-service training.
50. The procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' personal development are mainly informal, although they are being developed further within the current improvement plan for personal, social and health education.

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

51. Overall, the partnership with parents is good. Of the relatively small number of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire or who attended the parents' meeting, most have positive views of what the school provides and achieves. However, a significant minority of these parents disagree that pupils get the right amount of homework or that they are kept well informed about children's progress, and disagree that the school works closely enough with parents. The inspection evidence does not support any of these negative views.
52. There is effective communication between the school and parents, with information provided through regular newsletters, notice boards, parents' meetings and annual reports. The weekly newsletters and the half-termly newsletter are particularly good examples. Pupils' annual reports are carefully written and give parents a very clear picture of children's attainment, progress, personal development, and targets for improvement. Parents know that they can discuss issues informally with staff. The annual governors' report to parents and the school's prospectus are both informative and attractive documents. They meet statutory requirements in almost all respects, although the governor's report does not contain a statement about school security.

53. The school makes significant efforts to encourage parental involvement in the school. A good number of parents help out in classrooms and in other areas of the school. There is a very supportive Parent Teacher Association that arranges social events for parents and children and thereby raises a significant amount of money to supplement school funds. Overall, the impact of the parents' contribution to the life and work of the school is satisfactory, although the school would like to see a general improvement in the contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home, and has plans to encourage this further.

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

54. The leadership and management of the school are good. Within this overall judgement there are particular strengths in the school's monitoring and evaluation of its performance and in taking effective action. The use of the school's financial resources by the strategic management team and the governing body are satisfactory. The school has clear aims that reflect its work. Pupils learn within a secure and caring environment and an atmosphere of success that helps raise many pupils' self esteem and confidence. A very strong sense of teamwork and determination to raise pupils' achievements pervades all the staff and governing body even though the majority of teachers have joined the school within the past year and a half.
55. The former headteacher, who has only recently left, provided strong leadership and direction that has focused particularly on close monitoring and support of teaching and pupils' progress and which has been effective in raising their achievements. This aspect of the school's management is much improved since the last inspection. The school is committed to equality of opportunity, pupils are valued and respected and the school actively promotes social inclusion by responding well to pupils' diverse needs. For example, pupils new to the school mid year are provided with extra support to help them settle quickly and assess their needs. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
56. The strategic management team, consisting of four managers and the new headteacher, has adopted its current structure only from last September but they have already had a positive effect on the school's provision, especially teaching. They have clear and complementary roles in monitoring standards, teaching, links with parents and the community and curriculum planning and development, although insufficient account has been taken of the reception year in this structure; for example, to help spread the very good practice there. The new headteacher, in post for only a month, is clearly focusing her attention on raising the school's standards and pupils' achievements further.
57. Strategic managers, including those for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, monitor pupils' achievements in relation to targets set for them and take early action where necessary. Teaching and learning are monitored and supported closely, both internally, and by advisers from the local authority. This has resulted in improvements to the curriculum, for example, the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in the school. Key managers and external advisers keep the governing body informed of developments through reports and presentations. The strategic management team has undertaken a comprehensive and rigorous self-review this year and reported its findings to governors. This report brings together key strengths and weaknesses in pupils' standards compared to national benchmarks and the school's provision, especially teaching, and the findings have directly influenced the school's one year development plan. The plan is

effective in identifying appropriate priorities and key actions although two weaknesses in it are that financial resources have not been fully directed to these priorities within the plan by the governing body and there is, as yet, no longer-term strategic view evident beyond the coming year.

58. Subject managers are very committed to improving standards in their subjects. They support teaching effectively and those leading current priority subjects have analysed planning documents and pupils' work to guide the focus for their improvements. For example, the science manager has focused attention on improving pupils' investigative skills as a result of a review of teaching, curriculum plans and work samples, supported by an external consultant. Monitoring of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' standards is very well developed and effective in improving teaching and learning in English and mathematics where the national strategies are being implemented well. The management of provision for the Foundation Stage is also very good so that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds in the reception year achieve well. The governors provide time and training resources within the school's development plan to other priority subjects such as design and technology. However, the short time scale of this plan means that some subject managers do not know when they are likely to have the resources available to make the improvements they would like.
59. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties effectively. The governing body is experienced, its committee structure has clear terms of reference and governors are keen to become more involved in the life of the school. They are linked to specific year groups and to subjects. Some are visiting the school more frequently and governors have worked hard to improve the quality and range of information they receive from a wider variety of sources since the last inspection. As a result, their knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses has improved and they have also made some good appointments of staff in the past two years. The annual governors' report and the school's prospectus are both informative documents and they meet statutory requirements in almost all respects (except for a statement on school security). The governing body has a vision for the development of the school, for example, in creating closer links with the local community through its bid for an art and music facility to add to the new information technology suite. However, these goals and ambitions have not yet been consulted on, especially with parents, or become a widely shared vision amongst all those with an interest, for example, by being made explicit within a development plan for the school over a longer term.
60. The finance committee monitors the school's budget closely. Procedures for day-to-day financial management and control are good. Specific grants are used for their designated purposes and the last auditor's report described effective financial systems and some good practice with only a few minor recommendations. Planned budget surpluses in recent years have sound justifications linked to the school's new information technology suite and current projections are for a small surplus. The school has embraced most of the principles of best value. Purchases are sought from several suppliers to obtain value for money. For example, governors set up a committee to steer the development of the new information technology suite and ensured good value for money by inviting several tenders linked to clear criteria. They are also following up spending decisions to evaluate their impact on pupils. The school compares its performance with national benchmarks such as similar schools. Governors give insufficient attention to how available resources should be used more systematically and strategically to support priorities through the school's development plan.

61. The school's administrative staff and the site manager provide good support for the headteacher and staff. They are efficient and provide a welcoming atmosphere for visitors and parents. Information technology is used effectively to manage pupil information, the school's budget and other administrative tasks.
62. The school's provision for its pupils, particularly teaching and the curriculum, is good and as a result, many pupils are achieving well and the school's standards are rising. Taking account of the relatively high levels of funding provided for the school, it provides satisfactory value for money.
63. In the recent past there has been a significant turnover of staff. These changes have understandably caused some turbulence as adults and pupils get to know each other. However, there is no evidence to suggest that overall standards of teaching and learning have been adversely affected. Indeed, the school has made good progress despite frequent changes of personnel. All staff are committed to raising standards. They understand their role in bringing about improvements and are keen to improve their own standards of teaching. Staff successfully support and challenge each other and there is a buzz of excitement throughout the school.
64. The strategic management team clearly understands the importance of seeing teachers teaching in order to accurately identify areas of strength and weakness. They have wisely engaged the services of local education authority advisers in order to develop their own skills and expertise in judging the effectiveness of lessons. This strategy has been very successful. Senior teachers improved their own skills and expertise quickly and then disseminated their new knowledge and understanding effectively to colleagues. As a result, the school is able to judge its own performance effectively and make changes or modifications to improve its provision.
65. There is consistency and integrity to the school's approach to the development of teaching. Classroom observations are selected on the basis of key priorities identified in the school development plan. Outcomes are then used to identify strengths within the team and areas for professional development. Support measures are put in place and new gains are fed back to the staff. Regular reports on the overall quality of teaching and learning, including observations made by local education authority advisers, are given to staff and governors. Overall, there is mutual trust, matters are dealt with sensitively yet professionally without losing sight of the need to raise standards.
66. Support staff are valued as key players in the school's work. They are encouraged to develop their own skills and there is a commitment to life-long learning throughout the school. For example, one teaching assistant recently successfully completed an Open University course for classroom assistants. She is now passing on her new skills and expertise to others within the school.
67. Arrangements for the induction of new staff are good. Indeed, many of the national requirements for newly qualified teachers are being applied to teaching assistants and supply teachers. For example, newly appointed assistants are allocated a mentor in order to ensure that they are fully integrated in to the life of the school, understand school policies and are able to implement recognised good primary practice.
68. All elements of performance management are in place. The school has embraced this new national initiative very effectively and used it to develop further its own work on improving standards of teaching and learning. A noteworthy feature is that



objectives set for individual staff reflect a shared understanding of the school's priorities and a willingness to work together for the good of the pupils and the school as a whole. Overall, the degree of co-operation and teamwork has improved considerably over the past two years. Inspection findings are that the ethos, enthusiasm of teachers for their work and willingness to embrace new ideas demonstrates that the school has high levels of shared commitment and the capacity to improve further.

69. The adequacy of the school accommodation is unsatisfactory. The internal accommodation is clean, warm and well maintained and the displays in the classrooms and around the school are impressive. However, the classroom areas used by Years 1 and 3 are each shared by two classes, and the disruption caused by noise and general activity adversely affects the teaching and learning in both of these areas, although it is particularly apparent in Year 1. Windows in the Year 3 and 4 classrooms are potentially unsafe, so most have been fixed so that they cannot be opened. They are draughty in winter and there is insufficient ventilation in summer. There is a general lack of storage space, and pupils' cloakroom areas are very small. There is no wheelchair access to the first floor. Whilst the outdoor accommodation is generally very good, there is no outdoor large play equipment for pupils in the reception year.
70. Overall, the range and quality of learning resources are good. In history they are excellent, including an impressive variety of resources from the local history centre, artefacts and displays. In information and communication technology they are very good, being centred around the newly provided suite that is already having an impact on pupils' standards. They are good or satisfactory in all other areas, although in geography they are barely satisfactory. The accessibility of resources in some classrooms is less than adequate as they are stored in cupboards that are not conveniently sited.
71. Teachers spend a lot of time and effort supplementing school resources with others of high quality, and in ensuring that all resources are prepared and laid out in advance of lessons. Good use is also made of the wider community to enhance lessons in a number of subjects, for example, in history and physical education.

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

72. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:  
*(Paragraphs in the report referring to these issues are provided in brackets)*
1. Improve pupils' writing throughout the school, and especially for pupils in Years 1 and 2. (paras 5, 6, 89, 92)
  2. Improve the provision for information and communication technology further by:
    - improving the use made of information and communication technology within the subjects of the curriculum; (paras 9, 28, 107, 117, 129)
    - removing gaps in the school's curriculum and resources (paras 9, 10, 28, 119, 129, 146, 151)
    - providing training for teachers and support staff; (paras 119, 131)
  3. Improve the accommodation to:
    - reduce distractions and constraints on teachers caused by the shared rooms for Years 1 and 3; (paras 23, 69)

- improve the provision of large play equipment in the outside play area for pupils in the Foundation Stage. (paras 69, 83)

*Key issues 1 and 2 are priorities in the current school's development plan.*

73. Minor issues the governors may wish to take account of:

- cost priorities in the school development plan and extend the period over which it operates; (paras 57, 58, 59, 60)
- links between Foundation Stage and strategic management team; (para 56)
- challenging behaviour by a small minority of pupils; (paras 13, 20, 99, 160)
- assessment procedures in some foundation subjects; (paras 43, 138, 165, 171)
- the taught time for the curriculum in Key Stage 2 is below that recommended; (para 28)
- identification of gifted and talented pupils; (para 43)
- occasionally more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some subjects; (para 110, 113, 144, 153)
- skills of evaluation in design and technology and science; (paras 9, 29, 116, 126, 128)
- data handling, enquiry skills and problem solving in mathematics; (para 108, 111)
- repair potentially unsafe windows in Year 3 and 4 classrooms. (para 69)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	74
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	24	31	15	2	0	0
Percentage	3	32	42	20	3	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	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	333
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	102

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	26	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	23	24
	Girls	21	22	24
	Total	45	45	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (93)	87 (96)	92 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	24
	Girls	21	24	24
	Total	45	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (93)	92 (100)	92 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	33	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	23	32
	Girls	17	14	17
	Total	40	37	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (70)	66 (74)	88 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	25	30
	Girls	15	14	18
	Total	40	39	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (71)	70 (69)	86 (82)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	294
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.8
Average class size	23.8

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	13.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	333

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000 - 01
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	£
Total income	776,688
Total expenditure	768,856
Expenditure per pupil	2,166
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,641
Balance carried forward to next year	44,473

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	11.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	351
Number of questionnaires returned	71

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	45	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	58	1	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	59	14	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	58	11	11	3
The teaching is good.	31	63	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	51	27	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	48	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	48	6	3	3
The school works closely with parents.	13	61	17	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	10	56	11	3	20
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	23	66	6	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	49	13	0	14

A minority expressed concern about the impact of a small number of pupils showing poor behaviour.

Some parents were concerned that there has been a high turnover of staff in the past two years for a variety of reasons and felt that the use of temporary teachers over that time has disrupted children's education in some classes.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

74. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. The knowledgeable Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides strong leadership and has a clear vision for developing the provision further.
75. Children are admitted into the reception classes in the September of the year in which they are five. In line with locally agreed procedures they start school on a part-time basis according to their birth date. All children are attending full time by the beginning of the spring term. When they start school, teachers assess children to find out what they can do. The results of these assessments show that there are significant variations in attainment from year to year. For the current group of children it is average overall, but variable within the areas of learning. Many children have well-developed skills in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, speaking and listening, the use of information and communication technology and handling small objects. They are confident learners and enjoy exploring and investigating the world around them. Children's skills are below the levels expected in the areas of writing, handwriting, letter sounds, reading, counting and pattern work. All children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in all areas of learning. Children are well prepared for their move into Year 1. Most children are likely to achieve the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning by the end of their reception year.
76. Teaching is very good overall in all areas of learning. Planning comprehensively covers all six areas of learning of the Foundation Stage and identifies clearly what the children are expected to learn. A strong emphasis is placed on children learning through actively engaging with their environment. They are encouraged to interact, explore and investigate. Very good support from teachers, and teaching assistants, ensures that children remain focused, and learn very well in most aspects of their work. Children are expected to behave well, act responsibly, and work hard. All adults act as very good role models, they work very well together as a team, and all relationships are very good. Sessions move at a good pace and are very well organised. Regular assessments made by teachers are used very effectively to monitor all children's progress and inform their planning. As a result, the rich variety of planned activities is well matched to the children's learning needs. Teachers have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of how young children learn. They are very competent in the teaching of basic skills. All adults are skilled at using open-ended questioning to guide children's thinking and help them develop a very positive attitude to learning. The two classrooms are organised to cover all of the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. Children are actively encouraged to access and put away their own resources, and to interact with them. Overall resources are plentiful, of good quality and used very well. However, the lack of outdoor play equipment limits the opportunities for the secure, safe outdoor play area to be used to its full potential as a learning environment.
77. Children enjoy school. They are proactive learners and respond very well to the activities planned by their teachers. They think that school is fun. Children actively take responsibility for their learning and confidently make decisions about which activities they are they are going to be involved in, and how they are going to

complete them. They become very competent at organising their own time. They are enthusiastic and work very hard.

78. Most children attend pre-school groups. Teachers have good relationships with these groups and a well-organised induction programme ensures that children settle into school life very quickly. Parents are provided with good information about the routines of the school day, and the activities their children will be engaged in. They receive regular high quality reports on their children's progress. The end of year reports for children in the Foundation Stage are particularly informative. Children contribute to their own report, future targets are set and parents are invited to respond. Parents support their children's learning in a variety of ways. They help them care for class pets over weekends and during holidays. Through sharing books, which are taken home on a daily basis, and by reading with them in school, they help children to learn to read and to develop a love of books. Parents regularly accompany children on visits and provide objects to support topics their children are involved in.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

79. Many children start school with well-developed skills in this area of learning. The imaginative organisation of daily activities provides children with many opportunities to work in small and large groups. They quickly learn to co-operate and consider the needs of others. They enjoy working in harmony and are keen to help each other. When playing games they take turns and share, showing a good understanding of the need for rules and a sense of fair play. They have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong. Disputes are very rare. Relationships with each other and adults are very good. In a range of situations children initiate conversations and negotiate. For example, in their role play, they discuss who will take on the roles of 'The Three Bears'. They find a solution for additional children who want to play, by deciding that they will be visiting cousins. All children concentrate for extended periods of time, in both teacher directed activities and those of their own choosing. They are able to plan their own activities and communicate their ideas to others. Children's self-help skills are well developed. They work independently, behave responsibly, and confidently select their own resources. They seek the help of adults when necessary, confident in the knowledge that they will be well supported.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

80. When they start school the skills of a significant minority of children are below the levels expected in some aspects of this area of learning. In particular, they have limited knowledge and understanding of writing, handwriting, reading and letter sounds. Effective use of structured schemes and focused, stimulating learning opportunities ensures that children achieve well. By the end of their reception year most children are likely to reach the expected levels, and some will exceed them. Children learn about letters and the sounds that they make. Ample opportunities are provided for them to handle and explore books. They understand that print conveys meaning, and that the title of the book is printed on the front cover. Children make good progress in learning to read. By the end of their reception year most can read simple texts accurately, and talk about stories that are well known to them. They enjoy stories and listen very attentively. Adults provide a very effective level of support to increase children's speaking, and listening skills. They become good communicators and use increasingly complex vocabulary appropriately. Many opportunities are organised to help children develop their writing skills. They make



lists in the role-play area, make cards, and write letters and stories. Their developing skills in this area are well supported by adults, who help them to write individual letters correctly, and spell simple, frequently used words.

### **Mathematical development**

81. On entry to the reception classes, children's attainment in this area is variable. Many children are unable to count and recognise numbers. The very effective provision ensures that children achieve well, and most are likely to reach the expected goals by the end of their reception year. A rich variety of activities provide opportunities for focused learning of skills, solving problems and independent exploration. For example, children learn about addition through combining groups of objects, and about subtraction when buying items from 'a shop'. They order and compare sizes when playing with Russian dolls, and have many opportunities through the day to learn to count accurately and recognise numbers. Interactive displays encourage children to recognise numbers and make sets of a given number of objects up to ten. They experience larger numbers when playing games, and learn the names of simple two-dimensional shapes through practical activities. Adults are very skilled at helping children learn the vocabulary of mathematics and frequently pursue opportunities throughout the day in a range of situations. For example, when comparing the weights of teddy bears children learn to describe them as heavier or lighter. In dance sessions children respond to instructions using positional language, and understand the meaning of the word 'rotate'.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

82. Provision for this area of learning is very good and effectively promotes learning through interaction, exploration and problem solving. Most children are likely to exceed the expected goals in most aspects of this area of learning, by the end of their reception year. Children investigate natural and man-made objects and materials using all their senses. They look closely at live giant African land snails using magnifying lenses and take responsibility for their care at weekends and during holidays. They describe the texture of bread and compare different kinds of honey when making sandwiches. When making hats and bags for their teddy bears they show very well developed skills. They select materials and choose appropriate ways of joining them giving reasons for their choices. They alter and adapt designs as necessary to ensure that their task is successfully completed. Children co-operate very well in these activities. They evaluate their work through discussion and make suggestions for improvements. Children confidently use everyday technology. They operate listening centres, computers and programmable toys. Children use their imagination well when building and constructing with found materials and manufactured kits. Good use is made of the school and the wider local environment to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the local area. When studying buildings they walk around the immediate locality and identify shops and different types of housing. Children have a well-developed sense of community and learn about the cultures and beliefs represented within it. However, insufficient opportunities are planned for to help children learn about people with disabilities and the variety of cultures and beliefs represented in Britain today.

### **Physical development**

83. Children's attainment in this area of learning is good and most are likely to exceed the expected goals by the end of their reception year. The practical emphasis placed on all planned activities fully supports their learning, by providing many

opportunities for children to practise and build on skills they have already learned. In dance lessons children control their movements very well. They move backwards, forwards and sideways and create and hold a variety of balances, which they then perform to musical accompaniment. Very good teaching strategies ensure that children learn to move in a controlled and co-ordinated way. When moving they show a well-developed awareness of space and each other. Good resources ensure that children have many opportunities to develop their control over objects. They build with small equipment, and handle paintbrushes and pencils with increasing skill. The secure, safe outdoor play area is used well whenever the weather permits. The lack of cover means that it cannot be used every day. When playing outside children skilfully control large wheeled toys. However, they are unable to practise their climbing skills on a regular basis, due to the lack of large outdoor play equipment.

### **Creative development**

84. Provision for this area of learning is very good. Children achieve very well because activities are planned that allow them to communicate their feelings and use their imagination. Adults are skilled at using open-ended questions to encourage children to talk about what they can see, feel and think. Children work co-operatively in their role play and use their imagination well to develop and enact a story. In dance sessions they move with expression and imagination to music. They sing songs and rhymes from memory, and accompany themselves using musical instruments. A wide range of media is provided to enable children to express their ideas and work in two and three dimensions. They confidently use paint, pastel and chalk, and express delight at the feel of paint to which porridge has been added. Using found materials they create imaginative models based on their own experiences. When handling natural objects they talk about how they feel and look. By the end of their reception year most children are likely to exceed the expected goals in this area of learning.

### **ENGLISH**

85. Standards in English are broadly average throughout the school. Some children start school with good vocabulary and some well developed pre-school skills but children's literacy skills for most are a little below those expected of children aged four.
86. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven and 11 year old show that standards have been steadily rising at Highbury Primary School. The results for seven year olds rose dramatically from well below average in 1998 to above average in 2000, although there was a dip in 2001. The results for 11 year olds show a similar picture. Results have been below, or well below average over the past few years but they rose to broadly average levels in 2001. The school's success in raising standards is due in large part to the emphasis placed on teaching basic skills and implementing the National Literacy Strategy effectively. The indications are that standards are improving year on year and the school is better placed to meet its targets.
87. The results of the national tests for seven year olds in 2001 show that standards were below the national average and that pupils do better in reading than in writing. Furthermore, the results show that not enough pupils achieve the higher level (Level 3) in reading or writing. When the school's results for seven year olds are compared

- with those from other similar schools the picture remains the same. Pupils at Highbury achieved below average standards in reading and well below in writing and the percentage reaching the higher level was disappointing, being below average in reading and well below average in writing.
88. The results of the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 2001 show that standards were about average when compared with both the national figures and with those from similar schools. The statutory target set by the school in 2001 was not quite met. This particular cohort made at least satisfactory progress in relation to their test results at Year 2. In 2001, Year 6 boys achieved better than girls. However, this cohort had significantly more boys than girls and the figures should be viewed with caution. The statutory target for 2002 is set higher, with 78 per cent targeted to reach the expected level. There are a significant number of pupils (about one third) who are identified by the school as having special educational needs in this cohort, a number of whom entered the school recently so that this is a particularly challenging target for the school.
  89. Inspection findings broadly reflect recent test results. Throughout the school, standards in English are about average, but they are better in reading than they are in writing. Pupils make satisfactory progress up to Year 2 and good progress in Year's 3 to 6. Those identified as having special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and are well supported. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls or between those from different backgrounds.
  90. At the time of the last inspection, standards achieved in literacy were judged to be below what is expected nationally. The school has been committed to raising standards, particularly in writing and this remains a key priority in the school's development plan. Standards by the age of 11 are now broadly average in reading, writing, speaking and listening. This represents good improvement since then.
  91. Pupils of all ages at Highbury have very positive attitudes to reading. Their achievements are at least satisfactory by the age of seven years and many pupils achieve well in later years and especially in Years 5 and 6. They talk openly about their favourite authors and books. Many have well-developed reading habits at both home and school. The school library is a favourite place for many and a significant minority of pupils are regular visitors to the public library in Cosham. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils are reading fluently at the expected level and use a wide range of strategies for decoding unfamiliar words. One seven year old took great delight in explaining how he 'cracked tricky words' by breaking them into smaller words or sounds, looking at the pictures, fitting in a word that would make sense or asking a grown up! By the age of 11 pupils are clearly 'hooked on reading'. They have favourite authors, novels or types of books. They confidently explain their likes and dislikes and discuss at a literal level how different authors develop characters, themes and plots. They are also discerning critics of films based on popular books such as Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings' and J K Rowling's Harry Potter stories. They compare and contrast each method of story telling and confidently explore strengths and weaknesses in both. The school's success in this respect is due to a number of factors that work well together to create a conducive atmosphere for learning. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good role models and they successfully pass on their enthusiasm for reading to pupils. The range of books on offer is modern, in good supply and attractively displayed. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in their own children's learning and many do so. The school keeps careful records of how well pupils are making progress and take prompt action if pupils fall behind.

92. Over the past few years, developing pupils' writing skills has been a focus in literacy lessons and across all subjects of the curriculum. Standards of writing by the age of seven are improving but are still below average. They are about average by the age of 11. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory by the age of seven but many are achieving better later in Years 5 and 6. Throughout the school, pupils form letters correctly, write in a joined fluent script, and spell common words accurately. There is a uniform approach to presentation and work in exercise books is neat, tidy and well ordered. Draft books are a noticeable feature throughout the school and pupils are increasingly able to improve their work in a logical and systematic way. This attention to the basic skills of handwriting, spelling, punctuation, drafting and re-drafting contributes significantly to the work done by the school in raising standards because pupils are able to organise their thinking and communicate ideas quickly and successfully.
93. The work done in literacy lessons enables pupils to understand different styles and functions of writing and methods of presentation such as reporting, narrating, persuading or complaining. This is supported well through the work done in other subjects such as science, history and information technology. Reports, recipes, letters, posters, instructions and diagrams regularly occur in exercise books or displays. During a Year 2 lesson pupils were able to develop the characters in the story of Little Red Riding Hood, using interesting adjectives. They successfully produced sentences for a poster such as: *The wolf is vicious and has cunning plans to trick kind people. Granny Annie is very kind, sweet and gentle.* In Year 6 pupils wrote convincing horoscopes using phrases such as: *there are important implications for you, you should be expansive and project far ahead, powerful energies confirm, etc.*
94. There are indications that the improvement work on pupils' writing is having an impact and is beginning to work its way up through the school. For example, some pupils' work in Year 5 is already at the level of those in Year 6. A good indication of this was in the Year 5 lessons on legends. Pupils' imaginations were fired and they were able to use interesting vocabulary such as *migrate, destroy, valuable, careless*, and evocative phrases including: *fangs dripping with blood, late one misty night, and running as fast as lightning.* Indeed, one pupil identified as having special educational needs wrote: *Agamemnon plunged his spear in to the dragon's drumming heart.*
95. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory but given the potential demonstrated by achievements in reading, they could be higher. Pupils generally progress at a satisfactory rate as they move up through the school. In the main, pupils of all ages at Highbury talk freely and confidently. They willingly participate in class discussions and are keen to share their ideas or views. Teachers include everyone in lessons, value all contributions and use correct or incorrect answers skilfully to reinforce teaching points. This positive ethos enables pupils of all ages and abilities to offer suggestions without the fear of ridicule or embarrassment. This is a significant factor in fostering good attitudes and enabling pupils to make sound progress. When guided and prompted by teachers, and teaching assistants, pupils use correct terms such as adverbs, adjectives, homonyms and apostrophes. They can also be encouraged to use interesting and powerful vocabulary. However, these skills are not fully embedded so that they form a natural part of the pupils' normal methods of communication. The school has identified this and lesson plans show an increasing emphasis on linking the key skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. A Year 6 lesson with the middle ability set of pupils' demonstrates this well.

Pupils were asked to compose a story. Then, a process of elimination selected a winner. Pupils were required to practise reading their stories aloud, constructively criticise each other's efforts and grade the pieces against strict criteria. This activity successfully combined the key literacy skills and provided good opportunities for pupils to develop higher level skills such as paying close attention to what others say, asking questions to develop ideas and making valid contributions using standard English.

96. Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of English are very good. They are keen and eager to engage in lessons, persevere with tasks and increasingly produce work of at least a satisfactory standard in terms of quantity and quality. They take pride in their work, keep books in good condition and follow the school's presentation policy well. This positive picture is achieved in the main through teachers' high but not unrealistic expectations of behaviour and conduct generally, their enthusiasm for the subject and the choice of interesting texts for use in lessons. Indeed, Year 5 pupils were so motivated and inspired in one lesson that they spontaneously cheered when told it was their turn to write!
97. The quality of teaching is good with very good features. It is of a particularly high standard in Years 5 and 6. For example, in Year 5 lessons on legends, the teachers enlivened the lessons through their own dramatic and captivating interpretations of the texts. They used very precise, focused questions, very good demonstration and excellent exposition to ensure that their pupils grasped the structure and exaggeration needed when writing a legend. They were firm yet fair when dealing with minor discipline matters. The skill, time and expertise of teaching assistants was used to good effect. Overall, their high expectations were met and work of a high standard was produced by pupils.
98. Teachers have embraced the National Literacy Strategy and use the techniques suggested in it to good effect. The most striking features of literacy lessons are that teachers know precisely what they want pupils to learn. They share these learning objectives and success criteria with their classes and use them to guide the lesson, particularly during plenary sessions. They choose tasks and activities that will appeal to the ages and interest levels of their pupils, and set a brisk, lively pace to ensure that time is used productively. A recent focus for improvement has been on the use of effective questioning techniques. The local education authority adviser's input has been very effective. In most literacy lessons, teachers used questioning skills effectively to assess pupils' level of knowledge and understanding, check on new learning and pace the lesson appropriately.
99. In contrast to this generally good level of teaching and learning, one lesson observed was unsatisfactory. The good lesson plan, with clear objectives and appropriate planned teaching strategies, could not be implemented satisfactorily because pupils' behaviour was not managed adequately. As a result, pupils learned little.
100. Throughout the school, marking and oral feedback to pupils is used effectively to enable pupils to know what they have done well and what they need to improve. This, together with the school's policy of actively involving pupils in their own learning through agreeing targets is instrumental in improving standards. All pupils spoken to during the inspection could explain their own targets and these were found to correspond very well with targets recorded in the annual report to parents. Homework is also used effectively to enhance learning. For example, Year 2 pupils were asked to design a wanted poster to extend their work on developing story

characters and Year 6 pupils were asked to prepare their written stories ready for publication.

101. The English manager provides very strong leadership. The work undertaken on assessment and self-review led by her has been instrumental in bringing about much needed improvements since the last inspection. The school's procedures for assessment in English are a strength of the school. Test results and teacher assessments are analysed regularly. The school knows where pupils are in terms of National Curriculum levels and where they should be at the end of each year. Progress towards the end of year targets is regularly reviewed and adjustments made to curriculum plans, teaching methods and support structures when necessary. Teachers check their assessments for validity and moderate work so that the criteria for each National Curriculum level is understood and used with accuracy across the year groups. A significant feature of the work in English is the commitment to improving the school's ability to judge its own performance. The English manager has worked closely with the local education authority's adviser to improve her own skills in judging the quality of teaching and learning. These skills have been successfully disseminated to colleagues and all teachers are now actively involved in judging standards and agreeing appropriate ways forward.

## **MATHEMATICS**

102. In the national tests in 2001 for seven year olds, pupils' standards were above average when compared to national figures, and also in comparison to similar schools. For 11 year olds, the school's performance was in line with the national average, but below that when compared to similar schools. There were no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. The trend in these results for the period 1998 to 2001 shows a steady improvement in standards by the age of seven and 11. The performance of seven year olds has consistently exceeded the national average. The performance for 11 year olds has been rising in recent years at a rate above the national trend, although there was a dip last year when the school set a challenging target for 2001 that was not met.
103. At the time of the last report in January 2000, standards were judged to be in line with the national expectations at age seven, with a good improvement in Key Stage 1 results. At age 11, pupils' standards were below the national average. Current inspection evidence indicates that standards overall for both seven and 11 year olds are in line with national expectations. The standards for pupils at age seven have been maintained and there has been an improvement in the standards for 11 year olds since the last inspection.
104. Most pupils enter the reception class with levels of ability in number below those expected for children of their age. Most pupils achieve well as they build up their skills and understanding. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching, linked in part to the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, have had a positive impact on pupils' progress. There is also good support for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
105. By the age of seven, most pupils demonstrate sound understanding of place value and of ordering numbers to 100. Year 1 pupils show their sound knowledge of ordering numbers one to ten as they enjoy playing the 'Guess my number game'. Year 2 pupils count on and backwards in tens, with higher attaining pupils starting at 115, and lower attaining pupils starting at ten, up to and above 200, and back.

Higher and average attaining pupils can use mental strategies to solve number problems involving money, such as the cost of two or three articles. Year 1 pupils develop their vocabulary of mass - 'weighs', 'heavy', 'light', when using a balance and multi-link cubes to check the relative mass of objects such as a rubber or pen. Most Year 2 pupils using a ruler are able to measure the length of objects; can recognise halves and quarters when shapes are shaded; and can match names to two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes.

106. Pupils become increasingly proficient in the use of the four operations as they pass through Key Stage 2. In Year 3, less able pupils can use two, three and four times tables to derive division facts. They also demonstrate a good understanding of three-dimensional shapes, and the teacher uses real life packages, for example, cuboid package containing cubes of Oxo, to support learning. Year 4 pupils measure and calculate the area of simple shapes using counting methods. In discussion, many demonstrate their understanding of why 'we might need to work out the area', such as supplying the right size of a 'carpet when moving home'. Many Year 5 pupils use partitioning successfully when mentally adding two digit numbers, and higher attaining pupils can subtract numbers equally well, such as  $54 - 28$ . Average and many lower attaining pupils showed they could listen carefully and successfully visualise two shapes. *'Think of a square base pyramid, on top of a cube, with faces the same area as the base of the pyramid. This combined shape is then sliced vertically from peak point of pyramid: draw the shape of the exposed face'*. Most Year 6 pupils have good skills in ordering numbers including negative numbers, and also fractions. More able and average pupils can use percentages to compare fractions, for example, to decide if  $15/20$  is larger than  $7/10$ . By the age of 11, most pupils are able to use a calculator and inverse methods to check their results.
107. The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in mathematics is not strongly developed. Year 6 pupils commonly use calculators to check their calculations. Year 1 pupils work successfully with a programme in the information and communication technology suite on number bonds up to 10, 20, 50 or 100. Otherwise there is limited use by pupils of classroom-based computers in mathematics lessons. Teachers make a useful contribution to pupils' literacy through their careful use of mathematical vocabulary and by the way they encourage pupils to express ideas clearly and unambiguously.
108. Pupils' data-handling skills are developed to a limited degree in some other subjects, such as the construction of block and line graphs in science. Currently there are too few opportunities for data handling to enable pupils to engage in more practical and investigative work in mathematics.
109. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, it is good and sometimes very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The improvement in the teaching has had a positive effect upon pupils' learning and achievements, although there are still variations in pupils' progress in some year groups. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy was demonstrated within every lesson showing some elements of good practice derived from it. Strengths in teaching include careful planning, with clear identification of learning objectives for the lesson shared with pupils. Every lesson follows the three-part structure with a plenary session. The best lessons allow sufficient time in the plenary to involve pupils fully in judging how successfully they have, or have not, achieved the learning objectives. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and they commonly use their day-to-day assessment to inform their

planning and teaching so that pupils' of different abilities learn equally well. In most lessons, learning is enjoyable, and is enlivened by individual approaches and imaginative teaching: the mounting expectancy of Year 1 pupils waiting to see when the balance would be equal as cubes were added to one side; the concentration of Year 4 pupils when visualising the three-dimensional shape hidden in bags as it was being described; or the relaxed way in which Year 6 pupils confidently come up to the white board to show their working, having been addressed as 'Carol', after Carol Vorderman.

110. Lessons typically offer work set for different levels of ability. There are a few occasions when more able pupils could be more fully extended in their group work. Teachers' marking of work has improved, with comments made that guide pupils on ways in which they can improve.
111. The subject is led well. The subject manager, who is new to the position since September, provides a good level of staff development and support. Although she has not had much opportunity so far to be involved in the monitoring of teaching, she has been involved in monitoring the subject's performance and pupils' work that is focusing her priorities in raising standards. There are some aspects of the curriculum that are less emphasised and where pupils' achievements are consequently not as good. These include pupils' skills of independent enquiry and problem solving, and skills in data handling within mathematics and in other subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

112. In 2001 the standards achieved in the national tests for 11 year olds were in line both with those nationally and with similar schools. Higher attaining pupils also achieved the standards expected. Pupils' standards have been rising in the past three years at a rate above the national trend. Although boys have achieved better than girls in the past three years, there have also been significantly more boys in these cohorts, especially in 2001 and this difference in standards may not therefore be significant.
113. Inspection findings confirm that recent past standards and trends are being maintained. Pupils' standards by the age of seven and 11 are at least in line with those nationally. Many pupils, including those with special educational needs are achieving well. Pupils progress well in their knowledge and understanding within all the main areas of science as well as in their skills of enquiry, although pupils' higher investigative skills in Years 5 and 6, such as evaluating the quality of their evidence and suggesting improvements to experiments are not as well developed.
114. Pupils in Year 1 know that objects cannot be seen without light and that light comes from a source. When investigating light reflecting from different coloured clothing, many pupils are able to record in simple tabulations, and conclude that light coloured clothing is best for being seen in the dark. More able pupils consider how to make their comparisons fair because they are guided well by the good open questioning of teachers and support teachers. Pupils in Year 2 know about some properties of materials such as melting and freezing through their investigations. In a well planned and managed practical lesson, pupils observed carefully while several foods such as chocolate, sugar and butter were heated and then cooled. Many observed changes such as bubbles and colour changes as they melted and more able pupils predicted that some would melt more quickly than others. Few could say whether these changes were reversible when the foods were cool again. Pupils' descriptive



and scientific vocabulary is developed well because teachers highlight and display key words and encourage pupils to use them in their answers.

115. By Year 4, pupils understand simple electrical circuits and can draw them using symbols for each component. They know that some materials conduct electricity, can name some insulators and describe how they are used to keep people safe from electrical shock. Many are confident when assembling circuits as when Year 4 pupils made circuits for a set of traffic lights and made a puzzle board that showed a light on when a correct answer was connected to a question. By Year 6, many pupils can measure and describe forces such as friction; gravity and those forces needed to stretch materials and they can investigate them in a fair way. More able pupils explain some effects of various series circuits such as when adding resistance wire. Many Year 6 pupils are also secure in their understanding of food chains and the flow of energy within them. They use correct vocabulary when describing relationships between animals and plants, for example, predator and prey, producer and consumer, and they speculate and predict the effects of one animal or plant dying out on the rest of the food chain.
116. Pupils' enquiry skills develop well from the age of five so that by the age of seven, many pupils understand the need for a fair test when investigating and they observe and record their findings. In Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils develop their investigative skills further so that the great majority become competent in making predictions in a range of different contexts, plan fair tests to gather evidence and draw conclusions from evidence. By Year 6, while many pupils are competent in their enquiry skills, few are considering the range of measures necessary to be able to conclude patterns from evidence, or repeating measures and thinking about how their experiments could be improved. This is mainly because of weaknesses in the planning for these higher skills to meet the needs of older and more able pupils.
117. Pupils enjoy science. In most lessons, they are encouraged to think for themselves, speculate about what is happening and explain their reasoning. For example, Year 4 pupils were given a range of challenges to solve by their teacher in their final lesson on electricity so that she could assess their understanding. Pupils of all abilities co-operated well in groups, responding very well to the challenging tasks set, and supported each other through their group discussions. Some aspects of pupils' numeracy skills are promoted well in science, for example, where pupils in Year 2 plot bar graphs of eye colour in the class and Year 6 pupils measure changing forces and plot line graphs of their results. However, information technology is not used sufficiently in science in some key areas. Pupils occasionally use databases to process and display information and they communicate information for an audience for example, when designing plant guides for seed germination. But pupils from the age of seven do not gather and display environmental information from experiments using sensors and know little about how scientists use data-logging techniques in their work.
118. Teaching and learning in science are good. Teachers plan carefully around clear objectives for lessons that include pupils' investigative and recording skills. Lessons are well structured and most teachers have high expectations of pupils so that they are appropriately challenged and work at a good pace. Teachers make very good use of questions to check pupils' recent learning as well as to encourage them to speculate and to explain their ideas. Pupils are generally managed well so that good use is made of time and group work is productive. In the less effective teaching, class discussions tend to be too long so that pupils lose concentration and the pace of work slows. Teachers are using resources such as activity sheets from a newly

introduced published scheme effectively to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. New scientific vocabulary is introduced well, as when a Year 6 class learning about food chains, used a range of cards to assemble various food chain relationships and label their features. Their teacher constantly recapped the key terms during the lesson and encouraged pupils to use them when discussing or responding to questions. As a result, pupils quickly learned these new terms. Marking is generally good. Teachers provide constructive feedback that helps pupils to improve. Homework for older pupils effectively extends and develops learning in lessons, for example, in applying learning about food chains in a homework sheet for Year 6.

119. Improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory with some recent effective work that has improved teaching and pupils' learning. The science subject manager, who is relatively new to this responsibility, is well qualified and provides good leadership. With the help of a local authority consultant, she has monitored teaching and pupils' work, identified weaknesses and taken effective action that is improving the teaching of skills in investigative science. Pupils' progress is now being assessed more systematically and the foundations laid for close monitoring of their achievements. Curriculum plans provide good support for teachers although more could be done to ensure pupils' skills in investigative science develop further in Years 5 and 6. Resources for the subject are good except for information technology where the school has no equipment for logging data using sensors. Teachers have not yet been sufficiently trained to make effective use of information technology in the subject.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

120. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In some aspects of art and design some pupils achieve above the expected levels. In addition, inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving although these improvements have yet to work fully through the school.
121. In Year 1, pupils learn to draw accurate shapes and add texture to their work. They draw houses paying good attention to detail by adding features such as roof tiles. They are able to control pencils accurately and achieve well. In Year 2, pupils explore printing techniques using printing pads, ink and textured objects. They learn that strongly textured objects make the best prints, and that care needs to be taken to spread ink evenly on the pad. When working with clay they roll it out carefully using wooden guides, and experiment with tools to create textured effects.
122. Pupils' skills in the use of tools and materials develop well as they progress through the school. In Year 3 they layer pastels and use a range of tools to drag away the top layer of pastel to create specific effects. In Year 4, pupils explore different resist techniques. They use masking tape and ink to generate designs. Additional layers of resist and ink are added to produce more complicated designs. They learn about the techniques involved in Batik, and use their sketchbooks to develop designs for their work. Pupils in Year 5 colour mix paint with increasing accuracy. They explore the qualities of charcoal as a drawing medium while studying the work of Auguste Rodin. They produce large sketches to match his style that show an appreciation of shape, form and movement. The drawing skills of many Year 6 pupils are well developed. They produce pencil portraits of good quality. They demonstrate well-developed skills and an understanding of the techniques needed to draw accurately.

123. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. They enjoy art and design activities and work conscientiously. Pupils are keen to improve and take pride in the work they produce. They are enthusiastic, share ideas and eagerly discuss how their work might be improved. They respond well to advice given by their teachers. Pupils regularly use computer programs to enhance their work. For example, Year 2 pupils learn the techniques of drawing and flooding while producing work in the style of Mondrian.
124. Teaching of art and design is good overall with some very good features. Teachers have good subject knowledge, manage pupils well and lessons proceed at a good pace. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils and clear instructions are given. In the best lessons, pupils are aware of the success criteria which will enable them and their teacher to judge if they have achieved the objective set. Strategies are used effectively to help pupils focus on their work. For example, in some lessons music is played to create a calm and work-like atmosphere, and teachers regularly use examples of pupils' work to illustrate good skills and techniques. The work of famous artists is used well to support pupils' learning. The artists used span a very long period of time and represent many styles. However, very little work of artists from non-western cultures is currently used, which limits the understanding pupils have of world art. Sketchbooks are used throughout the school. Whilst these are a useful record of pupils' work they are currently underused for generating and refining designs. Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development. They regularly express delight at the effects they have created, and work harmoniously in lessons. The contribution the subject makes to their cultural awareness is less well developed.
125. The subject manager is very knowledgeable and provides good support for other teachers. She has a clear vision for the development of the subject, and has developed a good scheme of work based on the teaching of skills. Inspection evidence suggests that this scheme is having a positive impact on standards as pupils move through the school. Clear learning objectives are detailed for each year group. All aspects of art and design are addressed in the scheme, although opportunities for three-dimensional work are limited to small-scale pieces. A collection of work to exemplify each of the objectives set is being compiled. This provides an effective way of monitoring the subject, and is developing into a useful assessment tool for teachers. However, these examples are not yet matched to national expectations. Resources for art and design are good and used effectively. Rising standards, the improved scheme of work, and developments in monitoring procedures represent good improvement since the last inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

126. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe three lessons, in Years 3 and 4. Consequently, there is insufficient evidence on which to base a rounded judgement of teaching quality, especially for younger pupils up to the age of seven years. On the basis of a review of samples of pupils' past work and in lessons, standards are about average compared to those nationally for pupils up to seven years and up to 11 years, and their achievements satisfactory. However, pupils' evaluation skills are not as well developed as their skills in joining and making products from resistant materials. Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection, in part due to improved curriculum planning under the leadership of a new subject manager.

127. Pupils in Year 1 cut and join materials such as paper and card accurately and to their own design when for example, they make a range of shop fronts and join them together to illustrate shops in Victorian times as part of their history topic. The colourful stripes and black-beamed shop fronts illustrate designs of the times well. Year 2 pupils use a range of joining techniques such as glue and sewing of different textiles to design and make finger puppets based on animal designs. These designs are imaginative and are securely assembled.
128. Year 3 and 4 pupils examine commercial products, disassemble them and consider appropriate materials to use when designing their own, drawing on their knowledge of these materials' properties. Teachers stimulate pupils' own ideas effectively by making available a carefully chosen range of commercially produced products that illustrate key points in designing related to their use. As a result, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are beginning to relate their ideas and designs to fitness for purpose. For example, Year 3 pupils considered ways of making a photograph frame stand securely. Pupils cut and shaped paper and card to evaluate different approaches to making it stand and ways of making a hinge using different techniques. Some pupils experimented with triangular shapes to add stability to the stand while others folded the paper in different ways to strengthen it. Year 4 pupils disassembled and examined a range of commercially produced torches before making their own. More able pupils were able to draw on their knowledge of materials well to explain how the circuit is completed within the torch and how features of the torch such as the shape of the lens, size of the torch and the material the casing is made from, make it fit for its purpose. However, older pupils from Year 4 are not yet turning their understanding of designs of commercial products into clear criteria for their own finished products to help them evaluate their work as it develops. As a result, their skills in evaluating are not as good as skills in designing, cutting, joining and assembling.
129. Pupils enjoy design and technology. They co-operate well within group activities and readily share their ideas with others in their group. They are encouraged to think for themselves and to solve problems through projects that capture their imagination. For example, every pupil in the school was involved in making and testing a wheeled vehicle with Year 6 pupils making powered vehicles as part of a technology week last summer. Their vocabulary is developed appropriately because teachers helpfully identify terms new to the subject on the board at the beginning of lessons and encourage pupils to apply and assimilate them as they work. Information technology is not used sufficiently in the subject to design, control events or to learn about its use and impact in the modern world. For example, pupils in reception and Years 1 and 2 successfully programme a powered vehicle to move in a sequence but this introduction to control technology is not yet built on in later years although it is to be introduced in Year 6 for next term.
130. Teaching and learning in the three lessons observed are at least satisfactory and there are some good features. Teachers plan lessons carefully around clear objectives for the lesson. They choose resources well to illustrate features of design in their introductory sessions with pupils. They use questioning skills effectively to challenge pupils to think and explain for themselves, for example, when comparing the design of a range of torches to explain their features in terms of their use. Teachers are careful to include pupils of all abilities in each part of the lesson and in the better lessons, adapt their questions to pupils' abilities well. Teachers convey their expectations of pupils' behaviour and work clearly so that lessons are well ordered and purposeful. Although pupils are developing their skills in evaluating

commercial products, teachers do not yet guide pupils sufficiently in how to set clear aims and criteria to help them evaluate their own products as they develop them.

131. The subject manager has been in charge for a year and provides satisfactory leadership. She monitors samples of pupils' finished products and is building a portfolio of representative work. She has improved the way in which the nationally produced scheme of work is used to guide teachers' planning in each year. As a result, there has been satisfactory improvement in standards since the last inspection. However, there is insufficient guidance provided on how pupils' skills can be built on more systematically as they move through the school. The lack of recent training for teachers in design and technology skills and in the use of information technology in the subject is also constraining further improvements in pupils' standards. However, the subject is a current priority in the school's improvement plan and a focus for development in the summer term. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and there are good resources to support food technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

132. Standards for seven year olds and 11 year olds are average compared to those nationally. Three lessons were seen during the inspection, pupils' work analysed and teachers' planning reviewed. Most pupils acquire an increasing knowledge and understanding of people, place and environments as they move through the school and achieve standards expected for their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the school.
133. In their work on the school area, Year 1 pupils develop their ideas of place and of environmental awareness. They walk around the neighbourhood to identify different features of housing and other buildings, and express simple likes and dislikes of their environment. Year 2 pupils, on the theme of holidays, use a world map to show the locations of some holidays. They consider differences between distant places and their home area.
134. The topic of holidays provides Year 3 pupils with opportunities to deepen their understanding of differing environments, and to appreciate ways in which people's activities are affected by environmental influences. Climate and weather differences are key elements in this work. Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically about the fieldwork and visits they have been on while at school. They recall their work in Year 4 when they visited Fishbourne and drew comparisons between that village locality, and Cosham.
135. Year 4 pupils worked diligently together in their groups in the follow-up of their local survey when they had used cameras to record 12 distinctive features en route. Pupils of all ability levels were able to explain their choices, and how they contributed to the nature of Cosham as a place. Mapping skills are developed further when Year 5 pupils study St Lucia. Concepts of land use, and of environmental influences, are expanded. Pupils increase their understanding of the effects of natural disasters like hurricanes. They write imaginatively about living as a child in St Lucia, extending their understanding of contrasting localities and of physical geography, and deepening their appreciation of different cultures. Skills of geographical enquiry are developed well as pupils are encouraged to plan, to be selective, and to agree priorities, as they use various information sources such as the library, Internet and geographical resources.

136. Skills of literacy are used well in many topics. There are written accounts in many topics, and group discussions, which were key learning activities in the lessons seen. Some information technology opportunities are provided by the use of cameras and the Internet.
137. On the limited evidence available, the quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the last report. Strengths of teaching and learning include the skilful but relaxed management and organisation of the lively learning activities; the good pace maintained by teachers which was adopted by very nearly all pupils; and the naturally inclusive approaches adopted by teachers to provide support for all pupils including that from their peers when working together in teams. For example, Year 6 pupils, in a topic on 'Rivers', worked well in teams, as they began a research activity on four major world rivers. Knowledge of rivers, with aspects such as pollution, wildlife, climate, transport, tourism, is expanded, along with atlas using skills.
138. The subject manager provides sound leadership for the subject. Other strengths for the subject include field visits, which pupils find motivating, and the cross subject links with other subjects such as history, for example, through the work on Fishbourne. Geography also makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. The school recognises the need to extend the monitoring, assessment, and recording of pupils' progress. Resources for geography are barely satisfactory.

## **HISTORY**

139. The last inspection judged that standards were in line with national expectations. Good progress has been made since then and pupils' standards are now above average compared to those nationally. Pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and more able pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. Pupils from all backgrounds are fully included in the subject and all have equal access to learning opportunities. Boys and girls progress at a similar rate.
140. By the age of seven, pupils can place events and objects in chronological order and use common words and phrases relating to the passage of time. Pupils in Year 1 can describe how shops have changed over time and those in Year 2 can identify differences between life in school at different times. By the age of 11, pupils can recall, select and organise historical information to describe the periods studied and use advanced investigative skills in order to search for the reasons behind changes taking place in different societies. Pupils in Year 5 can use a range of sources of information (including photographs of damage done to Portsmouth during World War II bombing raids, artefacts and letters from evacuee children on an Internet site) to gauge the feelings of people involved in the war. They can communicate their findings in a variety of ways using writing, drawing and information and communication technology. Using their knowledge and understanding, some Year 5 pupils are able to give reasons for, and results of, events and changes at a level well above that usually found.
141. By the age of seven, pupils' achievements are good. They develop knowledge and understanding of famous women and men such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille and can communicate their ideas through talking, writing and using information and communication technology. Pupils in Year 1 can recognise how

their lives are different from the lives of people in the past, as shown by their questioning of a teacher dressed as Mary Seacole, a Jamaican nurse from the Crimean War.

142. By the age of 11, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the history they have studied and achieve well. Year 3 pupils are able to apply details gathered from a visitor, playing the role of Howard Carter, to their analysis of genuine Egyptian artefacts. They use a variety of sources of information to answer questions about life in Egyptian times. Pupils using the Internet can follow the process of mummification on the British Museum site and comment on the relevance of this to their studies of actual artefacts. Pupils in Year 6 explore Tudor times through visits to the Mary Rose, Southsea Castle and the Tudor Exhibition. Using information and communication technology they produce Tudor newspapers, which detail major events from the period.
143. Pupils enjoy history and work with enthusiasm. They behave well and show respect for the feelings of others. They handle artefacts with great care and they show initiative in their historical investigations. A fine example of this is the collection of mummified Barbie dolls brought in by Year 3 pupils. Pupils use basic skills taught in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in their studies. Planning techniques, such as 'Spider Planning', are used by Year 5 pupils who are noting the range of feelings felt by evacuee children as they board trains during World War II. Year 1 pupils are using simple graphs to show changing uses of local shops. Pupils use information and communication technology skills effectively to produce information sheets and newspaper reports throughout the school.
144. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall. Teachers throughout the school have a shared commitment to improving the subject and great emphasis is placed on giving pupils first hand experiences through the use of visits to historical sites and visitors to the school who bring life and excitement to the subject. Year 1 parents bring their old toys and bears to school, Year 5 and 6 pupils enjoy Shakespeare days when staff dress in character and a legion of Roman soldiers entertain Year 4 pupils with fighting displays and an afternoon feast. Teachers further enrich the subject by providing excellent artefacts, which pupils can investigate. Teaching is most effective in lessons where pupils are motivated by the use of appropriate resources and where teachers use effective strategies to lead pupils into an understanding of historical principles. In the more effective lessons, teachers have high expectations and are more successful in helping pupils describe main events, people and changes. They provide a range of tasks for pupils with different abilities. Where the teaching is less effective, opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge more able pupils to take their ideas further. Teachers generally use time and resources well and the learning environment is enhanced by very good displays of artefacts and pupils' work.
145. The subject manager, who has excellent subject knowledge, leads the subject very well. There is a highly detailed scheme of work and the provision of resources is excellent. The subject manager has a very good store of learning materials for every area of study and she arranges for the provision of high quality artefacts from local historical centres. Class teachers monitor each pupil's progress and the subject manager keeps a tracking record showing the progress made by each pupil year on year. The high quality of available resources and the use of assessment to inform planning have a significant impact on raising standards in the subject.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

146. The previous inspection judged that by the age of seven, standards were 'below average' and average by the age of 11. Good progress has been made since then and overall, standards are now in line with national expectations throughout the school. However, there are still limited opportunities for pupils to develop skills in controlling, monitoring and modelling events, for example, gathering data from experiments in science using sensors and presenting it graphically. All pupils' progress is satisfactory.
147. By the age of seven, pupils can use information and communication technology to organise information and present their findings. They can share their ideas in different forms including text. Year 1 pupils can assemble text using the mouse to select and drag suitable endings to sentences. They can delete text and add their own ideas. Year 2 pupils can select and use graphic tools in an art programme and produce artistic images in the style of Mondrian. They can fill areas with colour and add text in the form of titles. This represents good progress since the previous inspection.
148. By the age of 11, pupils can use information and communication technology to present information in different forms and show a growing awareness of the intended audience. For example, pupils in Year 3 can import text and graphics from a word processing programme to make Egyptian fact files for other pupils. Year 5 pupils can enter data and simple formulae to a spreadsheet and answer 'what if?' questions. For example, when planning to buy food and resources for a party for ten people they can enter and alter data and create a formula in a totals box. A few pupils are able to adjust their calculations when told that 12 people rather than ten would attend. Year 6 pupils can enter text, graphics and photographs onto a personal web page that will become part of a school web site. They are able to use graphics and text successfully to produce Tudor newspapers and they can use a digital camera with skill and care. Progress has been good since the recent opening of the new information and communication technology suite in October.
149. Pupils enjoy information and communication technology. They follow instructions well and use the equipment with great care. They share resources and show good listening skills and sustained concentration. Most pupils respect and value the views and feeling of others during discussion times. Pupils use skills learned in literacy and numeracy in most of their information and communication technology lessons. Pupils in Year 1 use their understanding of full stops, capital letters and spacing between words to create, 'Silly Sentences'. They also use their knowledge of number bonds to solve mathematical additions, which total 10, 20, 50 and 100. Pupils in Year 5 use number facts involving money to calculate which party treats can be entered onto their spreadsheets without exceeding the set budget.
150. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teaching up to the end of Year 2 is sound and this represents an improvement since the last inspection when it was variable. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. Teachers throughout the school have increased their skills and this has led to growing confidence and more effective teaching and learning. Teaching is most effective when there is an emphasis on high standards of behaviour and when good use is made of the teaching assistants. In very good lessons, teachers give clear learning objectives at the start and regularly review the progress made by the pupils. In Year 6, teachers asked two pupils to repeat the learning objectives, with one operating the computer whilst the other gave instructions. This is very good practice because it helps pupils



to consolidate what they have learned. At the end of the good lessons, teachers ask the pupils to make a simple assessment of their progress. Teaching is less effective when: teachers fail to remind pupils of the appropriate behaviour required in the information and communication technology suite and how to operate the computers with care and when teachers do not allow sufficient time for pupils to appreciate their work and of others during the plenary session. Teachers generally use time and resources well and the learning environment is enhanced by very good displays of work for each year group in the information and communication technology suite and around the school.

151. The subject manager has very good subject knowledge and has a clear view of the way forward. The manager is ably helped by an assistant based in the library and by an assistant in the suite. There is a good, detailed scheme of work but there are gaps in the school's provision where pupils do not use sensors to gather and present information from the environment, neither do they learn enough about control technology or modelling events. A checklist is used to assess pupils' progress in their skills, knowledge and understanding. The development of the new information and communication technology suite has made a significant impact on raising standards and the hardware and software resources are very good. The ratio of computers to pupils meets the national requirements. There is a training programme in place, which is enhancing the skills of teachers and teaching assistants. Since the last inspection the school has been well supported and guided by the local education authority. Regular training and monitoring visits by the consultant have helped to develop the subject and raise standards.

## **MUSIC**

152. There was limited opportunity to observe lessons during the inspection. One lesson was seen in Year 2, one in Year 4 and one in Year 5. However, observations of assemblies, scrutiny of schemes of work, analysis of timetables for peripatetic music teachers and discussions with pupils were also taken into account.
153. The school offers a wide range of extra curricular music activities and pupils are encouraged to learn to play a musical instrument. These additional lessons are supported in the main by the local education authority's music service. Achievements made by pupils during these lessons contributes significantly to the standards achieved in Years 3 to 6. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are fully involved in lessons and the good relationships between teachers and pupils ensures that even the most self conscious and shy pupils are included and helped to participate fully. More able pupils, especially those who learn to play a musical instrument are not always challenged sufficiently to build on their skills in lessons because teachers take insufficient account of their needs in their planning.
154. In the lessons seen, Year 2 pupils confidently and accurately sang street market calls together, comparing their contribution to that of other performers. In Years 4 and 5, pupils developed a satisfactory appreciation and understanding of contrasting musical styles and technical vocabulary. Year 4 pupils develop their awareness of the many cultural influences affecting the range of music enjoyed in our multicultural society today through composing music in the Alap style (a study theme for Year 4). The lesson also enabled pupils to explore and enjoy the spiritual harmony brought by this type of music to listeners and performers alike.

155. Throughout the school pupils enjoy music and respond with interest. They sing enthusiastically and are generally attentive and well behaved. When given the opportunity to use instruments and perform to others, pupils are willing and eager. Simple tasks such as clapping rhythms in assemblies are performed to a satisfactory musical standard and pupils show genuine enthusiasm for these activities.
156. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Lessons are planned carefully with clear learning objectives and link well to the current scheme of work. Pupils are managed firmly but kindly. Resources are in sufficient quantity and organised well during lessons. This ensures that pupils behave well, listen carefully and are alert. They have enough instruments of good quality to gain maximum benefit from time spent playing them. In all three lessons observed a good balance was achieved between explanation, demonstration and practical application. This ensured that pupils were motivated to learn, were fully engaged in their tasks and made satisfactory progress.
157. Two new music managers now take responsibility for leading this subject. Their recent audit has rightly identified assessment and improving the school's scheme of work as areas for development. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the school was for some time without a music manager. The school has employed the skills of a specialist music teacher that are still used effectively to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching. The specialist teacher is employed to demonstrate lessons and team-teach with key teachers at Highbury Primary School. They in turn share their new knowledge and understanding with colleagues within the school. This has effectively increased the confidence and expertise of non-specialist teachers so that music continues to be taught to a satisfactory standard and pupils receive their entitlement. The strategy has ensured music has a firm place in the school's curriculum and standards of teaching and learning have not deteriorated.
158. The school has a satisfactory range of musical resources that are used appropriately in lessons. Temporary arrangements are in place for their storage pending the completion of the specialist music centre.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

159. There were no opportunities to observe physical education lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5 during the inspection, partly because of poor weather. As a result, there is insufficient evidence to enable an overall judgement to be made on the quality of teaching, or pupils' attainment and achievements for these year groups. The evidence collected through discussion and looking at planning and subject documents suggests that provision overall has been maintained, and improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
160. Standards by the age of seven are at least in line with that expected nationally and some pupils exceed them. Overall pupils' achievements are satisfactory. However, in lessons where pupil management is unsatisfactory, pupils behave badly and they do not achieve as well as they should.
161. In Year 1, pupils learn to control a ball with different parts of their body. They also learn to throw and catch the ball with increasing skill. Pupils achieve well in lessons and work hard. In a Year 2 gymnastics lesson, pupils developed a range of stretches and balances to given criteria. They made wide, narrow and curled shapes. Working with a partner, pupils explored ways in which they could link their

movements together. They worked co-operatively to create a wide variety of well executed sequences which contained, not only the stretches and balances required, but were varied in the speed of performance. Pupils confidently demonstrated their sequences to each other. They listened attentively to their teacher and worked hard. Pupils have good control over their bodies and are aware of space. Pupils achieved very well during the lesson. They successfully transferred the skills they had learned as they progressed to working on small apparatus. Pupils in Year 2 are also able to control a ball while they are travelling.

162. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons. Most respond positively, in lessons and during extra-curricular clubs. These pupils have a good attitude to the subject and work hard. Pupils are keen to represent their school and take pride in doing so. However, the attitude and behaviour of some pupils are unacceptable. They do not listen to, or carry out their teacher's instructions and as a result they learn very little in lessons.
163. Overall teaching is satisfactory. There are some good and very good features, but also some that are unsatisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and use resources appropriately. In the best lessons, pupils are well managed and good use is made of pupil demonstration to exemplify the aims of the lesson. Learning objectives are clearly communicated to pupils, activities are purposeful and conducted in a controlled and safe manner. However, in the unsatisfactory teaching, pupils are not effectively managed so that lessons become unproductive because some pupils are badly behaved.
164. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular clubs to encourage pupils to engage in physical activity for recreation. Good links with Portsmouth Football Club have resulted in lunchtime and after school football clubs, which are organised and run by professional coaches. These make a significant contribution to the school's provision and pupils' achievements, and are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils.
165. The subject manager has been in post for a very short time and is providing satisfactory leadership. She is carrying out a full review of provision for physical education across the school and has a clear vision for the development of the subject. Monitoring of the subject is in the early stages of development. The current scheme of work is satisfactory and covers all aspects of the subject, but it does not clearly identify the expected level of skills for pupils of different year groups. Assessment of pupils is currently very informal. Resources are satisfactory.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

166. The standards of seven year olds and 11 year olds are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The school has made a good improvement since the time of the last inspection when standards were below expectations, and progress was unsatisfactory in both key stages.
167. These improvements, especially the raising of standards has resulted directly from the very good action the school has taken to meet the weaknesses in provision that were then identified. The quality of teaching is now good, rather than being 'frequently unsatisfactory'. There is now a good scheme of work in place; teachers ensure the subject has appropriate curriculum time; and, in lessons observed, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

168. Pupils study world faiths and are always encouraged to consider their own responses to the rituals, ceremonies, and beliefs they learn about. Their ability to reflect upon their own experiences and those of others is well developed. Year 2 pupils listen to the story of Zaccheus and engage in role play. In the concluding part of the lesson they can suggest why the story is important to Christians, what it tells us about Jesus, and what it tells us about ourselves. They understand that the concept of forgiveness is one element, and can reflect on this in relation to their own experiences. Year 4 pupils also engage in role play of the Seder Meal, when learning about symbols and celebrations important to Jews in the festival of Pesach, celebrating the Exodus and their freedom.
169. The very good contribution that religious education makes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development was also illustrated in a Year 5 class when a Muslim visitor answered questions about the Qu'ran. The manner in which pupils asked questions and valued the responses, showed their respect for, and interest in, the beliefs and traditions of other faiths. It showed too, the way pupils can develop their understanding of the importance of sacred objects in the lives of some groups of people. Year 6 pupils, thinking about the existence and characteristics of God, shared what comes to mind and their ideas about Him - or Her. Working individually or in pairs, they then presented their thoughts through poetry to be shared in the following lesson.
170. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers make good links with literacy. Opportunities for writing include writing in role as disciples of Jesus (Year 2), invitation letters to Sukkot (Harvest) celebration (Year 3), and developing a class acrostic poem to feature 'Revelation' (Year 5). There are also many opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills in class discussions and in sharing their work. Other strengths of the good quality teaching include the use of resources and the methods adopted to engage pupils' interest, and build their confidence to be fully involved. For example, Year 2 pupils enjoyed their 'hot seating' activities featuring Zaccheus, and Year 4 pupils gained from their working with artefacts. Teachers are also concerned to build relationships between pupils and ensure the inclusion and involvement of all by their careful attention to the organisation of groups.
171. The subject manager provides good leadership in supporting and promoting improvements in religious education provision within the school. She has made good use of the guidance offered by the local education authority. However, pupils are not yet assessed formally to guide their progress and to help the subject manager focus better on areas of development in standards for the subject.