

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BEECHWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Bitterne, Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116087

Headteacher: Mr J R Dunn

Reporting inspector: Ms Diane Wilkinson  
23048

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001

Inspection number: 230415

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Juniper Road Bitterne Southampton Hants
Postcode:	SO18 4EG
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Weet
Date of previous inspection:	19 <sup>th</sup> October 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23048	Ms Diane Wilkinson	Registered inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13911	Mrs Julie Gallichan	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? – Personal development aspect How well does the school care for its pupils? – Care aspect How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18706	Mrs Janet Gill	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
3505	Mrs Christine Hall	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music	
31218	Dr Tom Allen	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education	How well does the school care for its pupils? – Assessment aspect
31046	Mrs Christine Nuttall	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? – Curriculum aspect

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>30</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school has 378 full time pupils (190 boys and 188 girls) in the 14 classes in Years 3 to 6. It is smaller than when it was last inspected. The proportion of pupils (29.6 per cent) with special educational needs (SEN) is above the national average. One pupil has a specific statement of need. The 14.4 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals is around average. About 3.6 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), which is higher than at the last inspection and is slightly above average. The proportion of pupils joining the school after the normal entry point or leaving before the end of Year 6 is around 14 per cent, which is fairly high. The school serves an area with a broad social mix, although very few pupils come from an above average background. Overall attainment on entry varies considerably, being closely linked to the number of SEN pupils in the year group and it is rarely above average. Considering the school as a whole, it is slightly below average and below the level seen at the last inspection.

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

Beechwood is an effective school, which has worked very hard over the past three years to bring about good improvements in its work. Its success is due to the exceptional management, which has been very well supported by all who work in the school. The results are clearly seen in the good provision, particularly in teaching, and in the very good personal development of pupils. The outcome of this is that pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are very good. They now achieve well, make good progress and reach average standards by the time they leave. The capacity for the school to improve further is very good. It currently gives good value for money, which is an improvement since the last inspection.

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

- The high levels of good, very good and excellent teaching which lead to good learning and progress.
- The very good provision for pupils' personal development resulting in the very good attitudes and behaviour, and excellent the relationships seen.
- The broad and rich curriculum that is available to all pupils, including the very good SEN and EAL provision.
- The care the school gives its pupils, especially in the excellent monitoring of behaviour and attendance.
- The excellent leadership and management, which are fully supported by the whole school community.
- The very good quality of the accommodation, and the expertise and contribution of all staff in the school.

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

- The presentation of written work, especially the handwriting and spelling.
- The expectations of and the work set for the most able pupils.
- The consistency in the quality of marking, and some assessment procedures.
- Opportunities for pupils to use their information and communication technology skills in other subjects.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has improved well since it was last inspected in October 1999. It has addressed most of the weaknesses identified then. Some of them, such as the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the middle management structure, have improved very well. The impressive improvement in the attitudes and behaviour of pupils is significantly supporting the improvement in learning. Standards have improved and most eleven-year-old pupils now reach average standards. However, although writing has improved, handwriting and spelling are still not good enough. Assessment procedures are now good, although they are not used sufficiently to help provide for the needs of the most able pupils, and there are inconsistencies in the quality of marking, although it has improved this term. Very good improvement has been made to the accommodation, which has created a positive learning environment.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	E	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D Well below average E
mathematics	C	E	E	E	
science	E	D	C	C	

Results have been improving over the last six years, at a better rate than most schools nationally. In 2000, an average proportion of pupils reached the higher levels in English and science and also the expected levels in English. This led to results being average overall in these subjects. Not enough pupils reached either the expected, or the higher levels, in mathematics so the school's results were well below those of the majority of schools. The school's performance is also the same when compared to schools in a similar context (with between 8 and 20 per cent receiving free school meals). There is little difference in the overall results of boys and girls, although boys were under-achieving in writing. At the time of the inspection, the comparative data for 2001 were not available. In 2001 standards in English and mathematics were below those of 2000. In science they were close to 2000, being slightly below. There are two main reasons for this. First, there were more SEN pupils in the year group (50 per cent more than the national average). Secondly, the progress being made by pupils in one class had been adversely affected by an extremely high number of staff changes. In the other three classes in the year group standards in English were not so far below last year, the drop being explained by the higher number of SEN pupils. In mathematics, the strategies to improve standards had been focused on too wide an area, resulting in standards falling. A thorough analysis of this weakness means the school has effectively addressed the issue this year. The current eleven-year-old pupils are making good progress, especially in English and science, and they are reaching average standards in all three subjects. The issue of boys' under-achievement in writing has been fully addressed and they are now achieving well. Less emphasis given to improving handwriting and spelling means standards in these areas are below average. Achievement is at least satisfactory in all other subjects and is good in music and design and technology. Standards are above the national expectation in music and in line with expectations in all other subjects. The high quality support given to SEN and EAL pupils means they have good access to learning in all subjects and achieve well. The rising standards are due to the hard work of senior managers in improving the provision, particularly the quality of teaching, and the very good support given to this development by all areas of the school community.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to participate in all that it offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Throughout the whole of the school day, pupils' behaviour is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent. Pupils' enjoy each other's company and are polite and friendly as they move around the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory, with very few unauthorised absences. The school is very successful in achieving good punctuality, so lessons begin very promptly.

These strengths give significant support to the good learning, which now takes place throughout the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good

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

High levels of good and better teaching are helping standards to rise and supporting the very good attitudes and behaviour seen throughout the school. Of the 82 lessons seen, 38 were good, 23 very good, and 8 were excellent. None were unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is good in nearly all subjects and very good in music. Partly due to the fact that classes are very effectively organised to teach literacy and numeracy in ability groups, these skills are taught well and pupils are encouraged to use them in other subjects. This helps pupils to make good progress. The quality of lesson planning, which is consistent throughout the school, is very good. The clear lesson objectives are effectively shared with pupils enabling them to gain a good knowledge of their own learning. Teachers are skilled at using the best methods to help different groups of pupils learn. The organisation and management of pupils, based on the very effective behaviour policy, are very good. These strengths result in pupils concentrating very well and working hard. The very best lessons are inspirational, and this is one of the reasons why boys are developing very good attitudes towards writing and are now achieving well. On a few occasions, insufficiently challenging work is set for the most able pupils working in the top sets. The quality of marking is inconsistent although it has recently improved. Teaching in information and communication technology (ICT) in the suite is good and pupils make good progress. However, the lack of computers in classrooms limits the progress made in using their skills. The contribution made by classroom assistants is very good, particularly when supporting SEN and EAL pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is rich, broad and relevant. It is well planned to meet the needs of very nearly all pupils. There are a few occasions when the most able pupils are not identified and catered for.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are included well in all that the school has to offer. Management is very effective. Both the class teachers and classroom assistants support pupils' needs very effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are supported well, usually in lessons, and they receive effective specialist help if required. They are fully included in all the school's work and all achieve well, a number reaching above average standards.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The emphasis placed on this aspect is a key to the school's success. Excellent promotion of pupils' moral and social development underpins the calm, supportive ethos that permeates the school. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and now poised for improved standards.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Consistently implemented procedures, together with excellent relationships, ensure every pupil receives high quality care, support and guidance. Health and safety procedures are very good. Good procedures are in place for assessing and supporting pupils' academic progress, which are used well to help planning.

The school's partnership with parents continues to grow. It welcomes the contribution they make to its work. The school regularly seeks their views and responds to any concerns in a positive manner. Most parents have positive views. They receive good information about the school's work and their children's progress.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are now excellent. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He has an exceptionally clear vision and is very aware of what the school needs to do next to improve. The very effective teamwork between all staff, and their strong commitment, continue to raise standards. The role of the subject and year leader has greatly improved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They help lead the school exceptionally well. Statutory duties are carried out effectively. They are very clear and positive in relation to their roles and responsibilities and support the headteacher well. Their knowledge of the school and their commitment to its further development are excellent.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance very effectively through the governing body, senior management team, year leaders and subject co-ordinators. The school has taken good action to improve and is now an effective school.
The strategic use of resources	The budget is used very effectively to give pupils maximum benefit. Financial planning, administration and budgetary control are excellent. Day-to-day procedures are well established. The principles of best value are well understood and implemented.

The school is well staffed with a very good number of suitably qualified teachers and classroom assistants. This provision impacts well on the progress of pupils. The quality and quantity of learning resources are good, and they help pupils to learn more effectively. The accommodation has been imaginatively reorganised to provide an effective learning environment and is maintained to a high level.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Children behave well and make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and children are encouraged to do their best.</li> <li>• Staff are approachable and respond well to their concerns.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• It has improved well over the past few years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work children are given to do at home.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons.</li> <li>• The high turnover in teaching staff.</li> <li>• The school working more closely with them.</li> </ul>

Inspectors fully agree with parents' positive views. The school regularly asks parents for their views and responds to these well. The number of parents who expressed their views at the meeting and in the questionnaire is low, so the proportion of parents expressing negative views is relatively small. Inspection evidence does not support these. The range of activities provided outside lessons is good and parents receive regular and good information about the progress their children make. The school regularly asks parents for their views and tries to work closely with them. Parents were fully consulted about present homework arrangements and their views responded to well. The amount of homework is satisfactory, but the giving of homework in half termly block means that, on a few occasions, it is not well matched to the work being done in class. The school's difficulty in recruitment and retention of staff is common to that experienced by many schools. Recent staff changes are mainly due to promotion and family relocation. The school has very good procedures for the induction and support of new staff.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 On entry to the school, the attainment of different year groups varies considerably from year to year, being very closely linked to the number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Overall it is slightly below average, mainly because the proportion of SEN pupils in the school is above the national average. Where there is a higher percentage in a year group this has a considerable impact on the school's results both when they are compared to all schools nationally and also to those schools in a similar context.
- 2 Standards have been rising at a better rate than in most schools since 1996 and are better than when the school was last inspected. This is the result of very hard work by the school, particularly since the arrival of the current headteacher who has put in place a number of effective strategies to bring about improvement. In the last reported year (2000) the school's results matched the national average in English and science, but were well below in mathematics. The teacher assessments differed from those in the tests, mainly because the assessment procedures used at that time did not focus enough on all the criteria needed to reach a particular level. This situation has been rectified and the new procedures introduced last term are identifying the level pupils are working at much more accurately. The results of the pupils who took the tests this year are not so high. This is partly because the proportion of SEN pupils who took the tests (34.25 per cent) was higher than in other year groups in the school. In addition, learning in one of the four classes had been significantly affected by a very high number of staff changes, some of them very close to the time the pupils took the tests. These factors meant the school did not reach its targets this year.
- 3 Standards are now rising again. Across the school, most pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, achieve well for their abilities and the majority reach the standards expected for their age. Most of the pupils currently in Year 6 are likely to reach average standards by the time they leave the school. The expected proportion of more able pupils is also likely to reach the higher levels in the tests. The school has set challenging targets for this year, above the national average, and staff are working very hard to try and achieve these.
- 4 In 2000, in the National Curriculum tests in English, the school's results matched the average of similar schools and the majority of schools nationally. These results fell in 2001 because of the high number of SEN pupils and lack of continuity in teaching in one class. When the results from the classes, which were not so adversely affected, are analysed, they are not far below those of the previous year and are the result of the higher number of SEN pupils. The majority of current Year 6 pupils are likely to reach average standards in all aspects of the subject by the time they leave the school. Secure listening skills help pupils to concentrate and gain information. Good progress is made in developing speaking and listening skills, particularly from a below average base in speaking. Good opportunities in class discussions and in drama activities help pupils to reach average standards. By the time they leave the school, very nearly all pupils confidently express their views and listen appreciatively to others. The very good promotion of reading skills, including how to identify the characteristics of different genre and to predict what is likely to happen by analysing the plot and characters, help pupils to make good progress. Most pupils refer well to the text when discussing books and have secure skills in retrieving information from non-fiction books. The average standards reached by most pupils in writing are the result of very hard work by the

school, particularly to encourage better achievement by boys. Boys are now much more enthusiastic about writing and very nearly all pupils now achieve well for their abilities. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to write in different formats and for different audiences, using an effective style and vocabulary. However, standards in handwriting and spelling are not as good as this and not at the level of which pupils are capable.

- 5 Pupils are given good opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote effective letters in history and Year 4 pupils used their knowledge of how to write instructions as part of their work in design and technology. Tables and graphs are used successfully to record the results of investigations in science, and measurement is used accurately when planning and making products in design and technology. Although the information in both written and graph work is usually correctly recorded, the quality of presentation is below that expected and also that of which most pupils are capable.
- 6 The results of the National Curriculum tests for the last three years show that the school's results in mathematics have been well below those expected of eleven year olds both when compared with all schools and also schools in a similar context. The school did not reach the target it had set for raising standards in 2001. The lower attainment on entry of this year group, in which over a third were SEN pupils, and the high number of temporary and supply teachers in one class, affected the standards. In addition, the resources to help raise standards were targeted at too wide an area to bring about the expected improvement. The school has taken effective measures to rectify the situation this year. Inspection findings show that the standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 6 are average and that the improvement since the last inspection is now good. Across the school, the majority of pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately for their abilities. Year 6 pupils have good understanding of place value and a secure knowledge of number, including multiplication tables and fractions. They understand and use the correct mathematical vocabulary. Pupils reach average standards in their mental arithmetic and are developing good strategies, using the correct calculations, to solve problems. They collect and interpret data, for example by using a frequency table. Pupils have a secure understanding of standard measures, including angles, and estimate to check the accuracy of their answers. Through the good encouragement pupils are given to explain how they work out answers, they are developing good strategies to solve problems.
- 7 Standards in science have risen at a greater rate than in most schools since 1996 and since the school was last inspected. In 2000, the school's results were close to the national average. They fell slightly this year, mainly due to the higher number of SEN pupils in the year group. Standards are now rising again with the majority of current Year 6 pupils likely to reach average standards and the expected proportion better than this. Across the school, pupils make at least satisfactory, and often good, progress. In the lessons observed during the inspection, good learning took place and teachers are helping pupils to build well on their skills and knowledge. A good emphasis on this aspect means that pupils' experimental work is developing well. Pupils use the correct scientific vocabulary and plan and carry out secure investigations, accurately collecting and analysing evidence. This helps them to increase their knowledge of different concepts such as forces, the properties of materials and the importance of exercise and diet.
- 8 By the time they leave the school most pupils achieve appropriately and reach standards in information and communication technology (ICT), which are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils use computers to explore and develop ideas, exchanging and sharing information. For example, as part of their history work Year 6 pupils use

PowerPoint to design a presentation about a famous person. Year 5 pupils create a bar chart of their pulse rates in science. Pupils develop secure word processing skills, using tools such as the "spell check". Although work is effectively linked to other subjects, the lack of computers in classrooms means that, currently, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their skills. However, the school already has the resources to address this and is waiting for them to be put in place.

- 9 By the time they leave the school, the majority of pupils reach standards in religious education which are in line with the expectations of the Hampshire Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the main features of the major religions of the world. For example, they understand how important prayer and the study of sacred texts are in many religions. Pupils know about different religious and secular Rites of Passage and the rules associated with world religions. In addition, pupils begin to apply the principles of religious beliefs when analysing their own reaction to events, and to link these to the moral issues in the world.
- 10 Most pupils make good progress in developing their skills and knowledge in music and achieve well for their abilities. The majority reach standards which are above national expectations. In all other subjects, most pupils make at least satisfactory progress to reach standards which are in line with national expectations. In design and technology, partly due to the recent developments introduced by the new co-ordinator, most pupils are now making good progress to achieve well for their abilities.
- 11 The school makes very good arrangements to ensure that the majority of its pupils are included in the full range of activities. This ensures that there is little difference in the progress made by boys and girls. Pupils with SEN and EAL have equal access to the good teaching and curriculum as other pupils. As a result, they make the same good progress as other pupils and achieve well for their abilities. A number of EAL pupils are now working in the above average groups in English and mathematics. A small number of SEN pupils who took the national tests last year reached average standards. Good arrangements to group pupils by ability support very nearly all pupils well. However, there is a small number of occasions when the most able pupils, working in the higher ability groups, are not sufficiently challenged and do not reach the standards of which they are capable.

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

- 12 Pupils' attitudes to learning, their behaviour and personal development are very good and this has a positive impact on their achievement. The consistent implementation of the comprehensive behaviour policy by all staff has resulted in enormous progress in this area. The quality of relationships is now excellent. Parents recognise the improvement in standards of behaviour and most agree that the school is now successful in this area.
- 13 Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to take advantage of all the opportunities offered to them. In lessons, they listen to their teachers with interest and respond confidently to questions and readily express an opinion when required. Teachers' brisk explanations of lesson learning objectives quickly focus pupils' attention. Pupils' good motivation and concentration mean they achieve all that is planned in most lessons. Pupils are keen to work hard and do their best and are pleased, and sometimes get quite excited, at their own progress. The very clear structure of literacy and numeracy sessions means pupils know what to expect. They are used to the routines and therefore organise themselves quickly when changing classrooms to join their friends in the appropriate set. They enthusiastically tackle individual tasks set for them and continue

working diligently even when not directly supervised by an adult. Pupils respond very well to the school's reward and award systems and many actively seek to please their teachers. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is not confined to lessons. Many join in extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes and after school. Pupils' enthusiasm for singing during assemblies is inspiring.

- 14 High expectations by the whole school community result in very good behaviour by almost all pupils. A calm, purposeful atmosphere in classrooms means pupils achieve well. Pupils move sensibly around the school building, especially when using the stairs. Lunchtimes are sociable and enjoyable occasions, and behaviour in the playground is very good. Pupils enjoy the games that are now being organised by the teaching assistants. The inclusive nature of the school means a great deal of support is given to those pupils with specific behavioural difficulties. Individual strategies are used to support them and improvements in their behaviour are celebrated to encourage them further. There have only been two fixed term exclusions in the last year and no aggressive behaviour was evident during the inspection. Pupils get on well together.
- 15 The fully inclusive nature of the school and the excellent relationships seen help to ensure that SEN and EAL pupils are integrated well into all aspects of school life. As a result, there is no difference in the standards of behaviour, attitudes and personal development of the majority of these pupils. The school's excellent systems for promoting positive behaviour and good attitudes to learning help those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties to behave at least satisfactorily in lessons and to work well in group situations.
- 16 Excellent relationships underpin the success of many aspects of school life. Pupils work collaboratively in pairs and small groups, which helps them to learn effectively. Pupils are very good at discussing, in pairs, questions posed by their teachers, and then giving their joint answer or view. During the first session of the design and technology project taking place during the inspection week, very good promotion of teamwork was made by the teacher. She made explicit reference to the need for teamwork, co-operation, and the need to communicate well. When asked, "What is teamwork?" pupils' answers of "helping", "sharing", "listening to each other" illustrated their good understanding. Pupils are polite and courteous towards visitors and engage in conversation readily. The school premises, equipment, resources and books are treated with care. Pupils are especially proud of their new playground and want to look after it. They respect the views of others and listen carefully when class friends are speaking or giving an answer. Pupils respond sensitively when their peers are sharing their feelings during the group time known as 'Circle Time'. They show their honesty when assessing their own progress and understanding at the end of a lesson by giving the teacher a 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down' sign when asked if they feel they have achieved the lessons' learning objectives.
- 17 Pupils take responsibility for organising the resources they need for lessons and tidy away after themselves. The School Council provides opportunities for pupils to be involved in decisions which concern them. Representatives from each class take this role very seriously. Pupils respond well to the responsibilities they are entrusted with. They take registers to the office, help with lunchtime routines, and act as library assistants and mathematics monitors. Year 5 pupils train to be peer mediators. Opportunities to take responsibility are being further developed, for example a team has now been brought together to produce a school newspaper. Pupils are growing into confident, sensible citizens ready to play their part in the wider community.

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\* During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and other issues. All pupils are encouraged to participate and to value the views of others.

- 18 Most pupils attend school regularly and attendance levels are only just below the national average. Figures for this year are lower than for last because of the increase in holidays taken during term time, which does have a negative impact on pupils' learning. There are very few unauthorised absences. Punctuality is very good. The rolling start to the day means pupils have early access to the building and almost all pupils are in their classrooms ready for registration at the appointed time.

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

- 19 Improvements in the quality of teaching have made a significant contribution to the rise in standards seen since the school was last inspected. In the October 1999 inspection a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was seen, although the majority was good or better. Since then there has been a significant changeover of staff amounting to two thirds of the number of teachers employed in the school. In addition, very nearly all the staff are in the first few years of their teaching careers. Parents are concerned about the high number of changes in staffing, but nevertheless agree that teaching is good. That the standard of teaching has improved is largely due to the very good monitoring and development of this aspect of the school's work. In the current inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Of the 82 lessons seen, the majority (69) were good or better with 23 being very good and eight excellent. The best teaching was seen across all year groups and also the majority of subjects. The teaching of some foundation subjects as topics in half termly blocks means it is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching in geography. The high levels of good and better teaching result in good learning taking place throughout the school.
- 20 There are very few weaknesses in any elements of teaching. Teachers have good expertise, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As a result, the majority of the basic skills are well taught and pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, are making good progress in learning and using these. Reading skills, and the skills of writing expressively and effectively for different purposes, are taught well. Less emphasis is given to promoting handwriting skills and learning the spelling rules, except where they are closely linked to sounds. Numeracy skills are promoted well, through a good focus on ensuring pupils acquire mathematical vocabulary as well as the mental recall of basic number facts and simple calculations. Teachers also make sure that pupils learn to apply their skills in practical and problem solving activities. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Information and communication technology skills are taught well, but the lack of computers in classrooms means that pupils cannot use them enough to help their learning across the whole curriculum.
- 21 The quality of lesson planning is very good and is consistent throughout the school. It is very well related to medium-term planning, with effective adaptation according to the progress pupils have made previously. For example, during the inspection, a very perceptive analysis of the difficulties the youngest pupils were having in working with new scientific concepts led to a complete revision of the work for that topic. An especially strong feature of the planning is the very clear learning objectives identified for each lesson, which are always shared with pupils. These are then revisited at the end of the lesson and pupils are asked for their opinion on the progress they have made. This approach helps to motivate and challenge pupils and ensures they gain a good knowledge of what they are learning. In all lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science pupils are grouped according to their ability. In English in Years 5 and 6, and in mathematics in Years 4 to 6, the class groups are organised by ability. This is very effective in allowing teachers to plan very focused work for pupils. In very nearly all these lessons teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve

and this, together with the interesting activities provided, results in the vast majority of pupils achieving well. Within the class group for the more able, pupils are also further grouped by ability. On most occasions this arrangement meets the needs of pupils well. However, in a small number of lessons, the most able pupils (about two to four pupils in the top group) were not set sufficiently challenging work, became bored easily and did not make the progress of which they are capable.

- 22 An effective range of teaching methods is used, being adapted well to both the requirements of different subjects and the needs of pupils in the class. Teachers explain things very clearly, give good examples and demonstrate well. For example, during an excellent Year 3 numeracy lesson, the teacher used very effective questioning to focus, check and extend pupils' thinking. An outstanding feature of teaching is the methods that the best teachers use to motivate pupils, particularly boys, to achieve well in writing. In an excellent Year 6 lesson for the less able pupils, the class teacher used drama very effectively to help pupils understand the story of Oliver Twist from the different viewpoints of the characters. The result was some very perceptive writing of Oliver's thoughts on the food he was given in the workhouse. In another excellent lesson, in Year 4, the teacher wrote a poem, which she encouraged the pupils to improve by evaluating its weaknesses and setting targets for improvement. They then rewrote it using more effective descriptions, including metaphors and similes. In a very good music lesson, pupils were encouraged to use actions to help them gain a very good sense of rhythm and an understanding of the appropriateness of the lyrics. The good teaching methods seen throughout the school in all subjects help pupils to acquire knowledge and skills easily and to work hard.
- 23 The outstanding relationships seen in the school, together with the consistent application of the very high quality behaviour management procedures ensure that the organisation and control of pupils in lessons is very good. A particularly good example of this was seen in a Year 6 physical education lesson. This resulted in pupils making very good gains in marking and dodging other players in hockey. This very strong aspect of teaching, together with the challenging and interesting activities provided, means pupils are interested in what they learn. Most concentrate well and begin to take responsibility for their own learning. A particularly good example of this was seen in the same outstanding physical education lesson where pupils acted naturally as leaders to monitor the work in their group when not directly supervised by the teacher. This aspect of pupils' learning is also promoted well by the very many opportunities pupils are given to discuss their work with a partner and then report back to the whole class.
- 24 The contribution made by the classroom assistants is of a very high quality. This is partly due to the fact that they receive very good training from the school. In addition, class teachers prepare them very well for the work they undertake in each lesson. They give particularly good support in ensuring the SEN and EAL pupils are fully included in all activities and are helped to achieve well for their abilities. Teachers are very skilled at moving learning forward and in very nearly all lessons a good pace is maintained, ensuring that pupils remain focused. Resources are very carefully chosen and effectively used to help pupils understand and make good progress. This is especially so in literacy lessons where the careful selection and use of texts give very good support to learning. For example, in an excellent Year 3 literacy lesson seen, the choice and explanation of different texts helped pupils to easily recognise the differences between stories and play scripts.
- 25 The scrutiny of work that pupils had done previously showed inconsistencies in the quality of marking which limited its effectiveness in helping to promote progress. Recent developments in assessment procedures have led to a marked improvement in this area,

particularly in English and mathematics where, this term, teachers are successfully marking and evaluating pupils' work. This allows them to identify clearly which pupils have learnt a new skill or concept and which of them still need support. This information is then used effectively to help plan the next stages in learning and to set group or individual targets for pupils to help them improve. It is planned to extend these good procedures to all subjects.

- 26 Wide consultation with parents led to the decision to plan homework for several weeks, at the beginning of each half term. This has been effectively organised to match the planned topics for each week. It gives sound support to learning, particularly in English and mathematics; although it does not make allowance for the fact that some planned lessons may have to be adjusted if pupils do not make the progress the teacher had expected. Pupils report that they regularly complete the tasks, which are then marked, with advice given on how to improve. However, in spite of the fact that all were consulted, a number of parents at the meeting and over a third of those who returned the questionnaire were not satisfied with the homework arrangements and the school already plans to look at these again.
- 27 The teaching of SEN pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the school was last inspected. For most of the time, pupils are taught alongside others in the classroom. On a very small number of occasions pupils are withdrawn to work with the special educational needs teacher. When this happens very good teaching and learning take place. Class teachers have a very good knowledge of the needs of individual pupils in their class, and work is well matched to SEN pupils' needs. On some occasions, teachers work with the lower ability groups and then good progress is made, with pupils achieving well for their abilities. The work of the classroom assistants in supporting SEN pupils is very good. The school has allocated resources to ensure that classroom assistants work with all literacy and numeracy lessons for the average and below average pupils. This approach is having a significant impact on the quality of learning. In whole class lessons the assistants sit with SEN pupils giving extra explanations or examples if needed and allowing pupils to check their answers before they "tell" them to the whole class. This helps pupils to develop confidence and make good progress. In group activities further support and encouragement ensure that pupils complete the work set.
- 28 The teaching of EAL pupils is good. Where pupils are at the early stages of English development they receive effective support from the local authority team. Very nearly all other EAL pupils participate fully in normal lessons. The very good focus on improving pupils' vocabulary over a range of subjects supports these pupils well. Where there is a need to give extra support, particularly in literacy lessons, the very good classroom assistants work with EAL pupils ensuring they fully understand what is being taught. As a result, they make good progress in their learning.

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

- 29 The school provides a rich and broad curriculum that meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the local religious education syllabus. It is of good quality throughout the school and meets statutory requirements. The school offers particularly strong personal, social and health education, including sex education and drug awareness, which has a positive impact on the quality of learning and the pupils' attitudes towards this. Design and technology has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good. ICT has also improved from a very low base at the last inspection. The teaching of ICT skills in the computer suite is carefully planned and well



taught. The curriculum would be further enhanced if pupils had greater opportunities to use and improve their ICT skills in other subjects. The school plans to provide at least one computer in or adjacent to each classroom, which will greatly improve this aspect.

- 30 National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are managed very well. These strategies are improving further the quality of teaching and learning so that standards continue to rise. A generous time allocation is given to the teaching of English, including additional time on developing reading. This initiative is proving highly successful. Teaching of English and mathematics occupies every morning and the quality of planning for these lessons is very good. The planning systems throughout the school ensure that teachers consider the learning focus behind each activity and this is consistently shared with pupils in every lesson. This helps pupils to gain a good understanding about what they are learning and helps them to make good progress. The school ensures that pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, for example the use of measurement in science and links in the historical studies of the Greeks and Romans. The generous allocation of time to the core subjects has been effective in helping to improve standards. In addition, the school has increased the length of the school day to ensure that it follows the national guidelines on the time to be spent on teaching and learning in the foundation subjects. The effectiveness of this situation is regularly reviewed.
- 31 The school effectively designs the curriculum to meet the needs of its pupils. Class teachers and learning support assistants provide careful and diligent support for all SEN pupils, which enables access to the full curriculum. Good early identification and regular monitoring of progress mean that the work planned for these pupils is well matched to the stage at which they are working. Individual education plans are clearly thought out and consistently followed by all staff. The effective grouping of pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons also ensures that the planned activities are well matched to SEN pupils' abilities and help them to make good progress and achieve well. These pupils have good opportunities to contribute to and play a full part in the life of the school and this helps to raise their self-esteem. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have good access to the curriculum. The awareness of their language needs means that these are fully addressed in planning and helps support the good progress pupils make, allowing a number to reach above average standards. The school is conscientious about ensuring that all pupils, regardless of gender or background, have equal opportunities within the curriculum.
- 32 Although about 30 per cent of parents did not consider that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons, the provision for extra-curricular activities is good. The activities support the curriculum well and have a good impact on pupils' learning and attitudes. These activities are popular with the pupils and include science, art, French, calligraphy and the production of a school newspaper. There are plans to introduce mathematics games and juggling, as well as gymnastics. An outstanding example of the quality of the extra-curricular activities was the Dance Club that captured pupils' enthusiasm and energy and inspired both boys and girls to participate.
- 33 Links with the community and partner institutions are very good and have a positive impact on the school's provision and pupils' achievements. The school works closely with feeder infant schools, despite the pupils transferring from several different local schools. There is also good liaison with local secondary schools ensuring effective arrangements are in place to prepare Year 6 pupils for the next stage in their education. The school has developed many opportunities to work with other schools and educational institutions and share training opportunities, projects and expertise. The provision for SEN pupils has been enhanced by the expertise provided from link schools.

The school provides a richness of experience by organising educational visits to places of interest that in turn enrich and extend the pupils' learning. A range of visitors to the school helps to extend the work pupils do and provides them with valuable first-hand experiences, for example the artist in residence who helped pupils to design and paint the banners which add to the quality of the environment in the corridor area.

- 34 Considerable improvements have been made in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school, quite rightly, first concentrated on improvements in promoting the moral and social development of pupils in order to ensure that good behaviour and attitudes helped support learning. These aspects, which are so closely related, are now excellent. Provision for spiritual and cultural development, whilst satisfactory, has not been given the same attention and development. The school is aware of this need and the current focus on cultural development will give a good impetus to this aspect of the school's provision.
- 35 Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Acts of collective worship provide opportunities for meaningful reflection on aspects of pupils' own feelings and beliefs, the lives of others and the wider world. Pupils are encouraged to talk about special moments or possessions, and to consider their own role as citizens in the community during 'circle time'. 'Circle time' is successfully used in all year groups and is an important feature of the school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. At times, full advantage is taken of pupils' response to moments of surprise and awe. For instance, Year 3 pupils were amazed, whilst working on the computers, when work that had previously been deleted suddenly appeared again at the press of a button. However, opportunities to reflect on the wonders of the natural world, man's achievements or the power of technology are limited to teachers' taking advantage of opportunities as they arise rather than consideration of pupils' spiritual development when planning all aspects of the curriculum.
- 36 Provision for moral and social development is excellent. Pupils' understanding of the difference between right and wrong is well developed through positive reinforcement by all staff and the excellent role models they provide. A key feature of the provision is the consistent and supportive approach of all staff. From the moment pupils arrive in school, they are encouraged to understand what are acceptable behaviour and conduct. The school's Code of Conduct is prominently displayed in all classrooms and forms the basis of the caring and supportive ethos that is so strong in the school. Teachers constantly require pupils to collaborate and work together in different groupings. This effectively promotes pupils' understanding of the benefits of working as a team and what can be achieved when they work with others. The very effective working relationship between teachers and teaching assistants provides an excellent example to pupils of successful working relationships. During extra-curricular activities and residential visits pupils are given the opportunity to work with others across different classes and year groups. Assemblies and PSHE lessons are used effectively to promote pupils' awareness of moral issues in the wider world and the importance of playing an active part in both their school and wider community.
- 37 Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about past cultures in history, and visitors who come to the school to share their expertise, for example of the Greeks or World War II, help to bring pupils' learning alive. Visits into the local area help to raise pupils' awareness of their own cultural heritage. Pupils have enjoyed live theatre from visits to the school by touring theatre companies or by visiting the Mayflower Theatre in Southampton. Although pupils have had the opportunity to work with a visiting artist, full advantage is not yet taken to visit art galleries or museums in the area. A working party has just completed an audit and review of the provision for multicultural

education across the entire curriculum. As a result, a comprehensive document has been produced to assist teachers in their planning of this important aspect. It gives very good advice on how to raise pupils' awareness of their place in a multi-cultural society. Therefore, although provision for multicultural development is satisfactory at this time, it is poised to develop rapidly and become an integral part of pupils' learning.

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

- 38 The consistent implementation of well-conceived policies and procedures, together with excellent relationships, ensures every pupil receives high quality care, support and guidance throughout their time at the school. Within this caring and supportive environment pupils can learn effectively. The high standards now achieved represent very good improvement over recent years.
- 39 Very good attention is given to matters of health and safety. During the recent refurbishment of many areas of the school, pupils' safety was of paramount importance. The building and site now offer a safe and secure environment. However, the school is not complacent, and continually monitors potential hazards and dangers, and regularly carries out appropriate risk assessment surveys. Evacuation procedures are rehearsed frequently and carried out extremely efficiently and calmly – pupils know exactly what is expected of them and their quick departure from the building at a fire practice was particularly impressive during the week of the inspection.
- 40 Procedures to ensure the well being of pupils are thoughtful, clear and consistently applied. Arrangements for first aid are very good. Good records are maintained and parents contacted if there is the slightest concern. Lunchtime supervisors are valued members of the school staff team and provide good care and support during lunchtimes. Supervision levels are good. Child protection procedures are very good with appropriate members of staff receiving specific training. The good policy covers the expected areas and staff are reminded of their responsibilities in this area regularly. All requirements are met.
- 41 Excellent procedures are in place to record and monitor attendance. The computerised system is used efficiently by office staff to record attendance and then provide analysis for close monitoring by the senior management team. Procedures for recording communications from parents are systematically applied and unexplained absence followed-up conscientiously. Regular and effective liaison with the education welfare officer further supports the school's own efforts to ensure good attendance by all pupils. Good attendance and punctuality are promoted very actively by the headteacher and certificates are awarded to pupils at the end of each term if their record is particularly good.
- 42 Very good procedures for promoting good behaviour are in place. A key feature, and the reason for its success, is the consistency by which the policy is implemented by all staff. The school's Code of Conduct is displayed prominently in all classrooms and pupils are made fully aware of the school's high expectations in this area of their personal development. Teachers actively praise good behaviour and the structured approach to discipline ensures sanctions are used fairly when required. Pupils know what happens if they behave inappropriately. Reward systems are clear and are valued by pupils who are delighted when they receive individual points, stamps or team rewards. All incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are taken very seriously and action taken promptly. Pupils who find good behaviour more difficult, are helped to improve by the use of specific strategies devised to meet their individual needs.

- 43 The school now has effective systems for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These have improved over the last term and a half. The previous procedures did not sufficiently focus on all the criteria which pupils needed to achieve in order to reach a specific level and this led to inaccuracies. The statutory assessments at the end of Year 6, together with the national tests for English, mathematics and science used in all other year groups, give the school useful information. Half termly formal assessments in these subjects also give valuable information on pupils' progress. The results are very carefully analysed and effectively used to guide planning and to set targets for individual pupils. Pupils' self-evaluation of their work at the end of each topic also contributes well to target setting. Progress towards the targets is effectively assessed with new targets being set to ensure that steady progress is made. Pupils' progress through the school is tracked well with the information being effectively used to guide their learning.
- 44 The data from tests are used very well to identify general weaknesses in pupils' learning and to adapt future curricular planning to address the problem. For example, when analysis of tests revealed weakness in writing, especially for boys, a number of effective strategies were put in place. These included the organisation of class groups in the lower school to provide additional literacy support. Data are also used well to help group pupils by ability. This has helped to ensure that teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons is effective. Although assessment is accurately identifying those pupils who are working at above average levels, including the higher standards of the most able, this information is not always sufficiently used to challenge and extend the learning of the top pupils in each year group.
- 45 In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, the assessment and recording of pupils' progress and attainment is less comprehensive. However, together with the effective on-going assessment which takes place at the end of all lessons, it ensures that teachers can plan effectively for the next stage of learning and report accurately to parents in all subjects. This is a development priority for the school with effective new procedures being set up, but not yet fully in place.
- 46 Staff provide pupils with very good support and guidance and the very strong relationships result in mutual respect. Pupils' personal development is monitored well with sensitive support given to pupils if problems arise. Very specific sessions are organised for pupils that are felt would benefit, for example the social skills sessions.
- 47 The assessment of SEN pupils is very good. The school fully complies with requirements of the Code of Practice and statements and reviews are kept up-to-date. The records kept by the SEN co-ordinator are very helpful in monitoring the progress of pupils. The excellent relationships seen in the school, and the sensitive support of pupils in lessons allow them to develop confidence and self-esteem. Pupils also benefit from the very good liaison with outside agencies. For example, at the time of the inspection, specialist teachers from the local education authority were providing very good support for pupils. Very good liaison with both the feeder infant schools and the secondary school to which most pupils transfer ensures that there is continuity of support. The provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good. The pupil currently in school receives good support from teachers and also the designated classroom assistant.
- 48 The awareness of their specific needs means that the care of EAL pupils is also very good. Where necessary, extra assessments and monitoring of progress in their language acquisition are made. However, for the vast majority of EAL pupils, the school's good assessment systems help monitor their progress effectively. National test

results are very effectively analysed to ensure that these pupils are making the progress they should. This helps to ensure that some achieve the higher levels in the tests.

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

- 49 The school continues to develop its partnership with parents and regularly seeks their views and responds to any concerns in a positive manner. The quantity and quality of information provided for are is very good and help to keep them well informed. Parents' views of the school are positive about most aspects.
- 50 Parents responding to the parents' questionnaire and attending the parents' meeting expressed their satisfaction with many aspects of the school. Many agree that their children like school, make good progress and are taught well. They recognise the school is well led and managed and that their children are helped to become mature and responsible. However, a significant number of parents at the meeting and who responded to the questionnaire expressed concern regarding homework, that they do not feel well informed about how their child is getting on and that the school does not work closely with them. They do not feel the school provides an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views wholeheartedly. However, the number of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting was very small, only 22 per cent of parents returned the questionnaires. In addition, the issues raised as concerns by parents were not borne out by inspection evidence.
- 51 There are very good opportunities for parents to find out about how their children are getting on. Consultation meetings with teachers are offered each term and written reports are very good, providing particularly good information about the level of achievement and progress made in English, mathematics and science. The school endeavours to seek parents' views and the format of the autumn meeting has been changed in line with parents' wishes. Similarly, parents have been consulted about homework and the school has modified the system in response to parental comments. Its own analysis of parents' views showed a good level of satisfaction. Inspectors feel the school does endeavour to work in partnership with parents and has an open door policy and encourages parents to come in and speak with teachers if they have concerns. The fact that all Year 4 to Year 6 classes are on the first floor does seem to create a physical barrier, but teachers do escort their classes downstairs at the end of each day when parents gather in the playground to collect their child. Inspectors judge that a good number and range of interesting activities are offered outside of lessons.
- 52 Parents receive a good deal of high quality information. Regular newsletters, with plenty of information about school events and activities, and contributions from pupils, provide parents with very good information about the day-to-day life of the school. The prospectus is a well-presented and informative document giving parents a good overview of the school's expectations and procedures. The governors' annual report is produced in a very readable format, encouraging parents to read all about the school's work over the last year. Curricular information is sent out with homework books, but the school recognises that this is perhaps too brief and should now include more detail.
- 53 Parents are encouraged to be fully involved in the life of the school. Although few parents help in class regularly, they do respond to requests for support for specific projects. For example, during the inspection well over 20 parents helped on the 'making day' of the design and technology project. Parents' willingness to help with practical tasks, such as decorating, has contributed to the improvements made to the learning environment. Parents support the efforts of the Parents' Association, which meets to

organise specific events during the year. Funds raised are used to enhance resources for pupils. Most parents attend school performances, giving good support to their children. Parents' contribution to their children's learning at home is good. The homework policy is clear and parents receive useful information to help them support reading and spellings. The use of the homework booklet enables them to support their children with the weekly English, mathematics and topic homework.

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

- 54 The leadership and management of the school are now excellent and having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, pupils' achievements, their attitudes and behaviour. The school benefits from the outstanding leadership provided by the headteacher, ably supported by a very efficient and effective acting deputy headteacher, all of the staff and the governing body. The acting deputy headteacher has made a very significant contribution to raising standards in the school particularly through innovations in ICT, assessment and teaching approaches. She has also played a leading role in staff development. The senior management team, year leaders and subject co-ordinators are also making significant contributions to the management of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where improvements to the role of the year leaders and co-ordinators were necessary. An exceptionally clear vision and educational direction have been established for the school and everyone is very aware about what the school needs to do next to improve still further. Excellent teamwork and commitment from everyone has had a very positive impact on raising standards. The school's aims and values are reflected clearly in the excellent ethos, where there are extremely harmonious working relationships.
- 55 Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has taken very positive steps to address the key issues raised in the previous report in relation to standards of achievement, teaching, learning, planning, assessment and the roles of senior staff. In many subject areas, there have also been improvements and, with effective subject managers in place, there is the capacity for further improvement. There are still some outstanding developments regarding ICT, although many areas have already been addressed and standards have risen in the subject. There is a very clear action plan that is currently a priority in the school development plan to ensure staff are trained and resources allocated to implement fully the school plans for this subject.
- 56 The governing body is extremely effective, properly constituted and meets regularly. It has very high levels of expertise and is most enthusiastic and supportive of the headteacher and the staff. Governors have set up many new efficient systems to ensure they are fully informed about all aspects of school life. They make a significant contribution to the effectiveness of the school and recognise and act on areas for development. They recognise that the school has overcome many weaknesses, yet they are not complacent and are aware that the school still has to continue to raise the standards its pupils achieve. The governors fully support the headteacher in his vision for the school. They carefully monitor and assess plans and decisions before they are put into practice. There is a close and open working relationship that ultimately benefits the school and this has meant that improvement has been particularly rapid during the last three years since the headteacher's appointment to the school. Since the last inspection it has continued to tackle its priorities effectively and with enthusiasm.
- 57 Delegation of staff to management responsibilities is very good. Many are at the beginning of their teaching careers and are fairly new in post, but all support the management structure of the school and are keen to raise standards. They all manage their areas very well. This has helped the school move forward in some of its recent

developments, for example the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the raising of standards in English. Very good systems are in place to monitor teaching and curricular development, particularly in the core subjects, with the senior management team, year leaders and subject co-ordinators contributing very effectively to the overall system. All staff are given release time to manage their subjects, but when a subject is a priority for development further time is allocated. This is a very effective arrangement, as it allows staff to offer guidance and advice to colleagues, and to be aware of standards. The system for identifying teachers' development needs is very good and carried out on a regular basis by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team. Senior teachers have been very well trained to support and monitor their colleagues. Training opportunities are extremely well targeted to the school development plan and its priorities, and to performance management. All these very good arrangements help to ensure that the school is dealing very effectively with the high turnover of staff.

- 58 The provision for special educational needs is very well managed. The part time SEN co-ordinator has set up effective systems which support pupils well, including those times when she is not in the school. Class teachers are fully involved in the monitoring and review of pupils' individual education plans and this helps to ensure pupils' needs are supported well in lessons. The co-ordinator supervises the work of the classroom assistants and helps in their training. This has helped to ensure that they are very well qualified, work very well under the direction of the class teachers and give significant support to teaching and learning. Currently there is only a small number of EAL pupils in the school. A very good awareness of their needs means that management of this aspect of the school's work by the senior management team and year leaders is very good. The expertise of all adults who work in the school gives significant support to SEN and EAL pupils. There are sufficient small rooms for pupils to work separately if required, and good space in or adjacent to classrooms for them to work in groups or on their own if necessary. Good resources are provided to help support learning.
- 59 There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. Year leaders ensure that very good arrangements are in place to support the teacher in the classroom. There is a detailed handbook giving helpful information for all new staff and valuable support is available for supply teachers. Mentoring arrangements are extremely effective. However, many teachers, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher, have been appointed in the last three years. In addition, the school is experiencing the same difficulties in recruiting and retaining good quality teachers as is seen nationally. Parents are rightly concerned about the high staff turnover. Many staff are new to the school and some are in their early years of teaching. This has slowed the school's effectiveness in maintaining and furthering some developments. Nevertheless, the induction of new staff is of a high quality. All staff work closely together to improve the standards of pupils in the school. There are competent, skilful teaching assistants who provide extremely effective support for SEN pupils and for the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers deploy and brief classroom assistants exceptionally well and the quality of support helps to improve standards. The good number of mid-day assistants and their expertise in supervision and support of pupils in the dining hall and playground significantly help the very good behaviour and relationships seen.
- 60 The headteacher, senior managers and governors focus very clearly on ensuring that expenditure helps to raise standards. Spending is targeted very effectively with the principles of best value applied exceptionally well. The high under spend for the last financial year has been specifically reserved for the continuing refurbishment programme and improvement to the ICT provision. The vast majority will be spent this

year. The school makes good use of the local education authority support and uses technology well to develop manageable, yet efficient, systems. In addition to the support of routine administrative activities, where computerised systems are used well, the school has moved forward to embrace the benefits of information and communication technology in areas such as financial monitoring, record keeping and running the library. The school's financial planning is excellent. Financial administration, budgetary control and the day-to-day running of the procedures are very well established. The school has established systems to provide monitoring information. The school development plan clearly identifies priorities and costs and links well to the budget allocation process. Strategic planning is very good with a clear analysis of future commitments. For example, the headteacher, senior management team and governors have already explored the long-term financial implications of fewer pupils entering the school. The school makes very good use of the specific funds available to it, such as those allocated to meet SEN pupils' needs, which are spent very effectively.

- 61 Resources are good and used well in all areas with the exception of the currently limited use of computers in classrooms. The school has plans to address this issue imminently. As a result of well-targeted expenditure the quality and range of learning resources have improved progressively in recent years so that there are no weaknesses in provision. The accommodation is now very good and over the last few years has been imaginatively reorganised to provide effective learning areas, including a library and computer suite. The classrooms and public areas are extremely well organised, attractive and maintained to a high standard. The caretaker and cleaning staff make a very positive contribution to the good quality of the learning environment. Displays are used very well in classroom and corridors to create a stimulating environment where pupils' achievements are promoted and celebrated.
- 62 The school is now effective, with an excellent ethos and relationships, improved quality of teaching, much improved attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and standards that are rising. It now gives good value for the money invested in it, which is an improvement since the last inspection, when it was found to be satisfactory.

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

- 63 Build on the good work already being undertaken in the school and continue to raise standards further by: -

1. Improving the presentation of pupils' work through:

- giving greater emphasis to the teaching of handwriting and spelling;
- ensuring that pupils record their work carefully in all subjects.

See paragraphs 4, 5, 20, 67, 70, 79, 83, 85, 103, 108 and 128.

*(The need to improve these aspects of pupils' work has already been identified and strategies put in place to help raise standards)*

2. Encouraging greater progress of the most able pupils, especially in English and mathematics, by:

- continuing to improve assessment procedures so that they can be identified more accurately;
- having consistently higher expectations of what they can achieve;
- planning activities, which challenge and fully extend their learning.



See paragraphs 11, 21, 44, 70, 76, 80 and 85.

3. Ensuring greater consistency in the quality of marking and assessment so that:

- the marking of pupils' work identifies what they have achieved and gives guidance on how to improve;
- all assessment takes full account of all the criteria set out in the levels of attainment in the National Curriculum.
- bringing into full use the new assessment systems for the Foundation Subjects.

See paragraphs 25, 43, 45, 78, 80, 92, 97, 104, 108, 115 and 130.

*(The new marking and assessment procedures being implemented this term are already bringing about improvements in some key areas.)*

4. Planning opportunities to ensure that information and communication technology is effectively used to support learning in other subjects and ensuring that resources are available to all classrooms.

See paragraphs 8, 20, 29, 61, 68, 85, 91, 104, 108, 110, 112, 113 and 115.

*(There are already plans for the provision of networked computers for all classrooms in the school and the school is now waiting for the resources to become available.)*

Governors may also wish to include these minor areas for development:

- a) Adopt the same good strategies to encourage pupils' spiritual development as those recently put in place for cultural development by: -
- carrying out an audit and review of the current provision;
  - providing a comprehensive document to help teachers plan for this aspect in the teaching and learning in the full range of subjects.

See paragraph 35

- b) Review the homework arrangements so that they more effectively support the work in class.

See paragraphs 26 and 50

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	81
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	83

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	23	38	13	0	0	0
Percentage	9.8	28.1	46.4	15.9	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	378
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	121

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	44	42	86

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	32	31	40
	Girls	32	23	33
	Total	64	54	73
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (60)	63 (51)	85 (67)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	32	35
	Girls	27	31	30
	Total	52	63	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (63)	73 (58)	76 (70)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	366
Any other minority ethnic group	4

*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	2	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: Y3 - Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	25.2

#### **Education support staff: Y3 - Y6**

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	305

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	861693
Total expenditure	856284
Expenditure per pupil	2023
Balance brought forward from previous year	99106
Balance carried forward to next year	104515

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	12.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	11.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	378
Number of questionnaires returned	85

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	47	6	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	31	56	9	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	18	65	8	2	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	39	38	7	0
The teaching is good.	21	69	4	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	41	33	6	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	39	11	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	31	53	12	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	11	55	26	6	1
The school is well led and managed.	29	52	9	4	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	21	65	11	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	35	28	12	12

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

### **ENGLISH**

- 63 The school has made good progress in improving the provision, and raising standards since it was last inspected. Across the school, most pupils, including SEN and EAL pupils, are making good progress and they achieve well for their abilities. The majority of current Year 6 pupils are reaching average standards. This is the same as the results in the 2000 national tests. Last year standards fell. There are two main reasons for this. First, the number of SEN pupils in the year group (34.25 per cent) was higher than the average of the school and 50 per cent more than is seen nationally. Secondly, the standards achieved by pupils in one of the Year 6 classes had been significantly affected by a high number of staff changes, culminating in the class teacher leaving at the end of the term previous to that in which the pupils sat the tests. The standards achieved by the pupils in the other Year 6 classes were not far below those achieved in 2000, especially when the higher level of SEN pupils is taken into account. Until this year standards in writing were not as good as those in reading. In particular, boys were under-achieving in writing. This weakness has largely been addressed, with the majority of current Year 6 pupils, including boys, reaching average standards in this aspect. This good work means that there is now little difference in the achievement of boys and girls by the time they leave the school. Over the last five years, the overall improvement in standards has been better than in the majority of schools.
- 64 Standards on entry to the school vary from year to year, being very closely linked to the number of SEN pupils in each year group. However, standards are below those seen nationally in speaking and listening and also in some aspects of writing, particularly for boys.
- 65 There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, not only in literacy lessons, but also in other subjects. When pupils enter the school, the majority have reached average standards in listening, although a minority, mainly boys, find it difficult to concentrate in whole class sessions. Standards in speaking are not so good. Although many pupils talk confidently and express themselves clearly, the vocabulary they use is limited and they often make grammatical errors. Throughout the school, good listening is supported very well. Pupils are expected to listen well to adults and to each other. Good opportunities in literacy lessons encourage pupils to discuss their ideas with a partner and this helps develop both their listening and speaking skills. Personal, social and health education lessons also give very good support to this aspect. Teachers are good at modelling Standard English, making sure that pupils are sensitively corrected when they use colloquial English. Year 6 pupils grow in confidence, to speak effectively in a range of situations. The excellent relationships seen in the school mean that very nearly all pupils feel confident to put forward their ideas and to listen appreciatively to those whose views may differ. The good opportunities being developed in drama are also supporting pupils' development well. For example, during the inspection, pupils could adapt their language effectively to assume different roles during a play in an assembly. By the time they leave the school, most pupils have made good progress to reach the standards expected for their age. The sensitive support given to SEN and EAL pupils ensures they make the same good progress as other pupils. Very nearly all pupils achieve well for their abilities.

- 66 The majority of pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills, and all pupils, including SEN and EAL pupils, achieve well for their abilities. By the time they leave the school, the majority of pupils are confident in reading texts at the level expected for their age and reach at least average standards. Reading skills are promoted well in literacy lessons and most pupils refer well to texts when discussing books. For example, they describe how characters are feeling, and accurately explain the direction the plot is likely to take. More able pupils select key points, using characters and settings to elaborate their answers. Most pupils read accurately, fluently and expressively. A good example of this was seen when a group of Year 4 pupils read aloud from a play script. Pupils enjoy reading their written work to the class and this helps them to develop a good understanding of their learning. Pupils with SEN and EAL are technically correct in what they read, building up unknown words from the syllables although they are sometimes hesitant. The majority of the average and more able pupils enjoy reading. Although less able pupils do not enjoy reading so much, the encouragement given by the school ensures they develop the good habit of reading at home as well as at school. The good focus on a wide range of reading skills and regular visits to the school library help pupils to retrieve information from non-fiction books. Very nearly all pupils know how to locate information by using the library classification system, contents, index and glossary. Average and more able pupils begin to skim and scan texts for the quick retrieval of information. These good skills are also supporting pupils' learning in other subjects, such as history and geography.
- 67 Excellent evaluation of test data by the school led to the implementation of effective measures to improve standards. Better progress is now being made in writing where most pupils are achieving well for their abilities. The majority of current Year 6 pupils reach average standards. The style of pupils' writing, and the appropriateness of what they write for different audiences, are good. However, presentation, including handwriting and spelling, is still not as good as it should be and this was also seen at the last inspection. Most pupils write cursively, but letters are not always formed correctly and neatly. Inaccurate spelling spoils some otherwise very high quality writing. These weaknesses are also affecting the quality of written work in other subjects, such as geography. The school has recognised and planned to improve these areas. In addition to ensure extra time is spent developing these skills in lessons, the school is endeavouring to raise the profile of good presentation and writing and has recently set up an after school club on calligraphy. Very good attention is given to ensuring pupils recognise the importance of writing for different audiences. In addition, there is a good focus on different styles and genres. Good teaching of these aspects results in lively, thoughtful and interesting writing. During the inspection, some good standards were achieved in Year 3 when writing play scripts and in Year 4 when writing clear instructions for a design and technology project. Year 5 pupils produced poetry of a good quality, using metaphors and similes such "scared is – 'a wolf howling at a full moon' ". Year 6 pupils are becoming skilled at writing from different points of view, as in retelling the story of Oliver Twist in the workhouse from Oliver's point of view. Year 6 pupils also wrote very informative letters to a friend, pretending they were living through the Southampton Blitz.
- 68 Many good opportunities to write for a range of purposes, across different subjects such as history, and design and technology, mean that pupils are developing effective communication skills. The more able pupils in Year 6 produce the school newspaper, "The Beechwood Times". During the inspection week, they interviewed an inspector and took photographs to present as a report. The lack of computers in classrooms limits the opportunities for pupils to use word processing to help develop their writing skills. However, there are plans to site further computers in the spacious corridor areas outside each classroom.

- 69 The excellent relationships seen in the school, together with the very good behaviour seen, encourage all pupils to develop very good attitudes to English. Sensitive support by both teachers and classroom assistants for SEN and EAL pupils ensures that they are included well in literacy lessons and other English activities. A major reason for the rising standards is the success of the school's strategies to improve boys' achievement in writing. This has had excellent results. During the inspection, Year 5 boys in the above average group showed great enthusiasm for writing descriptions of the sunrise. The below average Year 6 boys enthusiastically explained how Mr Bumble would describe the meals served to the boys in "Oliver Twist" as "nourishing", but Oliver would describe them as "inedible". The same very good attitudes are also seen in reading where most pupils talk enthusiastically about what they have read. The very good attitudes and behaviour seen in many lessons play an important part in supporting the good progress pupils make.
- 70 Teaching is good overall and a high proportion is very good or excellent. Very nearly all the teaching seen during the inspection was good, with six out of twenty-five lessons being very good and four being excellent. The teaching of reading skills is very good. This includes how to identify the characteristics of different genre and to predict what is likely to happen by analysing the plot and characters. Skills in teaching some aspects of writing are also very good. For example, these help pupils to develop a very good style and use of vocabulary, and the ability to write well for different purposes and audiences. However, there is less emphasis on teaching pupils to write clearly and legibly, and to use spelling rules, other than by building up words through the sounds. This has resulted in pupils making very good progress in their learning in the former aspect, but only satisfactory progress in the latter. The vast majority of lessons, including literacy, group reading and extended writing, are very well planned. The organisation of pupils into groups according to their ability in literacy lessons significantly helps the work to be well matched to pupils of different ability. Work is built well on what most pupils can already do and this is supported by the good use of marking and assessment of previous work. However, on a minority of occasions, the work planned for the most able pupils in the above average group is not sufficiently challenging. This is because the previous assessment of pupils did not clearly identify the level at which these pupils were working. The new assessment systems recently introduced are much more effective and this weakness is likely to be addressed. The methods all teachers use are very good. In particular, the whole class activities in literacy lessons are very well managed. For example, in an excellent lesson seen in Year 3, the quality of explanations and the vocabulary used helped all pupils to make at least good progress. In a Year 6 lesson, the excellent subject expertise of the class teacher ensured that pupils' ideas were fully developed and led to very good learning taking place. The school's excellent systems for behaviour management, which are consistently applied by all staff, mean that the management of pupils is very good. This aspect is considerably enhanced by the excellent relationships teachers have with pupils. Very good attention is given to including all pupils well in learning. For example, in an outstanding Year 6 lesson, SEN and EAL pupils were allowed to "phone a friend" when they were not totally sure of an answer. The support given by the very well qualified classroom assistants is very good. This is especially so for SEN and EAL pupils. The assistants help explain things to these pupils in language they easily understand. In addition, the pupils are encouraged to check the accuracy of their replies with the assistant before answering in front of the whole class. This gives significant support to their self-esteem. Homework has been planned to support learning effectively. This is given in half termly blocks and matched to topics in each week. It gives sound support to pupils' learning.



- 71 The curriculum is good, being rich and interesting. This, together with the good teaching, helps pupils to develop good attitudes to their work. In addition to the very well planned literacy lessons, very good group reading sessions, extended writing lessons and opportunities for drama are all helping pupils to make good progress. The very good attention given to meeting the specific needs of SEN and EAL pupils ensures that they are effectively included in the full range of learning activities. Although good provision is made for the more able pupils, through group work in the Year 3 and 4 classes and through the organisation of class groups by ability in Years 5 and 6, there are a few occasions in which the needs of the most able pupils are not fully met.
- 72 Leadership and management of the subject are outstanding with very high quality monitoring of the provision pupils' attainment. A very knowledgeable and hardworking co-ordinator is fully supported by senior management, and also by all staff in the school. This, together with the very good analysis of national and other tests, which clearly identifies where the provision needs to improve, are helping to promote good progress and to raise standards further. The number and quality of teachers and classroom assistants are very good and help promote good learning. Most classrooms are of a good size for the range of activities. The library is spacious and well laid out. A classroom assistant, who manages the loans, also gives good support in helping pupils develop their library skills. In addition, she opens the library after school so that pupils and their parents can change books together. Resources, including a good range of books in the library and for group reading, are good and teachers use these well to help pupils learn. The lack of regular access to computers for writing activities limits pupils' use of word processing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 73 In both the 2000 and 2001 National Curriculum tests, the school's results were well below those of the majority of schools nationally and also of similar schools. Not enough pupils attained the expected level and the school did not reach the target it had set for raising standards in 2001. Although pupils had made satisfactory progress during Year 6, results were disappointing because a high proportion had special educational needs and some had experienced a series of temporary and supply teachers. However, standards have been rising slowly, and at the same rate as is seen in most schools, over the past five years. Due to the continued focus on this aspect and recent good decisions made to adjust the provision, standards are now rising at a better rate. Inspection findings show that current pupils are reaching satisfactory standards and that the majority of pupils now in Year 6 are likely to reach the expected Level 4 in the tests this year. The improvement in standards since the last inspection is now good.
- 74 Although most pupils entered the school with below to average standards in mathematics, and there are few higher attainers, they have made satisfactory progress over time and achieve appropriately for their abilities. In recent and current work, inspectors found no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils with SEN make good progress and EAL pupils require no extra support for their learning and their progress and achievements are similar to that of other pupils.
- 75 The school sees the raising of standards in mathematics as a priority, and staff are working hard to achieve this. The subject co-ordinator and senior managers have made a thorough analysis of test results, identified gaps in pupils' learning and planned to address these. The school uses the National Numeracy framework to enable the teachers to produce good quality lesson planning. The setting arrangements are used successfully, especially in Year 6, where the use of booster classes is contributing

towards the raising of standards. As a result of dividing pupils into set groups for mathematics, teachers can set work at a suitable level and take into account the differences in progress to enhance opportunities for effective learning.

- 76 By the age of eleven, pupils have good understanding of place value. Most choose the appropriate operation when solving problems. They collect and interpret data, for example by using a frequency table. Good coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study ensures that the majority of pupils make secure gains in their skills and knowledge and reach the standards expected by the time they leave the school. For example, pupils gain a secure understanding of standard measures including angles and apply these accurately in their calculations and when solving problems. They check the accuracy of their answers by making well-judged estimations. The more able pupils work quickly and confidently, however the assessment procedures do not clearly identify the most able pupils and this limits the provision of sufficient challenge and enrichment, which would help to raise the standards for these pupils further. Teachers are effective in giving the less able and SEN pupils more time to consolidate their knowledge and understanding at an appropriate level. In a brisk session of mental arithmetic, most pupils demonstrated reasonable knowledge of multiplication tables and understanding fractions. Thorough attention to the development of mental and oral skills has improved pupils' speed and ability in number work. Teachers use resources effectively at the start of numeracy lessons, for example by using counting sticks to reinforce multiplication facts. Important mathematical vocabulary is shared and written on whiteboards to encourage pupils in their answers. Pupils are always encouraged to explain how they work out answers and they are developing good strategies to solve problems.
- 77 Pupils with SEN make good progress in mathematics with work planned well to meet their needs. Teachers make good use of the help provided by classroom assistants to support learning, which they do very well. In one Year 6 class, the classroom assistant played a fraction game whilst the teacher encouraged the pupils to help her to solve the problem. In a Year 3 lower-attaining class, the classroom assistant sat with a small group of pupils during the mental session and prompted them to try and answer questions. As a result they joined in the session and were prepared to 'have a go'.
- 78 The quality of teaching and pupils' learning are good, overall. Examples of very good and excellent teaching were also observed throughout the school. Lessons are carefully planned, based on the pattern of the National Numeracy framework. In particular, teachers make careful allowance for the provision of practical and problem solving activities. All teachers make good use of mental activities at the beginning of lessons; they are aware of the need to extend pupils' mathematical vocabulary, and they are careful to address this issue during lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work promptly but, although some teachers provide comments of advice or praise, others do not carry out the practice consistently. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide clear instructions, which enable pupils to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. Where teaching is particularly good, lessons have a brisk pace, expectations are very high and all pupils are challenged well. An excellent example of this was a Year 6 low-attaining group where the teacher successfully taught the use of fractions as 'operators' and managed to inspire the pupils to succeed and enjoy their learning.
- 79 Pupils clearly enjoy the work and the mental activities in particular. They settle to their written and practical tasks with interest and enthusiasm, work well with other pupils when required, know what they are expected to do, and make great efforts to accomplish their tasks. Pupils are nearly always well behaved, and on occasions their behaviour is exemplary. This enables them to concentrate well and make good progress. Teachers

make good use of the concluding sessions of lessons to check pupils' understanding and celebrate some of the work done. Presentation in books does need some attention as this can often lead to careless errors in the pupils' working.

- 80 Leadership in mathematics is very good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and she carefully monitors work being undertaken in the school, as well as supporting her colleagues' planning. She has played a very important role in raising standards of teaching and learning in the subject. Assessment has improved and she is already aware of the need to improve the assessment and provision for the most-able pupils. Resources are now good and each class has an individual supply of basic mathematical equipment in addition to other quality resources stored centrally. Numeracy is generally used appropriately in other subjects, such as in design and technology when Year 6 made slippers. The lack of computers in classrooms means that limited use is made, at present, of ICT to further develop pupils' mathematical skills. With the very good leadership provided by the co-ordinator and the progress made so far, the school is in a good position to improve standards in mathematics further.

## SCIENCE

- 81 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds, the school's overall results were close to the national average and also in line with similar schools. Results in the 2001 tests were slightly lower. This is largely due to the high proportion of SEN pupils in the year group and the high staff turnover adversely affecting standards in one class. Inspection evidence for the current Year 6 pupils indicates that standards are better than last year. The majority are likely to achieve average standards with a significant minority reaching the higher levels. Over the past five years, and also for current pupils, there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
- 82 Standards have improved well over the past five years, and at a better rate than is seen nationally. This is due to the hard work of staff and good developments in the curriculum. Standards continue to rise and all pupils, including the more able. SEN and EAL pupils, make at least satisfactory, and often good, progress to achieve well for their abilities. Teaching has improved and is now good. A particular improvement is the emphasis on scientific enquiry and the correct use of scientific vocabulary. This helps pupils to understand scientific concepts more easily and to gain a good understanding of their learning.
- 83 Throughout the school, teachers provide activities which build well on pupils' knowledge and skills. Learning is good and, this year, in Years 4 to 6 the majority of pupils are reaching the expected standards, with an increasing number of pupils attaining better than average as they move through the school. In Year 3, standards on entry were slightly below average, with fewer children attaining above the expected level than in previous years. The school gives very good attention to developing both pupils' knowledge and skills, particularly the further development of scientific enquiry skills and the correct use of scientific vocabulary. Pupils have a good understanding of how to plan and carry out a scientific investigation, including the need to ensure the test is fair. There are appropriate opportunities for older pupils to carry out investigations that they have designed themselves. Year 6 pupils use force meters well to measure mass in Newtons, and provide good descriptions of different push and pull forces. They are aware of equal and opposite forces, and explain the relationships well by using key words. Year 5 pupils investigate the effect of exercise on pulse rate. They know about the need for a varied and healthy diet and appreciate the importance of regular exercise. They are planning, collecting, recording and explaining their evidence well, but the quality of written presentation varies and is slightly below expectations overall. In the computer suite, one

class has designed and produced impressive posters on the topic of keeping healthy using a publishing program. Through investigations, Year 4 pupils predict and then discover that some materials can be separated and that some solids react differently to others when added to water. Likewise, Year 3 pupils are investigating to find out how materials can be classified. The modified tasks and good support given to SEN and EAL pupils mean they are included well in all science activities, although their skills in recording their work are under-developed.

- 84 As the result of good teaching, pupils are interested in and enjoy science. They enthusiastically take part in discussions, investigations and research, using reference books. Opportunities provided by the teachers to discuss their findings and report back to the whole class make a positive contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills. Attitudes to science are very good, illustrated well by the concentration shown during practical work. Behaviour is good in both whole class and group and paired activities. On occasions, teachers encourage pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for aspects of their learning, such as when asked to make improvements to explanations about forces.
- 85 The quality of teaching is good. It was never less than satisfactory and, on occasions, very good. It is having a positive impact on learning because of the interest generated, the effective use of probing questions and scientific vocabulary and, in the best lessons, the links made with the outside world and industry. Teachers plan very well with clear learning intentions and assessment opportunities. Generally teachers have good subject knowledge and organise and manage pupils very well. The best teaching allows pupils to develop their own ideas, linked to specific scientific targets. This was demonstrated well in a very good Year 6 lesson where pupils were encouraged to apply their knowledge of forces and wind resistance to offer effective explanations as to why a speed skier seen on the "Speed" video was not blown away by winds of 150 miles per hour. Resources are also used to good effect. Teachers throughout the school often make good use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to promote learning in science. Pupils are expected to collect data and record their work carefully, but the lack of computers in classrooms prevents pupils from using their ICT skills to enhance their learning. In addition, some work is poorly presented and this affects its quality. Marking does not give enough advice to help pupils to understand how they can improve.
- 86 The good curriculum, which is based on a national scheme of work, ensures an effective balance between the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. It is well planned and good use is made of links with literacy, numeracy and a number of other subjects, although not sufficiently with ICT. Good assessment procedures also record the development of pupils' skills. The information is analysed very well in order to set targets for improvement, both for the individual pupils and for the year group as a whole. Learning in science makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. A good example was when they were encouraged to reflect on what happens when winds reach up to 150 miles an hour. In addition, good links are made with the outside world and industry.
- 87 The co-ordinator has led the subject very well and she monitors the school's provision and the standards pupils achieve very effectively. She has raised its profile throughout the school and helped ensure the notable improvement in widening pupils' scientific vocabulary, improving enquiry skills and raising their awareness of the importance of science outside the classroom. She runs a popular science club during a lunch time. These initiatives have had a positive impact on achievement.

## ART AND DESIGN

- 88 At the last inspection standards in art were judged to be in line with national expectations at age eleven, although the quality of work was variable across the year groups. The school has made sound progress since then and standards in art and design remain satisfactory, with pupils making steady gains in their knowledge and understanding. The provision has improved with the adoption of the national guidance and most areas of work are represented, but the multicultural dimension is not as strong as other areas, although this is an area currently in development. The impact of the scheme of work has not yet had time to make any significant difference to standards.
- 89 The school has been working to raise the profile of art in a variety of ways, for example, through the 'artist in residence'. Work completed, by the pupils, on large silk banners depicting journeys through life is very impressive and promotes teamwork and co-operation. Displays play a more prominent feature, not only in promoting art, but in successfully enhancing the learning environment in the corridors and public areas. An extra-curricular art and design club gives older pupils opportunities to explore different techniques, including batik on silk and the use of computer programs to create effective designs based on the work of Seurat.
- 90 Teaching is at least satisfactory and on occasions good. It is evident that, by Year 6, pupils have had a satisfactory range of experiences upon which to build their knowledge of art and design and of the work of well-known artists, although their experiences are usually confined to western art. A good proportion of Year 6 pupils effectively use swirling patterns and shapes to convey a night sky, based on the work of Van Gogh. In the best examples, the teacher successfully encourages pupils to carefully consider which brush to use and apply the paint thickly, allowing the colours to mix on the paper. Teachers give good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others to suggest ways of making improvements next time. All pupils, including SEN and EAL pupils, successfully participate in all activities and, with good encouragement, make similar progress to their peers.
- 91 Throughout the school, teachers promote the use of sketchbooks well. For example, in Year 4, pupils make careful observations of plants, and attempt to draw them from different perspectives. This will form ideas for collage, based on the work of Manet, in subsequent lessons. There are good links with literacy, as Year 5 pupils write out instructions in their sketchbooks to make a clay pot, based on a Roman design, and use a range of reference books to develop their ideas for their later work. Links to history are explored when Year 6 pupils create posters depicting rationing, and use watercolours in their pictures of buildings associated with World War 2 in Southampton. The use of ICT is evident in past work in Year 4 when symmetrical patterns and pictures of fish were created; this work was of a satisfactory standard. However, opportunities to use ICT are limited. This is an area the school is aware that it needs to develop.
- 92 Given the pupils' positive attitudes to the subject and improved provision, the school has the capacity to improve the subject. Although visitors come into the school and work with the pupils, visits to art galleries to enhance the curriculum are limited. Monitoring by the co-ordinator is not yet in place although the senior management team and year group leaders undertake this role as part of curricular monitoring. Formal systems for assessing pupils' skills or progress over time are underdeveloped.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 93 Evidence of the quality of learning has been taken from classroom activities, scrutiny of the pupils' written work and the artefacts they have made. Throughout the school, pupils complete their work to standards that are at least those expected for their age and abilities. This was the case at the last inspection. However, some of the work is now of a higher standard and improving, particularly the finished products, such as the slippers the previous Year 6 pupils made. The slippers were finished with good attention to detail for decoration purposes, as well as being functional.
- 94 Good work by the subject co-ordinator has helped to increase teachers' knowledge and confidence. As a result, pupils now have a very good experience in all the aspects of the designing, making and evaluating processes. This is helping to raise standards and pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, are now achieving well for their abilities. The work completed in topic books and the examination of the products that pupils make, show how well they respond to the opportunities provided by their teachers. Pupils work with a wide range of materials that allow them to use different joining techniques and make products move. There were good examples of joining materials and use of simple pneumatic systems in the moving monsters that Year 3 pupils produced.
- 95 Pupils work with a wide range of materials in very well planned lessons. The quality of teaching is good. The confidence of the teachers, and the good teaching of skills seen in the Year 4 lessons, helped pupils to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the use of money containers, and the designing, making and evaluation processes. Attention to introducing a variety of effects, such as stitching and using fabric paint prior to working on the product is particularly effective. This means pupils can select their own method of design, whilst practising techniques on a prototype and not on the product. The three-day topics, that all pupils complete once a term, are particularly successful, and help the pupils to understand the whole process and complete their products to a good standard. These events provide particularly good links with parents and governors, as they come in to help pupils making and finishing the products.
- 96 There are very good links with literacy as Year 4 teachers effectively promote pupils' speaking and listening skills as they encourage them to consider the suitability and appeal of a variety of money containers. Numeracy is promoted particularly well when pupils have to work out the most appropriate apparatus and way of measuring materials for their containers. Teachers stress the need for accuracy; this helps pupils complete their product well. There are good links with science as pupils use batteries and switches to complete circuits to make torches work. All pupils clearly enjoy this subject and they take care with the quality of their work. Teachers promote co-operation and teamwork in lessons very well. This helps pupils work well within groups, sharing equipment and exchanging ideas.
- 97 The enthusiastic subject co-ordinator has worked effectively to improve learning resources and to create a very good curriculum to support his colleagues. All the pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, now enjoy a rich learning experience in design and technology. This is a consequence of recent improvements in the subject. The co-ordinator does not formally monitor teaching but does look at the work pupils produce to ensure coverage of the subject and progression of skills. As yet, there are no formal systems for assessing pupils' skills or progress over time.

## GEOGRAPHY

- 98 During the inspection no lessons were seen in geography because the subject is taught in blocks alternating with history. Judgements on standards, teaching and pupils' learning are therefore based on scrutiny of pupils' work, displays around the school and discussions with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils.
- 99 There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. There is now an updated scheme of work based on national recommendations, resources have been increased, planning is more detailed and procedures are now in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. As a result standards have improved.
- 100 By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils reach standards which are line with expectations and achieve appropriately for their abilities. Pupils' map interpretation skills are developed through the study of Ordnance Survey maps when preparing for their visit to the village of Minstead in the New Forest. They give grid references to locate features on the map and recognise the importance of the key. Pupils make secure comparisons with a contrasting environment when they compare life in St Lucia with that in England and analyse differences in climate and land use. They become familiar with locating places on the globe.
- 101 Pupils increase their understanding of map work by studying weather maps and interpreting the symbols used. By the end of Year 6 they have a sound knowledge and understanding of the water cycle, and correctly explain the process of evaporation and condensation. Year 6 pupils speak confidently about Southampton and its importance as a port. They correctly define geographical terms associated with rivers such as tributary, meander, river basin and erosion. They consider environmental issues when examining coastal erosions and discuss the economic impact of floods. By the time most pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, leave the school they have a sound knowledge and understanding of different aspects of geography and are well prepared for the next stage of learning.
- 102 Current improvements in the quality of teaching have had a positive impact on pupils' attitudes. They enjoy their learning and talk about it enthusiastically. This means that current pupils are now making good progress as they move through the school.
- 103 Analysis of pupils' work, and other evidence, indicate that pupils are well taught. As a result, they acquire a good foundation in the subject by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and extend pupils' vocabulary of geographical terms. A range of opportunities for fieldwork helps pupils to acquire the skills of map reading and interpretation. Resources, such as atlases and globes, are soundly used to locate the places studied, such as St Lucia and Cherbourg. Although work is systematically marked with suggestions for improvements, teachers do not have high enough expectations about how the work should be presented.
- 104 The subject is managed by an enthusiastic, recently appointed co-ordinator. There is a clear vision for the development of the subject. A new national scheme of work, and the assessment system linked to this, have been introduced, but these are at the early stages of implementation. In the past there has been some inconsistency in the coverage within a year group. Not enough emphasis has been given to investigations through fieldwork, use of maps and surveys associated with the local area. In addition, the lack of easy access to computers limits their use in enhancing learning. Recent strategies to encourage cultural education will give greater support to work in geography.

## HISTORY

- 105 There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. These include the updating of the scheme of work with more detailed planning and increased resources including artefacts. The organisation of days when pupils can experience what life was like in the past, and an increase in the number of visitors help pupils to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of this aspect. Good links with literacy skills have been developed, for example in report writing, letter writing, interviews, account of events, drama and role-play. As a result, all pupils, including SEN and EAL pupils, are making better progress and standards have improved.
- 106 By the end of Year 6, most pupils reach standards which are now in line with national expectations. History is a high profile foundation subject and staff are enthusiastic in teaching it. The majority of pupils, including the more able and those with SEN and EAL, make at least satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately for their abilities. This is in spite of the increased focus the school has made on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
- 107 Most pupils reach the expected standards in all aspects of the subject. As part of their understanding of different periods of the history of Great Britain from Roman times to the present, the majority of pupils have a sense of chronology by using time lines to sequence the major events from 50 BC. Nearly all pupils gain a sound understanding of what life was like in past eras by comparing this with today. For example, the younger pupils compare Victorian schools with Beechwood, and the impact of the Tudor monarchy on people's lives with the influence today's monarchy has on their lives. In learning about the Roman and Viking invasions of Britain, older pupils understand the reasons behind the invasions, and appreciate the impact of the occupations. They also know that the ancient Greek and Egyptian civilisations made a valuable contribution to today and what we can learn of life then by studying artefacts in the British Museum. Most pupils acquire sound enquiry skills through using books and artefacts to find out about leisure pursuits in the past. They recognise how things are different now. The older pupils begin to develop their own research skills when finding out more about the Second World War and its impact on the lives of people all over the world. The school arranges history days when pupils dress up as historical characters and experience life during the period being celebrated. These educational experiences help pupils develop positive attitudes to their work and to work hard to make gains in their skills and knowledge.
- 108 The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers are very enthusiastic and motivate pupils well. This helps to ensure that pupils develop good attitudes and make at least satisfactory progress. Year 6 pupils say they enjoy their work, especially the range of history days. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good and work is well planned across year groups. Good use is made of visits to places of historical interest, including a visit to Manor Farm to learn about Victorian times, a focus on the Tudor era during visits to Hamble Country Park and Southsea Castle, and to Fishbourne Palace to explore how some Roman people in Britain lived. Year 6 pupils enjoyed talking to some of their grandparents about life in Southampton during the Second World War and studied photographic evidence in slides shown by the Bitterne Local History Society. Teachers make good use of time and resources in lessons, as seen in the use of video extracts in Year 6 classes which helped pupils to empathise with children evacuees from the area during the Second World War. The lack of computers in classrooms limits their use in supporting learning. Some work is recorded well, particularly when it is specifically linked to literacy. However, some work is not carefully presented and this spoils the quality. Co-ordination of the subject is effective and has led to improvements in the



provision. This, together pupils' achievement, is monitored satisfactorily. New assessment systems are in place, but are not yet fully implemented and this limits their use in monitoring progress and supporting future planning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 109 The school has made significant improvements since the previous inspection from a very low base. At that time the subject was under-developed and a key issue identified was the need to improve standards. This has been achieved. Standards have risen and there have also been improvements in the quality of teaching and curricular planning, the progress of pupils and their attitudes to learning. There is now a well-equipped ICT suite, which is timetabled for use, and the number of computers allows class groups to be taught effectively. The range of programs now meets the needs of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.
- 110 A good curricular overview and planning ensure effective curriculum coverage and enable pupils, including those with SEN and EAL to make good progress as they build well on their developing skills in the computer suite. The librarian uses a micro-librarian system and the pupils understand how the system works. In addition, another computer in the library allows pupils to do research by using a CD-ROM. Planned curricular links are made with other subjects, for example mathematics and science, and pupils undertake this work well within the suite. Plans are now well developed to ensure networked computers will be available in, or adjacent to, all classrooms. Resources for both teachers and pupils are giving effective support to learning in the suite. Teaching and pupils' resources have been purchased to support teaching. For example, the two digital cameras record and support the curricular developments and initiatives, like the good Year 4 Summer Art work. Pupils' work is effectively recorded on a floppy disk so that progress can easily be judged as they move through the school.
- 111 Standards are broadly in line with expectations for age. The majority of pupils including those with SEN and EAL and the more able, make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately for their abilities. In the computer suite, pupils find things out, develop their ideas well and make things happen. They exchange and share information with developing confidence and review, modify and evaluate their work well as it progresses. For example, in Year 6, pupils understand how to access and use the PowerPoint presentation program. They use this well when creating and designing their own multimedia pages for their presentation about a famous person linked to their history and science work. In database work, Year 5 pupils create a bar chart containing the information about their pulse rates for work in science. They also use spreadsheets appropriately. Year 4 pupils develop their word processing skills well, including starting up the computer and loading and opening files. They use a spellchecker to correct their work. Year 3 pupils successfully change the colour and size of the font and import pictures into a poster for which they then create a border.
- 112 Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the computer suite it is good, but insufficient emphasis is given in classrooms, partly because of the lack of access to computers. Staff have completed recent training and are developing their confidence and expertise well. This is having a positive effect on their teaching and the quality of the pupils' learning in the computer suite. In the suite all pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, are well challenged and supported, so they make good progress. Teaching assistants are well briefed and offer valuable support. In the lessons observed in the suite, teaching was at least good and, on occasions, very good or excellent. Teachers have good expertise and plan well, identifying clear learning intentions. They are enthusiastic, explain things well and skilfully question pupils. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, the

teacher challenged pupils to create their own presentations based on homework research about a famous person. Pupils worked in pairs of different ability levels, which successfully allowed peer assistance to take place. The teacher was extremely efficient in circulating, posing probing questions about procedures, and ensuring all pupils “had a go” and found out for themselves. The pace was brisk and pupils made significant gains in their learning as they rose to meet the teacher’s high expectations and challenges.

- 113 The current lack of computers in classrooms means that teachers are unable to provide regular opportunities for pupils to consolidate and apply their developing skills and to support their learning across the curriculum in their daily studies. Although computers are not used in general classrooms, calculators are used well to support learning in numeracy, videos help the work of Year 5 pupils in science and compact discs in music.
- 114 Pupils enjoy ICT and concentrate and collaborate well when using computers, for example when using a CD-ROM for research or when receiving e-mails. Behaviour is good and older pupils are confident enough to assist the teacher in operating the technology in the computer suite.
- 115 A new subject co-ordinator was appointed this September. She is already managing the subject very well. She has written an impressive “Vision and Positional Statement”, which demonstrates clearly her sharp analysis of the current position, identification of improvements made since the previous inspection and an excellent plan for what needs to happen in the future to improve the subject. This includes continuing to develop assessment procedures and improve resourcing, for example to allow use of ICT to support learning in music. There is continuing staff training to increase expertise. Other plans include the intention to re-establish the computer club and provide more ways of allowing ICT to support the learning of SEN pupils.

## **MUSIC**

- 116 Standards in music are above those seen nationally by the end of Year 6. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were in line with expectations. Musical tuition of instrumentalists remains a strength. Teaching, learning and curricular planning have improved.
- 117 By the end of Year 6, standards are above expectations. In performing skills, particularly singing, standards are high. Progress is at least good and generally very good for all pupils, including SEN and EAL pupils, so they achieve well. The school has adopted and adapted a national scheme, which leads children well through the elements of music. Pupils relish performing and enjoy composing their own work. They have good opportunities to do so. Pupils respond very well to the music of other composers and comment on music features with confidence. They interpret very well the mood the music conveys. Music is used well to develop skills in other subjects, particularly the development of literacy, dance, art and design, and thinking skills. The achievement of pupils by the end of Year 6 is good and extremely good for some of the instrumentalists. For example, during a Year 6 brass instrumental lesson, three boys were playing the trumpet exceedingly well and had already achieved very good standards in national music examinations.
- 118 Teaching is at least good and generally very good. High expectations, enthusiasm, good subject knowledge and use of musical terminology, skilled questioning and very effective behaviour management are features in the very good lessons. These help pupils to make very good progress. During singing in the hall with Years 3 and 4, the teacher, a trained singer, began with helpful breathing exercises. As the result of the teacher’s high

expectations, pupils sang tunefully and expressively with good and developing control. In a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils showed good understanding of the structure of a cyclical pattern, effectively explaining dynamics, tempo and timbre, after listening to an effective demonstration by one child on a drum. The teacher asked the class to listen to a recording of a similar pattern in Indian music, carefully questioning pupils to ensure they understood how the rhythm was grouped. Good discussion in a Year 6 lesson helped pupils to recognise why the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" should be sung with passion and volume. The teacher's own enthusiasm and good subject knowledge inspired the pupils. Learning was good and pupils quickly made the link to their work in history.

- 119 In lessons, pupils perform and evaluate the effects of their work maturely and perceptively. They are appreciative and supportive of each other. Pupils are well motivated and enjoy performing and creating music together and independently.
- 120 The deputy headteacher, a trained singer, recently took over co-ordination of the subject and she is managing and leading the subject extremely well. She is working closely with a newly qualified music specialist teacher who is likely to take over the management of the subject. High calibre instrumental tuition for brass, woodwind and string instruments is available throughout the school from peripatetic staff. Effective curricular planning ensures good coverage of all aspects of the subject and builds on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding well as they move through the school. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are developing. Resources are good and the school intends to purchase digital keyboards to use when computers are available in classroom so that pupils can more easily apply and develop their composition skills in Years 5 and 6. The comprehensive compact disc collection is of good quality, but the range of music from other countries is limited. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through the many opportunities to work and perform together at the Christmas or summer concerts. Plans are in hand to re-establish the school choir.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 121 Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations and most pupils, including the more able and those with SEN and EAL, achieve appropriately. This is similar to the standards observed at the previous inspection. Standards in swimming were above the expected level at the previous inspection and, although no swimming could be observed as the pool was out of use, evidence suggest that standards in swimming are still high and a notable strength of the school.
- 122 The school's programme for physical education covers all aspects and requirements of the National Curriculum and the commitment demonstrated by staff to the subject is high. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with excellent teaching being observed in Year 6. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and are confident in their presentation. They produce good planning with clear objectives and a logical development of skills. As a result, pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn. Pupils understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and are aware of the need to warm up before strenuous activities, and to cool down afterwards. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were out of breath after enjoying a series of exercises at the start of a session. Teachers' expectations of the pupils are high. Members of staff change into appropriate clothing for lessons and they provide generally good demonstration for pupils. The pace of lessons is brisk and good use is made of appropriate resources, including some very good games equipment.

- 123 In the best lessons, instructions are communicated to pupils precisely. Teachers demonstrate games skills or expressive arm and body movements clearly and good use is made of praise and encouragement. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher demonstrated effectively how to use a hockey stick to maintain control over the ball. Teachers often use pupils to demonstrate. However, there are too few opportunities to discuss the quality of work seen to help pupils to identify and evaluate the areas they might improve themselves. This is an area the school is aiming to improve.
- 124 As a result of enthusiastic teaching and commitment, pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. Effective behaviour strategies, used by teachers throughout the school, ensure that pupils behave very well and concentrate hard on the tasks set. Pupils follow instructions well and obey the safety rules. They work sensibly in pairs and co-operate well. Mixed gender pairings and groups are now the norm and the school has successfully addressed this issue from the last inspection. Pupils in Year 3 worked well in mixed pairs, for example, to develop a sequence of curls and stretches. As the result of excellent teaching, pupils in Year 6 worked with particularly good levels of effort and concentration to improve their hockey skills.
- 125 The subject is promoted well by the co-ordinator who is extremely enthusiastic. He has drawn up a suitable action plan to identify ways in which the subject should develop further and monitors the provision and standards satisfactorily. There is only the minimum amount of time allocated to the subject, mainly in afternoon sessions, as numeracy and literacy occupy most of the morning. This arrangement is restricting the use of the hall for physical education and alternative arrangements for outdoor activities when the weather is unsuitable. The scheme of work ensures pupils develop skills in a logical order. Resources are good and accessible. The school has a large hall and two large playgrounds, but no field. With the good leadership demonstrated by the co-ordinator and the commitment of staff, the school is well placed to improve standards further.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 126 The standards achieved in religious education by the end of Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the Hampshire Locally Agreed Syllabus.
- 127 By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils, including the more able and those with SEN and EAL, have gained a sound knowledge of the main features of the major religions of the world. They understand that prayer is meaningful and a powerful force in the lives of people of different faiths. Pupils know that Muslims pray five times a day facing Mecca and understand the importance of the prayer mat. They develop a good understanding of the differences, as well as the similarities, between different faiths. Younger pupils know that there are specific customs in different religions and compare different practices, such as baptism and marriage, which mark stages of commitment to believers' faith. They recognise the significance of holy books, such as The Bible and The Torah. Older pupils know the main features of Judaism, including the importance of the Ten Commandments. They have a sound understanding of the significance of different festivals, such as Christmas and Easter. Pupils begin to apply the principles of religious beliefs in analysing their own reaction to events. They consider the experience of loss through death and write their memories of a special person. This leads on to 'persons they most treasure' and the importance of family life. By the time they leave the school, pupils are beginning to apply their knowledge of religious beliefs to the moral issues in the world.

- 128 Most pupils, including the more able and those with SEN and EAL, make good progress as they move through the school. They learn about religion as well as learning from religion in considering the meaning of life. However there is inconsistency in the quantity and quality of recorded work.
- 129 Since the last inspection, standards have improved and teachers are more confident in teaching the subject. A new scheme of work has been devised with the support of the Local Education Authority inspector, based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and national guidance. New units of work have been drawn up by the co-ordinator for each year group and additional artefacts have been acquired to enhance the teaching of the subject. Each unit of work includes planned links to enhance literacy skills.
- 130 Teaching is good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, which enables them to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, and to answer questions posed by the pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils wanted to know why a compass was attached to a Muslim prayer mat. The work is well planned across the year groups so that pupils have equal opportunities to learn about different faiths. Good use is made of resources including the experiences of pupils in the class, as demonstrated in a lesson where pupils from a Jehovah Witness background explained their approach to prayer. The enthusiasm of the teachers is transmitted to the pupils who ask searching questions and think deeply about ideas that arise. Class management is good and most pupils respond with good behaviour and hard work, remaining on task to achieve the objectives of the lesson. High expectations of the teachers and a good pace of delivery result in keeping pupils' interest and concentrating throughout the lesson. However, there is less emphasis on the recording of work to help teachers assess the progress pupils make. Assessment systems are relatively new and are not yet fully implemented.
- 131 The subject is efficiently managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who provides valuable support to colleagues. She is involved in planning, as well as monitoring through analysis of pupils' work. There is a clear policy and scheme of work. The curriculum is enhanced by the visits made to places of religious significance, for example the local Hindu temple, and by visitors to the school, including a representative of the Islamic faith and the Methodist denomination. Acts of collective worship support religious education as seen in the assembly on the theme of special people.