

INSPECTION REPORT

BORDON JUNIOR SCHOOL

Bordon

Hampshire

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115864

Headteacher: John Sargent

Reporting inspector: Janet Sinclair

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 June 2002

Inspection number: 245286

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:	County
Age range of pupils:	7-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Budds Lane Bordon Hampshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Butler
Date of previous inspection:	3 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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19824	Mrs J Sinclair	Registered inspector	Religious education, art and design, design and technology	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught?
9756	Mr K Parsons	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
24891	Mrs J Johnson	Team inspector	Mathematics, history, geography, English as an additional language.	How well is the school led and managed?
23067	Mrs D Brigstock	Team inspector	English, music.	
12367	Mr A Green	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, physical education, special educational needs, equal opportunities.	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a junior school for boys and girls of seven to 11 years of age. It is slightly bigger than other junior schools having 279 pupils on roll. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and only four pupils for whom English is an additional language; their first language is Bangladeshi. They are given additional support to help them to understand and speak English. Twenty eight per cent of pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, which is above the national average. Of these, one per cent of pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is slightly below the national average. Their needs include dyslexia, autism, physical disability and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Nine per cent of pupils are eligible for a free school meal, which is well below the national average of 19 per cent. There are 11 classes; all with pupils of the same age and the average class size is twenty-five. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below average overall. The school is situated on Ministry of Defence land and a large proportion of the pupils come from serving personnel. These pupils often only stay for a short period of time so the school has to deal with high levels of turbulence. The school has undergone major refurbishment in the last year in order to improve the learning environment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good and improving school, which is being very well led by its new headteacher. He has created an exciting learning environment that is motivating staff and pupils alike. Relationships are very good throughout the school and this creates a very positive work ethos. As a result, pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well. The teaching is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good and is giving a clear and strong educational direction to the work of the school.
- Teaching is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum is interesting and relevant and is enhanced by very good extra-curricular activities and links with the community.
- There is good provision for English and it is very well used across the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is consistently good and these pupils achieve well. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to the provision. Provision for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is very good.
- The school is very effectively promoting pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour and relationships are very good throughout the school.

What could be improved

Standards in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) so that pupils reach the appropriate level for their age.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since its last inspection in 1997; however, much of this has been achieved since the arrival of the new headteacher. All the key issues have been addressed well. Attainment in history, art and religious education has improved and standards are now average. There has been a very good improvement in pupils' attitudes and behaviour, the proportion of good and very good teaching is much higher and the leadership of the headteacher is now very good. Assessment procedures are good and provide accurate information on pupils' performance, short-term planning has improved and teachers have high expectations of all pupils. The governing body carries out its role

effectively and school improvement is well managed. Cost effectiveness has improved as the school ensures that all spending is closely linked to the school's agreed priorities. The trend in core standards is upwards. The only apparent deterioration is in standards in mathematics and ICT, although pupils are achieving satisfactorily in both of these subjects as was recorded at the time of the last inspection. The school is very well placed to make further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	C	C	C
mathematics	E	E	E	E
science	C	D	C	C

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

This information shows that the performance of pupils in 2001 was in line both with the national average and that of similar schools (based on the number of pupils having a free school meal), in English and science and well below the national average in mathematics. These standards have remained fairly consistent over the past three years. The school's trend in standards is overall in line with the national trend.

Inspection findings indicate that standards are average in English and science and below average in mathematics at the end of Year 6. Pupils are achieving well in English and science and satisfactorily in mathematics given their below average attainment on entry. Standards in mathematics are improving as a result of good teaching and planning. However, there is scope for further improvement through a whole-school approach to addressing specific weaknesses in pupils' performance. Standards in all other subjects, except ICT, are average and pupils achieve at least satisfactorily and often well. Although standards are below average in ICT, pupils are achieving satisfactorily given their below average attainment on entry. The standard of their work has been affected by problems with the new computers, which has limited pupils' opportunities to use them.

The school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics, based on a regular review of pupils' progress. This is necessary due to the high level of pupil turbulence caused by the regular movement of services personnel. These targets are likely to be met.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are happy to come to school and work hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The school has very clear expectations for pupil behaviour and pupils respond very well to this. They behave extremely well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. There is a climate of mutual respect, which involves all in a partnership for learning. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. Unauthorised absence is high and this is linked to the poor attendance of a small number of pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good.

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

The quality of teaching is good and leads to good learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Of the lessons seen, almost two out of every three were good or better, approximately one in three was satisfactory and a small minority was unsatisfactory. There is a good level of consistency in teaching, and examples of good teaching were seen in every class. The very good and excellent teaching was seen mainly in Years 5 and 6. Teaching in English is good overall and basic literacy skills are very well taught. Teaching in mathematics is good overall whilst the basic skills of numeracy are taught satisfactorily. The main strengths in the teaching are good subject knowledge, well planned and organised lessons, interesting and engaging teaching methods and tasks that are well matched to pupils' differing learning needs, except in ICT. Teachers effectively deploy learning support assistants who give valuable support in lessons. They make good use of cross-curricular links, visits and visitors to provide exciting learning experiences. As a result, pupils are motivated and keen to learn and put a good amount of intellectual and creative effort into their work. In the very few lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, the pace of lessons was slow and teachers did not ensure that all pupils were engaged in the work and as a result, pupils lost interest and chatted to each other.

The main weaknesses in teaching, which are affecting standards in mathematics and ICT, are that teachers do not make enough use of these subjects across the curriculum, work is not well matched to pupils' differing learning needs in ICT and marking is not well used to help pupils to improve their work in mathematics.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is relevant and interesting and is enhanced well by the school's very good provision for extra-curricular activities and links with the community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported and as a result make good gains in their learning. Learning support assistants and special educational needs teachers work hard to support them in lessons. Provision for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils get additional support to ensure that they understand the technicalities of the English language. Their progress is monitored well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. Provision for social development is very good and is promoted very well through the school council, visits, opportunities to work together and an appreciation of the success of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides a supportive environment in which pupils feel safe and valued. The school has effective mentoring systems in place to help the large number of new pupils to settle quickly into school routines. Procedures for child protection and the health and safety of pupils are satisfactory. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good.

Parents have positive views of the school and the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall. The school needs to improve the reports parents are given on their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The leadership provided by the new headteacher is very good. He is providing a very clear educational direction for the work of the school, which has already led to significant improvements in the school's ethos. The school improvement team has worked extremely hard under his direction to set up an interesting and relevant curriculum. Staff with management responsibilities are developing their roles well. However, the role of the deputy head teacher is underdeveloped.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The school does not have a full complement of governors, but those who are in place work extremely hard to fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and actively support the school in addressing them. They have successfully helped to shape the school's direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Teaching and curriculum developments have been effectively monitored to ensure that improvements are made. Performance data is analysed well and used to set targets for improving pupils' performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of its resources including specific funding. Very good use has been made of surplus funds to improve the fabric of the building in order to create a better working environment. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

The school is well staffed, accommodation is good and there are enough resources to meet curricular requirements.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children are taught well and make good progress. • Their children like school and work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The school works closely with parents and they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • Behaviour in the school.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views held by parents. However, in terms of what parents would like to see improved, the inspection team considers that the amount of homework is appropriate for the age and aptitude of the pupils and behaviour, which has been steadily improving, is now very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. However, the school has a high level of turbulence as a large number of its pupils are children of services personnel and only remain in school for short periods of time. These pupils often arrive without any background information on their attainment. Although the school is attempting to track the attainment and progress of these pupils, this has only just begun. Only 50 per cent of the pupils currently in Year 6 started the school in Year 3. From examining the school's data and looking at pupils' work, the judgement is that in any year group, attainment on entry is below average overall.
2. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6, results were average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, based on the number of pupils having a free school meal, results were average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. When the three years 1999 to 2001 are taken together, results have fluctuated in science, improved in English and remained well below average in mathematics. The school's trend in standards is broadly in line with the national trend. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls over time. Standards in mathematics have deteriorated since the previous inspection, whilst standards in English and science have been maintained. However, although standards in mathematics appear to have deteriorated, pupils are achieving satisfactorily and this is a similar finding to the previous inspection. The school is likely to meet its targets for English and mathematics, which it carefully adjusts to meet the changing profile of the Year 6 group
3. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 6, standards are average in English and science and below average in mathematics. This represents good achievement in English and science and satisfactory achievement in mathematics based on pupils' below average attainment on entry. Pupils are achieving well in English because the school makes good use of the literacy strategy, literacy skills are used well across the curriculum, teaching is good and lessons are very well planned. In mathematics, although standards are now improving as a result of good planning and good teaching, weaknesses remain. Staff leaving has affected management of the subject, mathematics is not used well across the curriculum and the school has not addressed weaknesses identified in tests in a systematic, whole-school manner in order to secure greater improvement. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs achieve well.
4. Standards are average in all other subjects except ICT where they are below average. Pupils are achieving well in history and geography and satisfactorily in all other subjects. This is due to good teaching and the well-planned and interesting curriculum, which has recently been introduced. This is beginning to have an impact on standards achieved. Pupils now enjoy learning and are interested in all their work.
5. There has been an improvement in standards in art and design, history and religious education since the previous inspection and a deterioration in standards in ICT. Standards in ICT have been affected to some extent by technical difficulties, which have meant that the school has not been able to make full use of its computers and this has been made worse by the recent change to new multimedia computers. However, the school is not making enough use of ICT across the curriculum and is not matching work well enough to pupils' differing learning needs.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good gains in their learning, relative to their prior attainment. They make good progress towards their individual targets because of work, which is well matched to their needs, and the good support given by the learning support assistants and special educational needs' teachers. Most pupils whose targets are linked to behaviour rather than academic progress make good progress towards these.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment.

7. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well with respect to their prior attainment. Their needs are assessed early in Year 3 and the necessary provision designed to enable them to learn well is put into place promptly.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are enthusiastic and hold positive views about school. They like being members of Bordon Junior School community, and are very willing to talk about their experiences of school life. Many are personable young people, whom it is a real pleasure to meet. Most of them are happy to come to school and are prepared and willing to work hard at their lessons, participating well in the tasks set for them. They complete their homework willingly and a large number of pupils take advantage of the range of extra-curricular activities on offer. They have good involvement and interest in school activities.
9. The behaviour of pupils in the school is very good, an aspect appreciated by most parents. There is a consistent message from pupils, parents and staff that this represents a very good improvement, very much linked to the clear expectations and culture of very good behaviour established on the arrival of the current headteacher. Now pupils conform well to the school's expectations. Their sensible behaviour in most lessons means that teachers do not have to spend much time maintaining order, with a clear benefit to the quality of learning taking place. This enables the teacher to concentrate on one group of pupils whilst the remainder can be trusted to get on with their work. For example, in a year 4 mathematics lesson, despite finding it hard, pupils persevered in determining the angles in triangles whilst the teacher was helping one table of pupils. Even in the less interesting lessons, pupils do their best, and most resist any temptation there may be to misbehave. Pupil behaviour around the school is very good. The playground and field are unthreatening places, with pupils playing happily together. There have been 11 pupil exclusions in the past year, involving six pupils, all for justifiable reasons such as persistent swearing or violent behaviour. This is gradually decreasing as pupils realise that the school is taking a firm stand on the behaviour they expect. Neither parents nor pupils regard bullying as a problem, and any incidents of bullying or serious teasing that occur are quite exceptional to the normal run of school life. Pupils respect each other's and the school's property, with pupils trusted not to interfere with some quite attractive items in classroom displays; for example, the display of naval artefacts in Year 4. They look after their environment well and there is no litter.
10. Most pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to class, group and individual activities. They try hard to meet their targets as identified on their individual education plans. They usually listen well in lessons and their response to appropriate questions is good. Their behaviour in lessons is generally good. Their behaviour when withdrawn for small group or individual work is very good. They are fully integrated and socialise well.
11. Overall, relationships in the school are very good. Teachers know their pupils individually and they have very positive relationships with them. Similarly, pupils get on well with each other, a particularly important aspect when significant numbers of them join or leave the school each year. Many of the children from forces families are used to this life and although they do not like it, they are used to making friends quickly and fitting in to new groups. The school's induction procedures for these pupils help them to fit in quickly. Relationships in the school contribute to mutual respect. Teachers value the work of all pupils and in turn the pupils are confident to ask for support and guidance when they need it, which has a positive effect on their attainment. Pupils' relationships with each other also reflect the strong values encouraged by the school; friendship, honesty and respect, which lie at the heart of the work of the school. Pupils look after each other as individuals and understand the impact of their actions on others. They share resources well when working in pairs or in groups, and co-operate well, respecting each other's points of view. In a Year 3 science lesson, for example, they shared the apparatus well in their groups and all contributed to their theories on whether mixtures of various substances in water

could be separated by filtering them. They value each other, each pupil being accepted for their own ability to contribute. For example, in a Year 5 lesson out on the field, the competent boys were tolerant of the efforts of less athletic girls in their teams. In a Year 4 circle time, pupils listened to each other and did not try to dominate the discussion or interrupt others. Inclusion is well established in the school, with all pupils encouraged to feel part of the school community. Low and high attaining pupils work constructively together and no pupil is excluded from pair or group work. In the ICT suite, for example, they support each other well, with more knowledgeable pupils showing less competent classmates what to do. Boys and girls usually work together unselfconsciously. Most pupils have the confidence to enable them to relate well to each other and adults and they are generally polite.

12. When given the opportunity, pupils exhibit satisfactory initiative and personal responsibility. In lessons, pupils carry out jobs, such as handing out books, willingly and this makes a significant contribution to the efficient running of classes. They take pride in their work, encouraged by the way teachers value it. Pupils contribute to the running of the school through the elected school council and the prefect system.
13. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, which, combined with their good personal development and very good relationships, make a significant contribution towards their standards and achievement
14. The rate of attendance by pupils is currently in line with the national average for a school of this type. Within this overall picture, the proportion of absences that are unauthorised is very much higher than the norm. Some of this can be explained by the poor attendance of a few specific pupils, with 19 of them recorded as attending for less than 80 per cent of sessions. The high number of pupils leaving the school mid year also affects the data. In some cases parents do not notify the school that they are going away and in these cases pupils remain on roll, being recorded as unauthorised absences, until their new school makes official contact. Finally, there is an element of parents failing to provide the school with reasons for what are probably justified pupil absences. The rates of attendance, including the high incidence of unauthorised absence, are similar to those observed during the last inspection of the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the teaching seen, almost two out of every three lessons were good or better and of these one in four was very good or excellent. One in three lessons seen were satisfactory and two lessons were unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when only one in four lessons was good or better and one in five was unsatisfactory.
16. Teaching is good in most subjects. It is satisfactory in religious education, art and design and physical education. No judgement could be made on teaching in history and design and technology as insufficient lessons were seen. Across the school, teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use well to promote pupils' learning. All lessons are well planned; they are particularly well planned for English. Teachers ensure that they share the learning intentions for the lesson with the pupils so that they are very clear about what they are expected to learn. In many lessons, work is well matched to pupils' differing learning needs ensuring that they are challenged appropriately. This was particularly noticeable in English and science. Additionally, there is a good level of support in these lessons for pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to learn at a similar rate to their peers. The work of learning support assistants in supporting these pupils is good and sensitively delivered.
17. Teachers use a good variety of teaching methods to engage and interest pupils and extend their skills. For example, in most English lessons teachers fire the imagination of pupils with their stimulating whole-class sessions at the start of lessons. Teachers often use unusual methods; for example, in geography they created a river and flood plain in the school grounds. This fully engaged pupils and increased their understanding. Teachers use humour well; for example, in an ICT lesson in Year 5, and this motivated pupils to work independently.

18. Pupils are managed very well, but in a thoughtful and sensitive manner, which helps their self-confidence and promotes self-esteem. Teachers foster very good relationships and a co-operative approach to learning that ensures that all pupils are engaged and their responses are valued. This in turn enables all pupils to take risks and develop confidence in their ability. Marking is good in English, but is more variable in other subjects. It is less effective, for example, in mathematics, where it is not used well to help pupils to improve their work. Teachers make good use of resources, including good use of the school grounds, visits and visitors, to enhance pupils' learning.
19. In Years 5 and 6, the quality of teaching in approximately one in five lessons was very good or excellent. These lessons were characterised by:
- very good use of technical vocabulary such as 'operation', 'probability' and 'classification';
 - challenging tasks;
 - the use of Interesting games to develop skill and ideas;
 - teachers' very good use of voice and choice of text in English – this enthralled pupils;
 - very good use of drama to create atmosphere;
 - very good subject knowledge, for example, the specialist class music teaching and teaching in English;
 - work very well matched to pupils' differing learning needs;
 - creative teaching that conveys purpose and enthusiasm motivating pupils to learn with gusto.
20. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good there are common features to these lessons. The pace tends to be slow, pupils spend too long inactive and there is not enough time for group tasks and reviews at the end of lessons. As a result, pupils sometimes lose interest and are inattentive.
21. There were two unsatisfactory lessons. In one, the pace of the lesson was so slow that pupils lost concentration and behaved inappropriately. Additionally, there tended to be a constant hum of distracting noise, which affected the concentration of all pupils within the class. In another lesson, the teacher did not intervene to ensure that pupils remained on task and were engaged in appropriate activities. This meant that some pupils very quickly lost interest and engaged in silly behaviour.
22. Curricular planning is good. It has been very recently updated to provide an interesting range of activities and good links across the curriculum, except in mathematics and ICT. Teachers are making very good use of these links across the subjects of the curriculum; for example, when studying the Egyptians in history, teachers make effective links with art and design and English. This helps to promote pupils' learning and their wider understanding, but more importantly, pupils are eager to get on with their work.
23. Teachers use ICT well in English. They encourage pupils to practise the skills learned in literacy to improve their presentation. For example, they construct bullet-pointed lists and download images and photographs to illustrate their work. They use video cameras well in drama lessons as a means of evaluating pupils' performance. However, teachers make limited use of ICT to support other areas of the curriculum. Although this is to some extent linked to technical difficulties and changes to new multimedia computers it requires more work in planning to ensure its use within the classroom.
24. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and contributes well to the good progress they make. Work is generally well matched to their specific needs. Pupils are challenged and their targets are met. Individual education plans are kept up to date and targets are reviewed regularly. There are good liaison procedures between the class teachers and learning support assistants, which ensures that they provide good support for pupils. They give good feedback to teachers about pupils' progress in the form of formal and informal notes, which they discuss with the class teachers and which help to inform future planning. The

learning support assistants and special needs assistants make a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers who take set groups, which contain pupils not normally in their class, have a good knowledge of the pupils with special educational needs, but not all have copies of the targets for those pupils. The management of pupils is very good. At times, they are withdrawn from class for individual and group work with the special needs teachers or learning support assistants. The support in these groups is good. The use of resources to support learning is good. However, teachers' daily planning does not always specifically identify the lesson objectives for pupils with special educational needs.

25. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good support during lessons from class teachers and learning support assistants. They also receive focused one-to-one support once a week from the appropriate outside agency and during this time any difficult ideas, such as 'counting on' in mathematics, are clarified. This enables all pupils to access the tasks set in lessons and to take part as active members of their individual classes. In a mathematics lesson based on probability; for example, a pupil contributed answers in a whole-class session, supported sensitively by a learning support assistant, and worked independently with another pupil during the practical part of the lesson.

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

26. The curricular provision is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning across a wide range of subject areas. It is broad, balanced and relevant to the pupils and meets the statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects, religious education and collective worship. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory. Very good use is made of themed events; for example, a Celtic day, the local environment, visits and visitors to the school. All pupils have swimming lessons. The allocation of time for teaching the curriculum is just in line with national recommendations. Enough time is allocated to the development of ICT, but its use is not fully developed in all subjects at present because of technical problems. This is having an impact on the use of computers in the classrooms, the availability of a range of programs in the computer suite and in classrooms, and the subject knowledge and confidence of some teachers. This accounts for the below average attainment of pupils in Year 6. However, despite these short-term problems, the new computer suite is already raising the standards of attainment of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5.
27. The headteacher and the school improvement team of three teachers are developing an enriched curriculum, which is enthusing pupils and having a positive impact on teaching, standards of work and behaviour. There is now a clear topic focus that is supported by work across several subjects, which makes the curriculum relevant and interesting for pupils. For example, the well-presented history folders in all years show good links to English, art and design and geography. This gives pupils a good learning experience and helps them to improve their understanding of the topic.
28. Very good use is made of the National Literacy Strategy to teach lessons in a stimulating way. There is a very good emphasis placed on the teaching of the basic skills of English and good use is made of English across the curriculum. For example, teachers use drama well to help pupils to learn about life in a Victorian workhouse. Satisfactory emphasis is placed on the teaching of mathematics across the curriculum and sound use is made of the National Numeracy Strategy. Planning of lessons takes place across the year groups, which ensures that appropriate skills are developed and all pupils in a year group have similar opportunities.
29. Curriculum planning is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects, which inform teachers' detailed termly planning. Planning for all subjects is based on a range of national guidelines and commercially published schemes that have been adapted to the school's particular requirements, with an increased focus on local issues explored through a variety of topic based subjects; for example, Old Portsmouth. The scheme for religious education is in accordance with the Hampshire Locally Agreed Syllabus – 'Visions and Insight'.

30. The provision for equality of access and opportunity is good. All aspects of school life are open to boys and girls, irrespective of their level of attainment, background or culture. Pupils are grouped by prior attainment for mathematics in Years 5 and 6 in order to address the below average standards. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are given good support. However, there are occasions where all pupils are attempting the same task and using the same resources, so that the higher attaining pupils are not being offered sufficient challenge.
31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and contributes towards the good progress they make overall. Provision for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is very good and as a result, they achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. The school's implementation of the Code of Practice is meeting the needs of the pupils on the special needs register well and ensures equal access to the curriculum. The special educational needs co-ordinator is ensuring that the new Code of Practice will be fully implemented by September 2002 and that all staff are becoming familiar with the new requirements. Individual education plans and individual behaviour management plans now relate to these.
32. Pupils with English as an additional language access the curriculum appropriately. Their attainment and achievement is assessed regularly and parents are informed of progress. This is generally through discussion with their children rather than through the translated word. These pupils are well supported and their progress is regularly monitored. This ensures that they achieve well.
33. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The well-planned curriculum is taught effectively. Sex education and attention to drugs misuse are taught formally in Year 6 and through other subjects throughout the school. This provision is good. Religious education, science and assemblies are used effectively to support the good relationships and good personal development seen throughout the school. The school nurse and police liaison officer give good support for personal, social and health education lessons. Concepts of citizenship are promoted well. Satisfactory opportunities are given for pupils to show responsibility around the school. For example, Year 6 pupils control the overhead projector and the recorded music in assemblies and a school council has recently been introduced. Good opportunities are provided through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities, which are very good. For example, Year 6 pupils can take part in the 'City of Southampton Civic Award to Young People', which is a preliminary to the Duke of Edinburgh Award.
34. As well as the school nurse, visitors to the school regularly enhance the opportunities provided for the pupils. For example, a member of a historical society 'in role' has talked to pupils about his life as a Roman soldier, a calypso band has held a workshop day, drama workshops have been held and the local fire brigade and army personnel have talked to pupils about their work.
35. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and enriches the curriculum well. Staff give freely of their time to provide a very good range of clubs, which are beneficial to the many pupils who take part. Extra-curricular activities are open to pupils of both gender and to pupils from Years 3 to 6. Sports activities include football, netball, judo, cricket, tennis, fitness and athletics. Other activities include art and craft, computer, modern dance, draughts, chess, indoor games, recorders and violin.
36. Very good use is made of a range of visits to support subjects and give pupils first-hand experiences. For example, Year 3 visit the Milestone Museum and the local army camp, Year 4 visit Bignor Roman Palace and Old Portsmouth, Year 5 visit the local secondary school for a theatre production and the Imperial War Museum and Year 6 visit Hampton Court. As well as day visits, the pupils also have the opportunity to take part in two residential visits. Year 4 visit an environmental centre in Stubbington, Hampshire and Year 6 an environmental centre in Swanage, Dorset. As well as the good links to many areas of the curriculum, both visits effectively support pupils' personal and social development. The community is used very well to support the curriculum. For example, visits are made to local attractions such as the local army

camp, a tributary of the River Wey and a nature reserve. The army has built the fitness activity course and helps to run and organise sports days.

37. There are good links with the neighbouring infant school and the local secondary school. This ensures that pupils progress easily from Year 2 and on to Year 7. Staff share information and Year 6 pupils are taken to the local secondary school for a number of activities. Pupils meet their new teachers and visit the secondary school as part of a well-planned induction process. The school works closely with the neighbouring infant school to ensure that the transition to Year 3 is a smooth and happy one for the pupils. Careful planning and preparation helps pupils who arrive and leave at different times in the year to settle in well.
38. The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has improved since the last inspection.
39. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection when it was reported that the school gave only limited attention to pupils' spiritual development. The daily act of worship, religious education lessons and circle time all provide pupils with a variety of experiences, which help them to develop empathy for others and an appreciation of the value of our differences. Pupils in Year 5, for example, showed sensitive understanding of the Muslim practice of 'Birth Blessings' as they wrote their offerings for a new baby.
40. Assembly themes are designed to include reflection on human attributes like patience and illustrate clearly how these can have an impact on people around us. The themes in whole-school assemblies are followed up well in year group assemblies where themes are developed in a less formal atmosphere and pupils have the opportunity to question and discuss views. The school makes effective use of recorded music to set the tone of assemblies or to enhance reflection when pupils enter and leave the school hall. All assemblies include a time for reflection and a prayer. They generally enable pupils to reflect on a wide range of issues in a calm and positive atmosphere, allowing them to consider their own responses. The school curriculum as a whole is designed to motivate pupils through practical experiences and to provide links between subjects. This is enabling pupils to become more animated learners and to develop as questioning individuals who are able to listen and respond to the views and beliefs of others.
41. The provision for pupils' moral development is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. All staff ensure in their day-to-day dealings with pupils that they are clearly aware of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and the effect these have on the people around them. Teachers use planned circle time effectively to support this. Staff are appropriate role models and treat pupils sensitively and with respect, encouraging in them an appreciation of the importance of honesty, fairness and respect for truth. In some lessons pupils have the opportunity to examine issues of rights and responsibilities. For example, in history in Year 3, when pupils considered the life and work of Doctor Barnardo.
42. The provision for pupils' social development is very good and has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. Pupils are given many planned opportunities to work collaboratively together, which promotes their social development. Groups of Year 5 pupils, for example, examined pictures of four different areas of France and discussed what clues the pictures gave them about the physical and human features of each place. Pupils of all ages are given responsibilities in class and around the school, helping in day-to-day organisation and this fosters their sense of responsibility to others. Class discussions, which relate to the school council, support pupils' social development very well.
43. Provision for cultural development is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Knowledge of local culture is built up through studies of the local area to support work in history and geography and provision for the wider culture is supported well through literature and other curriculum areas. Pupils in Year 6, for example, study the work of the environmental artist, Andy Goldsworthy. A number of theatre groups visit throughout the year,

as; for example, the group portraying light and sound as part of Year 6 work in science. A range of visitors, from various cultural backgrounds, who share their interests and expertise, also make significant contributions as do visits to appropriate places of interest. These include a visit to Hampton Court as part of Year 6 work on Tudors, a 'Drama Day' and a visit to a synagogue by Year 5 pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school cares for its pupils well and this is a similar finding to the previous inspection. It places a strong emphasis on pupils' social and personal development. This extends beyond the formal provision within the curriculum, and even beyond the extra-curricular provision. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire believe that the school is effective in helping their children to become mature and responsible individuals.
45. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can feel safe and valued. All staff make considerable efforts to address the welfare of individual pupils when they need it. The contribution of teachers is noted and appreciated by both parents and pupils. Responsibility for child protection lies with the headteacher, who is experienced in this area, although he has not received any recent refresher training. He liaises with the local social services department as necessary. Adults in the school are reminded of their child protection responsibilities on a formal basis. There is good provision within the programme for personal and social education to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own safety. Support from staff enables pupils to feel safe and valued and to concentrate on their learning, thus helping them to progress to the best of their ability. The school site appears to provide a safe working environment for pupils and staff. Although a formal risk assessment of the building has apparently been carried out, the results have not been recorded; this process needs to be completed. Risk assessment visits are carried out before school trips; for example, the Year 4 trip to Old Portsmouth was preceded by a visit to the area by the teachers responsible. The headteacher and staff are active in ensuring that health and safety procedures are in place and followed. Routine health and safety procedures and testing are in place. No unsafe practice was seen in lessons during the inspection.
46. All teachers are active in the pastoral care of their pupils. Throughout the school, teachers know their pupils well and successfully meet their individual needs. They are effective in supporting them when they need it. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good, although it is largely informal. Of particular importance in this school, is the effective mentoring system for helping new pupils to settle in quickly.
47. The school has sound procedures to monitor attendance and encourage pupils to come to school regularly. There are systems in place to identify problems with attendance as they emerge and the school involves the education welfare officer in problem cases. These procedures would be enough in most schools, but the high recorded level of unauthorised absences suggests that the school needs to consider further ways to encourage parents to provide reasons when their child is absent. The school's attendance policy dates from 1996 and is not particularly helpful in this respect.
48. There are very good procedures to monitor and promote pupil behaviour, as demonstrated by the significant improvement in recent years. These are not just based on the formal systems, although the school does have a system of rewards and sanctions. There is a general consensus amongst staff and pupils that there is a natural way that pupils are expected to behave, and that they will conform to it. This expectation and ethos is strong and it permeates the school. This is supported by the school's approach to the curriculum, where the emphasis on personal experience and relevance is designed to engage pupils' interest and thus reduce the temptations to misbehave. There are clear boundaries of what behaviour is acceptable, although the written policy for behaviour management lags behind the very good practice. All teaching staff and learning support assistants are constantly reinforcing the school's expectations. The standards of behaviour achieved owe much to their very good relationships

with pupils and their personal effectiveness. The school does have problems recruiting and retaining lunchtime supervisors, resulting in a less consistent application of the school's approach during lunchtimes. The anti-bullying policy is a rather vague document and does not reflect the school's good practice. For example, a particularly good approach to the subject of bullying was seen in an English lesson, where a short role play was used to bring home to pupils what the experience of being bullied feels like. The school's approach to eliminating oppressive behaviour is effective, based on establishing a climate for behaviour that emphasises the positive, and dealing effectively with any exceptional incidents that occur.

49. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when a review of assessment procedures was identified as a key issue for development.
50. The school receives accurate information on attainment in English, mathematics and science when pupils transfer from the infant school. However, because of the high level of pupil mobility, a significant proportion of pupils arrive at school with no records. To rectify this, pupils take annual non-statutory National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics plus additional tests in reading and spelling. The results are used to plan work to meet the differing learning needs of pupils and identify pupils who may need additional support and start the process of tracking the achievement of individual pupils as they move through the school. Pupils on the school's register of special educational needs are also highlighted so that their progress can be monitored more closely. Pupils with English as an additional language have very detailed records held by the special educational needs co-ordinator, which accurately chart their progress through individually tailored targets.
51. The results of tests are entered onto a computer spreadsheet and analysed in order to agree targets for English, mathematics and science for the end of Year 6. However, because so many pupils leave and enter school throughout each year, the targets are routinely reviewed to take the changing profiles of each year group into account. The co-ordinator analyses attainment for different groups of pupils, including those from military families as this group of pupils is very mobile; some pupils having attended several different schools in a short space of time.
52. In all other subjects, teachers record pupils' achievements against the 'learning objectives' that have been set for each subject every half term. The recording system is the same for each subject, providing a standard pattern for teachers to follow. Each pupil has an assessment folder in which all test scores, targets and reports on progress are stored, providing a picture of individual achievement for teachers and parents to access. In addition, teachers keep a good assessment file, which tracks the attainment and progress of the whole class in all subjects. These are regularly checked by the assessment and subject co-ordinators to ensure they are up to date. Co-ordinators use the results to help them to make judgements on the effectiveness of planning and teaching series of lessons and to alter the plans when necessary.
53. In English there is an additional system of writing in 'Snapshot' books once a term. When awarding levels of attainment, teachers work together to mark this work against nationally agreed criteria ensuring consistency in their judgements. They have built up portfolios of good, graded models of work to help them to make their decisions. This is helping to improve standards and provision in English.
54. The arrangement for the assessment and identification of pupils with special educational needs are good and are being implemented in accordance with the 1994 Code of Practice and the new Code of Practice. Teachers and learning support assistants know their pupils well. Year 2 national test results and other assessments from the infant school or pupils' previous schools are used well to target their needs initially. Records are up to date and examples of pupils' work are kept, which helps to monitor progress. Individual educational plans contain specific and measurable targets, which are regularly reviewed and shared with pupils. However, some plans have too many targets for pupils. The monitoring and support for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is very good. Their annual reviews show good progress and outline

future targets. The support given by learning support assistants is good overall, and leads to good achievement by pupils. Liaison with outside agencies and external support staff is good

55. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is good overall. The process has been improved and the evidence collected now provides a more precise insight into the development of each pupil to enable the teacher to plan activities that meet individual pupils' needs. Assessment is a part of the day-to-day teaching and ensures that work is well matched to pupils' needs in most subjects, although this is less successful overall in ICT. Marking is regular and of good quality in many subjects. It is not good enough in mathematics and as a result, does not lead to improvement in pupils' work. Teachers target groups of pupils to give informed comments designed to celebrate what they have done well and to point out the next steps in their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. The vast majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire or attended the meeting with inspectors were very positive about many aspects of the school. In particular, parents believe that their children like school, that the teaching is good and that their children work hard and make good progress. They think that the school helps children to become mature and responsible. They also think that the school is well led and managed. Although most parents endorse the standards of behaviour achieved, a few remain critical. A significant number of parents are dissatisfied with the amount of homework set, however, the inspection team considers that generally the quantity set is appropriate in relation to the age of the pupils. Overall, parents' views of the school are good and the school enjoys the confidence of its local communities.
57. The overall quality of information for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus and annual governors' report to parents both generally meet requirements, but the governors' report is the better of the two at providing a flavour of the school, celebrating with parents its very real achievements, whereas the prospectus needs updating. There are frequent, very good newsletters to keep parents informed of the life of the school. The annual reports to parents on their children's progress are disappointing documents. The main problem is that key attainment information is hard for parents to interpret. In core subjects, pupils are graded against the average for the school, rather than in comparison with national standards, and this is not helpful to parents. The written comments on core subjects tend to say more on curriculum coverage rather than standards achieved, whilst those on foundation subjects are very brief indeed and say nothing at all on attainment. There is a need to give parents a clearer picture of how their children are performing against national standards. However, the comments on pupils' personal development are individual and of good quality. The school provides regular opportunities for parents to meet with teachers to discuss their children's progress, as well as specific meetings to explain aspects of the curriculum.
58. The contribution of parents to the school and their children's learning is satisfactory. Most parents support their children's homework and put time into making costumes for 'experience' days. A small number come into school to help in class, making a worthwhile contribution to the work of the school. For example, one parent was seen providing useful assistance to a special educational needs group in a literacy lesson. Parents also help to supervise pupils on school trips. Some attend the weekly celebration assembly in school. The school's parent teacher association, although involving only a small number of parents, is active in organising social and fund-raising events. The school has a home-school agreement in place, but it has limited impact on improving the links between school and parents.
59. Liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are aware of the point of contact in the school and share in the targets of the individual educational plans. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that parents receive a written copy of the pupils' targets with helpful suggestions on how they can support their child at home to achieve the targets. Parents of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs are kept very well informed and are given good opportunities to be involved in reviewing the targets set for their

children, in accordance with the Code of Practice. As well as formal meetings, they are also invited to meet the special educational needs co-ordinator, the learning support assistants and the special needs governor at an informal afternoon tea in order to develop closer relationships.

60. Parents of pupils with English as an additional language support the work of the school well. For example, they have been involved in school assemblies, visited classes, provided Muslim wedding outfits for pupils to look at and helped in a session in food technology.
61. The level of partnership with parents has been maintained since the last inspection of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The leadership and management provided by the head teacher are very good. His senior management team and school improvement team ably support him. This is an improvement on the leadership in place at the time of the last inspection. All key issues for action noted in the last inspection report have been addressed and the school has made a good improvement since that time. However, much of this has been achieved since the arrival of the new headteacher. Pupils' attainment in art, history and religious education is now average and short-term planning and day-to-day assessment have improved, as has the effectiveness of the governing body. The quality of teaching, although satisfactory at the time of the last inspection, has also improved and with this has come clearer expectations for higher attaining pupils across the school. The school has a detailed action plan that is summarised succinctly and indicates that the management of the school has a very clear view of those areas that require further development and has planned for these systematically and comprehensively.
63. The headteacher provides very strong leadership for the school and has a clear vision of its educational direction. The last two years have been difficult for the school, with a large changeover of staff, long-term sickness of a member of staff and the turbulence caused by the movement of services personnel. Despite this, the new headteacher has been instrumental in transforming the ethos of the school into one in which pupils are very well behaved and enthusiastic about their work and teachers find pleasure and satisfaction in their own hard work and its results. This has been achieved by rewriting large sections of the curriculum so that it includes a wide range of practical experiences for the pupils, has effective cross-curricular links that make learning meaningful and is supportive of the range of pupils and their individual needs. The improvement in the learning environment and the impact of relevant and good quality displays has also contributed to this. The latter is an example of how the effective performance management targets have been instrumental in effecting positive change within the school. Performance management procedures are fully in place and used well to support school improvement. Overall these changes have had a profound effect on pupils' behaviour and response in lessons. The ethos of the school now reflects its mission statement very clearly, 'To develop the whole child through practical experience in a thematic, co-operative and stimulating environment'.
64. During this time of change the headteacher has been supported well by the governing body and the staff. The school now has a strong team spirit and a very good capacity to effect further improvements. Staff new to the school have also been well prepared for their roles, quickly feel part of the team and are enthusiastic about helping to move the school forwards. The major areas for improvement now are the raising of pupils' standards in mathematics and ICT. The latter will be helped by the recent provision of a specialist teaching room and the former is already showing some improvement because of the good quality of teaching. Raising standards in mathematics is identified on the school improvement plan, but the school's response to this has been slow. The promotion of literacy and the cross-curricular links that support it have been effectively established.
65. There are good systems in place for the effective monitoring of teaching and learning and the contribution of staff with management responsibilities is also good. However, they are not yet a totally established group. The curriculum improvement team has worked extremely hard and to

very good effect adapting schemes of work in a short period of time and also overseeing subjects that have no subject leader; for example, history. The leadership of mathematics has suffered due to co-ordinators leaving the school. This situation is planned to change at the start of the next term with the appointment of new staff, when the school will be in a position to develop the role of other subject leaders to the very good standard displayed by the literacy co-ordinator. The role of the deputy head teacher is underdeveloped and at present his contribution to school improvement is limited. However, the headteacher has identified this as an area for development and discussions are taking place in order to ensure greater accountability.

66. The governing body as a whole has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily despite difficulties with recruitment. It is now nearer full strength, although still low on the number of parent governors represented. It is now becoming more proactive in its assessment of the school's needs and its evaluation of the school's performance rather than relying heavily on information received from other sources. Individual governors now take turns being 'on duty', during which time they try to spend time in the school during the day, observing classes and talking to staff. This and the raising of governors' expertise through attending relevant courses is having a further impact on the governors' role in shaping the direction of the school. For example, they took time to ensure that they appointed a suitable headteacher, improved the school grounds in an effort to improve pupil behaviour and have been instrumental in providing the new computer suite. The governing body works hard and is very supportive of the school while still being prepared to question its recommendations. The various responsibilities of the governing body are dealt with efficiently although there is one minor omission in the governors' report to parents dealing with the reporting of in-service training of staff. All other statutory requirements are met.
67. Inspired leadership and very good management on the part of the headteacher, and the dedication and strong commitment of the school improvement team, have produced a good curriculum, purposeful and enthusiastic learners and a committed staff, placing the school in a very good position to effect further improvements.
68. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership. She is thorough and dedicated and is making a positive impact on the special needs provision. She has led training sessions for teachers, special needs teachers and teaching assistants and regularly monitors classroom performance of learning support assistants, which is raising their skills and knowledge. Teachers and the teaching assistants ably support her. Teaching assistants feel very well supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator and feel very positive about their roles. They are given good guidance by the special educational needs co-ordinator and other staff and attend appropriate training courses to update their skills and knowledge, which is ensuring that they support pupils well. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs are very well supported. The governor responsible for special educational needs also gives good support. She has a good understanding of her role, of the needs of the pupils on the special educational needs register, and of the requirements of the Code of Practice. The special educational needs co-ordinator, and all staff, have an appropriate awareness of the new 'Special Educational Needs Code of Practice', which will be fully implemented in September 2002, with the policy updated to take account of this.
69. The school makes good use of the resources available to it, including specific grants. The school improvement plan covers four years and key areas for development have detailed and costed plans. There is good long-term planning, despite the obvious difficulty of predicting pupil numbers and income very far into the future. Spending is related to the requirements of this improvement plan and competitive tendering is applied whenever possible. Principles of best value are applied in a satisfactory manner. Financial planning and monitoring are good and support the school's educational priorities well. Although, there has not been a recent local authority audit of the school's budgetary systems, however, it appears that appropriate financial controls are in place. The current headteacher inherited a large carry forward of funds, which have been spent well to support the school's educational priorities. The current level of carry forward is higher than the average, but again given the uncertainties of pupil numbers, it is prudent in this school to have a reasonable reserve. The school compares its expenditure with

other schools and uses this information to challenge its spending assumptions and assist in setting budgets. There is satisfactory use of modern technology within the school; for example, the school uses a computer system to issue books from the library.

70. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to teach the school's curriculum. This is an improvement from the last inspection. A high proportion of the teaching staff have been appointed over the last two years, but they know their roles and responsibilities well and are making an effective contribution to raising standards in the school. The roles of subject co-ordinators are developing well. In co-operation with other subject co-ordinators, they use their expertise effectively to help teachers to plan a series of lessons, ensuring that pupils in different classes have the same quality learning activities. They monitor and evaluate the contribution their subject makes to pupils' learning through termly assessments, but do not control budgets for their subjects. This limits their forward strategic planning. There are a good number of learning support assistants in school, all of whom support pupils with special educational needs. They are well trained and informed by class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator. They take part in planning and teaching lessons to groups of pupils who need additional support for their learning or whose first language is not English. Visiting specialist staff provide additional bilingual and learning support and this input is co-ordinated well.
71. The school's accommodation is good. In just over a year, the school has been almost completely refurbished to a high standard. The result is a clean, bright, attractively furnished learning environment of which the staff and pupils are justifiably proud. Display boards showcase very well displayed and presented pupils' work and add to the school's positive learning environment. The playgrounds, gardens and fields reflect the school's commitment to providing a stimulating place of learning. There is a lot of seating for pupils, which they use in the middle of the day for picnic lunches, and at other times as places to sit and chat. The adventure playground is sturdy, well cared for and a favourite place at playtimes. The fields are used for physical education, art and science activities. They are planted with native trees and shrubs and a pond is planned for the near future. The pupils' toilets, although adequate, are not furnished to the same high standard as the rest of the school. The new ICT suite, with air conditioning, has been built just off the hall and this has improved the school's provision for ICT. The school hall has a patched, parquet floor that is breaking up. It poses a hazard to pupils and adults when they cross it.
72. Accommodation and resources for pupils with special educational needs are good. The school has a spacious special needs room, where the co-ordinator and learning support assistants can withdraw groups and individuals and where the special needs co-ordinator can work on her administrative duties.
73. Overall, the school has a satisfactory range of resources for teaching and learning. There is a broad range of fiction and non-fiction books to support pupils' individual and whole-class learning. The school library is well stocked, and contains a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books at different reading levels for pupils to borrow or use for research. Pupils check their books in and out independently using a computer system. The English co-ordinator, aided by a member of the library service, chose and bought collections of reading books for classrooms, which reflect ethnic and cultural diversity. The school has invested heavily in ICT and there is a good ratio of computers to pupils. Due to a change in the system being used there is currently a limited range of supporting software for pupils' use and this has affected the standards of pupils currently in Year 6. The software has now been ordered. The school makes very good use of the local area as a resource for learning for all curriculum areas and has a satisfactory collection of subject resources supplemented by loans from the school's library service and local museums.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards and enable pupils to achieve more the governing body, headteacher and staff as a whole school team need to:

improve standards in mathematics and information and communication technology so that pupils reach the appropriate level for their age.

- Improve attainment in mathematics by:
 - providing strong leadership for the subject;
 - marking work so that pupils know what they need to do to improve;
 - developing a whole-school approach to areas for development in order to improve areas of weakness;
 - making greater use of mathematics across the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 3, 16, 89, 93, 95, 96)

- Improve attainment in information and communication technology by:
 - ensuring that all teachers are trained in the use of multimedia computers;
 - ensuring that work is well matched to pupils' differing learning needs;
 - ensuring that the problems with the new computer system are repaired so that classroom computers can be used regularly by pupils;
 - developing further the cross-curricular links with all subjects;
 - ensuring that all pupils can see demonstrations of programs and skills in the computer suite.

(Paragraphs 5, 21, 24, 95, 103, 112, 116, 119)

* The school has already identified this as a priority in the school improvement plan.

In addition the school needs to:

- ensure that risk assessments of the building are formally recorded; (paragraph 45)
- improve the quality of reports to parents; (paragraph 57)
- reduce the level of unauthorised absence. (paragraph 14)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	8	27	20	2	0	0
Percentage	3	14	46	34	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	279
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	81

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	56
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	49

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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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
	2001	36	32	68

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	21	33
	Girls	27	21	30
	Total	53	42	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (73)	62 (58)	93 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	26	32
	Girls	26	25	29
	Total	49	51	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (65)	75 (58)	90 (74)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1.4
Chinese	0
White	98.6
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	11	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)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	25

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	240

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	567,900
Total expenditure	626,256
Expenditure per pupil	2,137
Balance brought forward from previous year	126,642
Balance carried forward to next year	68,286

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	279
Number of questionnaires returned	78

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	49	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	47	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	63	13	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	40	19	7	1
The teaching is good.	66	33	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	40	6	1	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	33	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	44	46	7	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	69	29	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	37	1	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	37	4	0	9

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

ENGLISH

74. Standards in Year 6 are average in speaking and listening, reading and writing and this reflects the findings from the last inspection. The school has set challenging targets for Year 6 pupils for 2003, which the current Year 5 pupils are on track to meet due to the good improvements the school has made in its provision. Since the last inspection, the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy and substantially improved the range and quality of writing throughout the curriculum. This is having a positive impact on the standards being achieved.
75. The number of pupils attaining the expected levels for their age has increased since the last inspection and the school's trend for improvement matches the national trend. In the 2001 national tests for pupils in Year 6 standards were average compared to schools nationally, and similar schools. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. Evidence from assessment files indicates that the rate of progress pupils make in their learning is accelerating because all aspects of English now have a very high profile in the school's new curriculum.
76. Most pupils enter school with below average levels of attainment and, by the time they leave Year 6, their achievement is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when achievement was satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress towards their individual targets due to the good support they receive. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged and achieve well. The grant for additional literacy support is used properly to support pupils in Year 3, but the number of pupils who benefit is smaller than the level of need. To combat this, the school moves pupils in and out of the additional literacy support groups according to the greatest need. There are a few pupils who are on the gifted and talented register for English and the co-ordinator is rightly researching ways of providing a more challenging curriculum for them. Currently provision is made through weekly planning documents, but this is not enough to take their learning forwards as fast as the school would like.
77. Pupils are confident to discuss their values, thoughts and ideas and make very constructive comments about each other's work. They listen carefully and intently to their teachers and to each other. Teachers model good speaking skills very well and continually consolidate and extend pupils' vocabulary. Pupils' responses to questions become progressively more grammatically correct and thoughtful from Years 3 to 6. Teachers have high expectations of the accuracy of pupils' replies and their questioning techniques in lessons encourage development from single word answers to more complex sentences. Occasionally, teachers include opportunities for drama to explore ideas and feeling and this improves pupils' confidence in speaking to an audience. Constructive evaluation of pupils' work by their classmates was a feature of all lessons seen. For example, pupils' skills in this are taught in Year 3 where teachers give rules for the process. They are reminded that they must find three good things to say about another pupil's work and one pointer for development. By Year 6, the process is used well in the review of each lesson, and pupils' comments are helpful and precise. This practice has a positive impact on relationships within the class.
78. Most pupils read fluently and with understanding. They talk enthusiastically about books they have read and their favourite authors, some choosing to read a series of books by the same author. Higher and average attaining pupils read expressively. They use dictionaries efficiently, know how to use a thesaurus and access information quickly using the library system. Lower attaining pupils need far more support with their reading, which they get from teachers and learning support assistants. When using reference books, pupils understand how to use a contents page and index to find relevant information to support their learning. They book their library loans in and out efficiently using the computer system. Pupils' 'Home to School' reading records provide correspondence between parents and teachers, which informs parents on how well their children are doing and provides a useful link between home and school.

79. Pupils write in a variety of forms, including letters, poems, extended stories and character descriptions. The quality of their handwriting, punctuation and spelling improves from one year to the next. Figures of speech, such as similes and metaphors, are used in their writing, often to very good effect. For example, after a visit to Swanage, one Year 6 pupil wrote, 'Screeching, overhead seagulls call to recruit their army and attack the unsuspecting, scaly victims of the calm, clear sea'. They understand the need for redrafting and write in several different styles. They sometimes work collaboratively to produce an extended piece of illustrated work written using paragraphs and chapters.
80. The quality of teaching is good and consistently promotes good learning throughout the school. Two out of every three lessons seen were good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers provide very good role models for pupils in the way they present their own work. They make sure that at the beginning of each lesson pupils know what they are expected to learn, how it builds on previous work, where the learning will go next and how long their pupils have to complete a task. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented consistently throughout the school and in each classroom there is a good balance of whole-class, group and individual work. Teachers have a good understanding of the content of the National Literacy Strategy, which is reflected in their planning documents. Teachers' planning for individual lessons is very good. These lessons fire pupils' enthusiasm and clearly identify the activities for different groups of pupils within each class. Teachers know pupils' achievements well and what they need to learn next, and these assessments are recorded consistently throughout the school. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly, and provides clear, written feedback on its quality and how it could be improved further. Learning support assistants throughout the school have a positive effect on pupils' learning in English. They are well prepared and work alongside teaching staff in a positive partnership.
81. In the best lessons, teachers are well prepared, manage their pupils very well and know the limits for pupils' concentration. Consequently, pupils are interested, well behaved and in the right frame of mind to learn. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, the lesson was well paced, but delivered in a deceptively relaxed manner. The teacher had very high expectations of her pupils and captured their imagination and interest with the choice and use of resources. Her pupils were entranced and worked with total concentration, understanding that their work was valued. The learning support assistant adopted the same style with a group of pupils with the same excellent result in learning. In another very good lesson in Year 6, the teacher used drama to help pupils to understand the feelings of a victim of bullying. It was a powerful moment and led to a discussion on the words and similes that could be used to create tension in the first paragraph of a story. This effectively raised the standard of their writing.
82. Where teaching was satisfactory, as opposed to good or better, teachers used the same high quality planning documents, but spent too long on one part of the lesson. This led to a drop in pace and some pupils lost interest by the time of the review at the end of the lesson. On occasion the lessons were too long, and the behaviour of a minority of pupils deteriorated.
83. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils throughout the school are very good. Most pupils are very focused on their learning and respond really well to teachers' high expectations. In the only lesson that did not match this co-operative pattern, a minority of boys had very challenging behaviour, were not interested in the lesson and were unable to complete the task unless having direct input from an adult.
84. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has undergone major changes in organisation. The focus on learning from direct experiences has given pupils more opportunities to write, talk and read. Medium-term plans are detailed and clearly show where pupils can use the skills they learn in literacy lessons in other subjects. The plans are working documents that track, and add opportunities for writing. Links to other subjects, including ICT, are very good. For example, in Years 3 and 4, teachers, sometimes specialist teachers, use drama to bring life to learning about what it was like to live in a Victorian workhouse. Pupils act out the process of mummification when studying the Egyptians, and design 'Wanted' posters for the Egyptian god,

Thoth, using ICT. In Year 4, pupils write out instructions for mixing powder paints and design and write postcards for St. Lucia. In Year 5, they practise writing diaries after reading 'Carrie's War' while learning about World War Two in history, and use drama to explore their feelings about being the last evacuee to be 'chosen'. They debate their opinions of the Viking invasion and settlement. Pupils in Year 6, become familiar with some of Shakespeare's plays when learning about the Tudors. All these activities use first-hand experiences as stimuli for speaking, listening, reading, research and writing. Pupils make very well presented books on their topics where they use their improving skills in presentation and handwriting to make them attractive. All these activities are exciting and stimulating and promote good achievement in English. ICT is used to practise skills learned in literacy and improve presentation. Pupils construct bullet-pointed lists, changing the shape, size, colour and orientation of the text. They word-process some of their writing, download images and photographs to illustrate their work and use tape recorders to produce commentaries on visits. A video camera is also used in drama so that pupils can evaluate their performances.

85. The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the curriculum very well. She monitors the quality of teaching and learning routinely through lesson observations, scrutinising planning documents and samples of pupils' work and moderating the standards being attained. She talks to groups of pupils from each year group, sometimes focusing on lower attaining pupils, to identify group learning needs. From this work, new targets are constructed for each year group and shared with pupils. She has identified training needs for staff; for example, training in teaching spelling, and is taking effective action to address them. Tests to measure attainment and diagnose learning needs are undertaken annually. The results are carefully analysed and compared with national and local data. Targets for attainment for each year group are set and the co-ordinator monitors progress towards them.
86. The quality and quantity of the school's resources for English are satisfactory. The co-ordinator, in partnership with library services, bought new collections of books for each classroom with an emphasis on books that promote other cultures. The use of authors and visiting theatre groups introduces pupils to real people who make their living from their use of English. This stimulates and encourages them to improve their work.
87. The commitment of the co-ordinator and staff, as seen during lesson observations and through a review of work, is very high. They have a common enthusiasm for the new curriculum and the place of English within it. However, English lessons tend to dominate the timetable. As the new curriculum becomes more firmly embedded into the school's culture for learning, it would be appropriate to reconsider the amount of time pupils spend on English during the week, in particular the length of some lessons and the number of additional lessons provided.

MATHEMATICS

88. Test results in the Year 2001 for pupils at the end of Year 6 were well below the national average and that of similar schools. When the three years 1999 to 2001 are taken together, results have remained well below average. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls over time. The school has set realistic targets for mathematics, which it is likely to meet. These are carefully adjusted to meet the changing profile of the Year 6 group. Standards in mathematics have deteriorated since the previous inspection.
89. The attainment of pupils in the present Year 6 is below average and this is an improvement on previous years when it was well below average. Standards are now improving as a result of good planning and good teaching. However, there are some weaknesses, which continue to affect standards. Management of the subject has been affected by co-ordinators leaving, mathematics is not used well across the curriculum and the school does not address weaknesses identified in tests in a systematic, whole-school manner in order to secure greater improvement. Given their below average attainment on entry, pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving satisfactorily. Their achievement is similar to that of pupils recorded in the previous inspection.

90. By the end of Year 6, pupils of average ability have a sound understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They work accurately when dividing three-digit numbers by single-digit ones and some calculate remainders as decimal parts. However, their skill in multiplying by two-digit numbers is not yet secure. They are beginning to understand the idea of ratio and express relationships in simple terms, not yet using the appropriate notation. They plot coordinates confidently, but are far less secure when these contain negative numbers. Often graphs do not have axes appropriately labelled. Higher attaining pupils add simple fractions and use notation to represent ratio appropriately, although they cannot yet represent these in their simplest form. They calculate the sizes of sectors in pie charts. Lower attaining pupils cope with pie charts with support by measuring out equal sections and identifying the number of these to represent the required data. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress with respect to their individual attainment levels. Pupils use of numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum is variable. It is well used in various aspects of science; for example, using centimetre rulers to measure the growth of plants. The use of a bar chart to display the number of different types of birds visiting a garden is a good example of this. However, the school does not support pupils' mathematical development with planned experiences across other areas of the curriculum as effectively as it could.
91. The quality of teaching is good. It ranges from unsatisfactory to very good and was good or better in three out of every four of the lessons observed. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when it was recorded as satisfactory. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning and the attainment of pupils, particularly in Year 5, is nearing national averages. Teachers plan lessons well and in the majority of lessons they ensure that learning objectives are made clear to pupils at the start of the lesson. In the most effective lessons teachers refer back to objectives again throughout the lesson and during the review session at the end, thus ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of what they have achieved. However, the emphasis teachers' place on this is variable across the school.
92. The National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactorily established and in the most effective lessons teachers plan mental arithmetic sessions that are designed to engage the interest and extend the skills of the range of pupils in the class or set. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, the teacher planned a mental arithmetic session based on the three times table and through the use of whole-class and group chanting, kept the whole class involved and learning at appropriate levels. In a Year 6 lesson, in a mental session based around factors, the teacher's style of questioning ensured that all pupils could respond with answers within the number range in which they felt secure. A significant minority of mental arithmetic sessions, however, rely on one-to-one questioning and do not cater for the range of attainment levels represented in the class or set.
93. Teachers know their pupils well and aim to provide individual work to match pupils' differing learning needs. In a Year 6 lesson based on multiplication, groups of pupils in this higher attaining set worked with ranges of numbers suitable to their needs. However, in less effective lessons, work is often not well matched to needs and pupils require support from the class teacher or classroom support assistant in order to carry out the tasks. Where work is matched to need, pupils work well, with a growing sense of independence and learning is effective. In those lessons, teachers employ interesting methods to engage the interest of the pupils, and pupils are questioned on the range of methods possible; here learning is at its best. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, the teacher's questions were probing and pupils were motivated due to successfully completing their calculations to produce a given number on their 'goal post' cards.
94. Teachers manage pupils well in most lessons and very good relationships exist between pupils and adults. Consequently, pupils respond positively in whole-class discussions, trusting that the adults in the room and their peers will support them appropriately. Learning support assistants contribute well to pupils' learning by their competent reinforcement of the teacher's objectives.
95. The quality of teachers' marking is variable across the school. At best, work is well marked with constructive comments to help pupils to improve. However, much of the pupils' work, although marked, contains few comments to show pupils where they have gone wrong. Teachers generally set homework and this supports learning satisfactorily. The use of ICT to support

learning is limited. Examples observed include planning routes for a floor robot in Year 3 and the construction of bar and pie charts.

96. The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils use and apply mathematics more effectively than at the time of the last inspection. The requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met and assessment procedures are now good. They have improved since the last inspection. The results of national tests and non-statutory tests are analysed and the results used appropriately in the grouping and setting of pupils and the tracking of pupils' progress. The use of results to track the progress of various groups of pupils within year groups, however, is not covered comprehensively. Although weaknesses in pupils' performance in tests in Year 6 are identified, these are not identified as whole-school issues so that the development of these skills can be supported from Year 3 onwards in order to raise standards. The school has identified the need to improve standards in mathematics and this is included in the school's planning for the future. However, it has not responded to this in the extremely positive way that it has addressed other areas in the curriculum, but problems with retaining staff to co-ordinate the subject has not helped. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection.

SCIENCE

97. The results of the 2001 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 show that pupils' attainment at both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5, was close to the national average. Inspection evidence shows that by Year 6, attainment in science is average and pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. Pupils are developing satisfactory scientific knowledge, understanding and skills through relevant practical tasks. From the lessons observed and an analysis of teachers' planning, assessment files and pupils' work, all aspects of science are soundly covered.
98. By the end of Year 6, attainment in practical and investigative science and the use of fair tests is average. Pupils use charts, diagrams and graphs in a variety of ways to record their results and test their hypotheses. However, the analysis of pupils' work shows that they do not always have the opportunity to draw their own conclusions from their work and suggest improvements. Observations of lessons show that teachers do not always stress to younger pupils the need for a fair test. This happened in a satisfactory lesson in Year 3 to investigate whether salt, sugar, coffee and powder paint could be separated after being mixed with water. The teacher did not stress the need to use the same amount of water, solids to be dissolved and number of stirs when mixing and the same sieve when trying to separate the solids from the water. Although pupils were developing some scientific skills, they were not being introduced to fair testing and the higher attaining pupils were not given opportunities to write their own conclusion.
99. In their study of life processes, pupils in Year 6 name the major organs of the body and their functions, the main parts and features of a plant and describe conditions basic to plants, animals and human life. They identify the roots, stem, leaves and petals of a flower and conditions required for a plant to grow and pollinate. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 use their exploration of the school grounds well to identify different habitats and plant life. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 6, the teacher's very clear explanations, very good use of appropriate vocabulary and exemplary use of questions and pupils' errors and misconceptions led to them quickly to understanding how to use a classification chart to identify wild flowers. When the teacher told the pupils that they were then going to be scientists and would use their new skills and knowledge to identify plants in different parts of the school field their motivation was such that they exclaimed, 'yes' and 'cool'.
100. In their study of materials and their properties pupils can, by the end of Year 6, sort objects by texture, colour, shape, flexibility and hardness. Year 5 pupils design and carry out a fair test to understand the conditions required for water to evaporate. However, a review of work shows that not all pupils developed a conclusion and general hypothesis from their experiment.
101. In their work on physical processes, pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory understanding of how sound and light travels. They have a sound understanding of forces and, through experimenting

with parachutes, know that air resistance is a force that slows down objects and objects that float and sink do so because of balanced and unbalanced forces. They know the differences between solids, liquids and gases and can construct simple electrical circuits.

102. The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils make good progress in lessons. No lessons were less than satisfactory and one lesson was judged to be excellent. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge and confidence is good, which supports pupils well. Pupils are well managed, which results in good behaviour and attitudes. They are enthusiastic about science, particularly when there is a practical and investigative component to the lesson. Pupils are eager to share their knowledge and understanding with each other. They are co-operative when working in groups and want to learn more. Boys and girls work well together and make equally good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress in lessons because of the good support they receive from learning support assistants. All pupils are fully included in lessons. For example, in a good lesson in Year 4 about the classification of plants, the learning support assistant worked with a group of five lower attaining pupils. Her good questioning and explanations resulted in pupils identifying that different locations in the school field produce different types of plants. Pupils were able to complete an observation chart of their results, which contained the key vocabulary for pupils to select. Although many teachers ensure that worksheets match the needs of the different ability groups within a class, the higher attaining pupils are not always given tasks that encourage independence in selecting suitable apparatus or designing their own investigation. Pupils' work is well presented and consistently marked and valued by teachers. Teachers ensure that pupils use appropriate vocabulary and that it is spelt correctly. Written work contributes well to pupils' literacy skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection when work was judged not to be well set out and was not always marked. Teachers plan together within their year group, which ensures a consistency across classes.
103. Good use is made of numeracy in the subject. Pupils draw graphs and charts of their results and measure in standard units. For example, Year 6 pupils use a Newton metre when carrying out experiments on forces and Year 4 pupils use centimetre rulers when measuring the growth of plants. The use of ICT to support the subject is underdeveloped. Computers are used to construct graphs; for example, the results of a bird survey and a pond survey, but there was little evidence of CD-ROMs or the Internet being used for scientific research. The use of the library for research purposes is also underdeveloped. Resources are good. The spacious school grounds and the wild perimeter area also make a good contribution to the subject, especially when studying living things. The school plans to develop a pond, but good use is made of the nearby tributary of the River Way to study water life and the effects of pollution in rivers. The two residential visits to the environmental centres at Stubbington and Swanage and a day visit to Swanwick make a very good contribution to the subject and also to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She is knowledgeable and has identified clearly the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. The curriculum is well balanced and relevant to the pupils and links well to other subject areas.

ART AND DESIGN

104. Standards are average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average and achievement was unsatisfactory
105. In Year 3 pupils draw with a good attention to detail. They know how to print with string, use the technique of marbling and use a variety of different media for effect. They use clay effectively to make a plant pot and show some skill and imagination in decorating the pots with pieces of clay. As a result of their visit to Stubbington, pupils in Year 4 make close observational drawings of animals such as the fox, owl and badger. Their drawings show good attention to detail. They use their imagination well when making chalk drawings of the 'Rainbow Serpent' in their study of Aboriginal art. In Year 5 they study the work of artists such as Matisse and

Monet. They use the techniques of Monet to create their own pastel drawings and use their ICT skills satisfactorily to create fruit pictures in the style of Matisse. As part of their study of the Vikings, pupils make paper and paste masks. By the end of Year 6, pupils use a variety of techniques and skills to complete a range of work in art. They know about the work of environmental artists such as Andy Goldsworthy. They make detailed portraits of Tudor monarchs and link this to their visit to Hampton Court where they studied the portraits by Holbein. Pupils use string overlaid with gold to make a Tudor rose, know how to make templates and complete rubbings. Their drawings increase in detail and accuracy. They know how to use the technique of cross-hatching to create different strengths of colour.

106. Pupils enjoy art and even those who are not confident in their skills settle quickly to their work and are pleased with the results of their efforts. They work hard and are very motivated to complete their work.
107. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. Lessons are well planned and organised and all pupils are clear about what they are expected to achieve. There is a good focus on the teaching of skills and techniques such as colour mixing and use of tone, texture and colour, and pupils learn to use these in their work. Teachers manage pupils well and most art lessons have a relaxed, but hard-working atmosphere. In some classes good use is made of music to create calm and purpose. However, although pupils have sketchbooks, teachers do not use these well to practise skills and techniques in a systematic way or as a record of pupils' developing skills. Teachers use resources, such as the school environment and trips to the seashore, as opportunities for art work and this ensures that much of the work is relevant.
108. Although there has been little co-ordination of the subject in the recent past, the school improvement team responsible for writing the new curriculum has ensured that art and design is used well across the topics in place; for example, to support work in history. Much of the artwork undertaken during the past year has been linked to these topics. However, staff have planned the curriculum carefully to ensure that skills are developed systematically. Assessment is in the early stages of development and this is the next focus for the school improvement team. Some use is made of ICT; for example, digital cameras for secondary images and a graphics program to recreate the style of Matisse.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards are average in design and technology by the end of Year 6 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection when standards were found to be average and progress sound. Due to timetabling arrangements, only one lesson was seen during the inspection, therefore, it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching. However, planning was looked at, a portfolio of pupils' work was reviewed and discussions were held with the co-ordinator and pupils. These all confirm that pupils have been involved in a variety of appropriate tasks to design and make in a variety of contexts.
110. In Year 3, pupils design and make money containers. Their drawings are labelled, but fairly simply. Through this activity they learn to use sewing as a joining technique and know how to use a variety of stitches such as cross and running stitch. As part of their work on food technology, they taste and evaluate a variety of breads and grade them according to a set of criteria; for example, 'squashy', 'rough', 'delicate'. In the lesson seen they further developed their work on bread by suggesting a variety of fillings for sandwiches using some of these breads and discussed how to make the sandwiches look attractive. The teacher made good use of a design sheet to draw pupils' attention to the important aspects of the task; for example, bread, spread, filling and the final product. Pupils drew and labelled their diagrams carefully and accurately. The teaching in this lesson was good; the lesson was well planned, the teacher encouraged pupils to consider the range of options available to them and questioned them well to help them to develop their ideas and critically review their work. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language were well supported in this lesson.

111. In Year 4, pupils design moving books using tabs and split pins to create movement. They write lists of the materials they need and a set of instructions for the task. They are currently making a switch mechanism for use in their lighthouse project. By Year 5, pupils extend their work on food technology to bread making. They collect information about breads, produce step-by-step plans and work with a variety of utensils. Their diagrams are clearly labelled, ingredients listed and explanations of techniques used are given; for example, 'I did the edges with a fork'. They are developing the use of correct technical vocabulary such as 'kneading'. As part of their project on the Tudors, pupils in Year 6 make Tudor houses and visit Hampton Court to look at houses. As a result of this, they made good designs in terms of attention to detail. They used a variety of different sized boxes, wrote a list of materials needed and constructed a simple frame using paper spills. Good opportunities were given to pupils to work collaboratively on this task. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 confirm that when they made Roman chariots in Year 5, they made accurate labelled designs and used wood saws and glue guns to make the finished products. Although overall there is evidence that both the design and make aspects of the subject are covered and evaluations are undertaken, evaluations continue to be fairly simple and lack emphasis on the processes and skills.
112. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory, but the co-ordinator is aware that provision for design and technology within the new curricular framework is not fully embedded. This needs to be addressed at the school's review of the curriculum in order to ensure that pupils' achievement is assured. There is an appropriate policy and guidelines on the safe use of materials. National guidelines form the basis for planning and assessment sheets are used as a means of checking pupils' responses to individual units of work. There are some good links with other subjects, but the school needs to ensure that the subject specific requirements are always fully met. There is limited use of ICT; the only example found was when pupils looked at the website for designs of Tudor houses. There are adequate resources, but these are not well organised and stored to enable easy retrieval by teachers.

GEOGRAPHY

113. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 is average as it was at the time of the last inspection. Overall pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. Pupils develop a good knowledge of physical and human geography and their skills of analysis, acquisition and use of geographical vocabulary develop appropriately.
114. Pupils in Year 3, for example, develop a deeper understanding of their own locality through a study of Bordon and the local area and appreciate the main factors in its growth and development. A good variety of local visits, including one to local army headquarters, and local surveys support this area of learning effectively. In Year 4 pupils examine the larger settlement of Portsmouth and note its physical and human features, initially through the task of being a local estate agent, recording aspects that would be important in house sales. In Years 4 and 5, pupils develop an appreciation of the features of countries outside the United Kingdom through an examination of St Lucia and France, with particular reference to Cherbourg, Northern France. They understand the differences in climate, housing and occupations and the effect of local industries on the environment and inhabitants, comparing these with their own. Pupils have a sound understanding of water and its effects on people and the landscape, including the stages of a river and its associated language. The use of the local river has a major input into this, as does the practical task in Year 6 of preparing a small-scale riverbed and watching the path of the river develop as water is poured onto it. Evidence to support pupils' understanding of map reading skills is limited.
115. Only a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection, but the quality of these and an analysis of pupils' work suggest that the quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was noted as satisfactory. The lessons observed were well planned and organised. The particular strengths of teaching were interesting methods and effective pupil management. In Year 6 lessons, for example, pupils were fully engaged

watching the effect of increased water flow on their small-scale river, noting the flood plain developing around 'houses' that they had placed near the river. This, and the good relationships between teachers and pupils, had a positive impact on learning. In Year 5, pupils of all abilities respond well to questions about the four different areas of France being examined, due to the secure and pleasant working atmosphere created by the teacher. Good quality wall displays in classrooms are used effectively during whole-class discussions and effective links are made with history and literacy. The poems written about two contrasting areas of a local river, one area polluted and the other not, is a good example of this.

116. The curriculum has recently been rewritten. It is broad and balanced and now supports learning well by a good range of visits and practical experiences that motivate pupils. The links with history have not yet been fully documented and are capable of further development, as is the support of the subject by ICT. Assessment procedures are now in place and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The role of the co-ordinator has not yet been developed sufficiently to ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning is totally secure. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

HISTORY

117. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 is average and has improved since the last inspection when it was recorded as being below average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. given their below average attainment on entry
118. By the end of Year 6, pupils' depth of knowledge is sound and they have an appropriately developed sense of historical enquiry. The range of practical experiences and the variety of visits that support the curriculum effectively support their learning. In Year 3, for example, pupils learn about life as a Victorian by experiencing a Victorian school day and visiting a reproduction of a Victorian town in an exhibition centre in Basingstoke. Pupils develop an appreciation of how the physical aspects of a place can affect history as in Year 3 where pupils recognise the importance of the Nile, for example, in Egyptian history. A variety of activities help pupils to develop appropriate skills of historical inquiry. A good example of this is Year 6 where pupils examine and collect information from Greek pots, which contribute to their understanding of the roles of men and women in Ancient Greece. Practical experiences provide pupils with valuable insight and a growing understanding of the past. Pupils in Year 5 'lived' an evacuation day as part of their study of Britain since 1930, including a trip on a steam train as part of this, while pupils in Year 4 enjoyed a Roman feast as part of their study of the Romans. The school works hard at providing these enlightening experiences for pupils and the result is motivated pupils who produce written work of good quality and breadth.
119. No history lessons were observed during the week of the inspection, however, the outcomes would suggest that the quality of teaching is at least good. At the time of the last inspection teaching was recorded as satisfactory. There are a number of high quality displays around the school; for example, the one based on the Egyptians, including a full-sized mummy in a sarcophagus, in the school entrance hall. The review of pupils work undertaken, indicates that history is used well in the support of literacy. Good examples of this are instructions on 'How to make a Mummy' and a description of how Howard Carter felt when he first looked inside the tomb of Tutankhamun. Limited links are made with mathematics. ICT provides some support for the subject; for example, information on Cerberus, the three-headed dog that guards the gate to Hades, taken from the Internet. However, this is capable of being developed further. Some effective links are made with other areas of the curriculum; for example, in Year 3 making Egyptian pots and statues and in Year 6 the production of a menu for a feast and a list of good table manners as part of studies on the Tudors.
120. The curriculum contains good breadth and balance and has recently been rewritten to include a range of practical experiences thought necessary to motivate the pupils and improve their response. In this, the school has been successful. Assessments are done regularly and these

are used satisfactorily in forward planning. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

121. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This represents a decline since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line overall, but with a few falling below. The decline is due to a transitional period this year as new multimedia computers have replaced old computers. Also, technical difficulties with the new suite and the connections between the server and computers in the classroom have made it difficult to use class computers to support all areas of the curriculum. However, it is expected that the technical problems will be resolved by the new school year, in September 2002.
122. By Year 6, pupils confidently log on, with their own password, and shut down the computer, manipulate screen icons using the mouse, select items from an on-screen menu, use the 'drag and drop' features of a program and print their work. They are prepared to experiment should anything go wrong. All can change the size, style and colour of fonts. They have satisfactory keyboard skills and are able to find letters and numbers on the QWERTY keyboard. They know that information can be obtained from television, radio, videotape, audiotape, the Internet and CD-ROMs and can combine text, pictures and sounds to produce a presentation of their work. However, due to a lack of suitable programs and technical difficulties, pupils in Year 6 have had few opportunities to create and amend databases, send e-mails, use sensors or explore the effects of changing variables in a computer model. In the work scrutiny, there was only limited evidence of all pupils using the Internet and external control devices. A new electronic microscope has also not been used because of problems with loading the software.
123. The quality of teaching is good overall and results in good learning in lessons. Teachers manage the pupils effectively, with the result that pupils behave well when working independently of them and work well together. They are eager to learn new skills and happy to experiment and learn from their mistakes. Most ensure that they take turns to use the mouse and keyboard.
124. Teachers generally display good subject knowledge. Most explain the objectives of the program and lesson, which is then recapped at the end of the lesson. By good use of questioning and demonstration, pupils are quickly able to use a program independently. For example, in a good lesson in Year 5, pupils used an art program to draw fruit in the style of Henri Matisse's 'The Snail'. The teacher's good subject knowledge meant that she could quickly support any pupils' having difficulties with their computer skills and introduce new skills, such as the use of the 'effect' and 'rotate' icons, to change colours, shapes and position of the picture to produce an abstract snail effect. The teacher's clear explanations and good use of humour motivated the pupils to work independently on the task. Higher and lower attaining pupils are often set the same task, which does not consider the needs of different ability groups, especially the higher attaining pupils and those who bring skills from home. Learning support assistants and parent volunteers give lower attaining pupils good support, and so they make good progress in lessons.
125. The long, thin, rectangular shape of the computer suite makes it difficult for pupils to see a demonstration of a program or part of a program or to share each other's work because it is difficult to comfortably stand around a monitor. In the Year 5 lesson observed, the teacher carefully arranged pupils around one monitor to demonstrate some good work. She ensured that all could see by asking them to stand or kneel around the screen and then to walk around the suite looking at the work of others. However, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils found it difficult to see the demonstration monitor because they were not well organised around the screen and in a Year 4 lesson the pupils were not brought together to share their work. The school is aware of this problem and a large, electronic, interactive board and screen is to be installed in the suite in the new school year. This will allow all pupils to comfortably see demonstrations and share skills and knowledge with each other.

126. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 confidently use the computer in the library to borrow and return books. Pupils in years 3 and 4 have yet to develop this skill. The co-ordinator and librarian plan to place pupils' book reviews onto the library computer so that they can share with each other their opinions about the books available.
127. Good use is made of ICT to support skills in English through other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils word-process poems about rivers, write letters in the role of Lady Macbeth to Macbeth and write a short play set in the Tudor kitchen of Hampton Court. Year 5 pupils combine word-processing with clip-art pictures to write the story of a Viking raid and Year 4 pupils word-process stories about an imaginary world. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support mathematics and science. For example, following a visit to the Stubbington Study Centre, Year 4 pupils produce bar graphs of creatures found in a pond and a line graph of temperature changes. However, although Year 6 pupils have some experience of spreadsheets to record results, they have had few opportunities to manipulate the information in the cells of the spreadsheets in order to appreciate and interrogate the power of a spreadsheet and its contribution to mathematics. Satisfactory use is made of art and drawing programs. The use of ICT to support other areas of the curriculum is underdeveloped. This is recognised by the subject co-ordinator and will be addressed as soon as the technical problems of the new suite and the network to computers in classrooms have been resolved. A range of programs is waiting to be added to the computers.
128. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has identified clearly the strengths of the subject and the areas for development. However, she has had few opportunities to monitor teaching and learning. She is aware of the need to continue to raise staff confidence and knowledge in the teaching of ICT. A national initiative, to ensure that staff are well trained to teach ICT, occurred at the time when the school had older computers. With the introduction of multimedia computers, and also staff changes, the co-ordinator recognises the need for further training. She has reviewed the policy and produced a detailed scheme of work, which is based on national guidelines. The overall quality of computers has improved since the previous inspection. The ratio of computers to pupils is in line with the national average. The school has two digital cameras, although these are only used by adults and not pupils, a video camera and sufficient overhead projectors, tape recorders and CD-players. Year 6 pupils effectively control the CD-player and overhead projector during the school assemblies.

MUSIC

129. Standards are average at the end of Year 6 and pupil achievement is satisfactory. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection.
130. The youngest pupils can read their own simple notations and play simple three and four-beat compositions with control and accuracy using tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils in Year 6 can work in a group, using percussion instruments to represent mood. They critically evaluate their own work. Their listening skills are good and they can identify the moods that a composer such as Smetena conveys in orchestral compositions. Throughout the school pupils' skills in singing are average although younger pupils sing with more gusto than the older ones.
131. Six lessons were observed during the inspection, and two-thirds of them were good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. A specialist teacher, in partnership with the class teacher, taught the best lessons and these were very good. Pupils responded very positively to the additional expertise and the lessons were conducted at a brisk pace. Pupils learned the difference between pulse and rhythm and played set rhythms to accompany a song they were learning for a performance of 'Bugsy Malone'. Their learning was rapid and they showed enjoyment and total concentration. The teacher stopped and demonstrated well, when required, and pupils' performance and learning audibly improved at each of these times.
132. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils critically evaluated group performances, sometimes breaking into spontaneous applause, and responded very positively to their teacher's knowledge

and skills. These good and very good lessons were pitched at the right level for the pupils and demonstrated the use of appropriate vocabulary. They were well planned and all pupils were able to take part. In one lesson a learning support assistant took a group of pupils with special educational needs to another area so that they could practise without being distracted by other pupils. When they returned, they too had made good progress and were able to demonstrate their compositions with some aplomb.

133. In the two satisfactory lessons seen, either the lesson objectives were not pitched at a high enough level to take learning forwards quickly enough, or time was wasted in giving out instruments, which led to pupils losing interest and concentration.
134. Specialist teachers visit the school to give tuition in the violin and brass instruments, but few pupils take advantage of this additional tuition and there is no permanent school choir or orchestra. The temporary subject co-ordinator has helped teachers with their planning and begun to integrate more music into the school's new curriculum. Good links to other curriculum areas include, for Years 3 and 4, using an electric keyboard to learn to manipulate sound for ICT, celebrating Caribbean music through music and dance, singing two-part sea shanties as part of learning about Portsmouth and creating music and movement for Shiva's Dance when studying Hinduism. In Years 5 and 6, pupils listen to music from 'West Side Story' to complement their learning about 'Romeo and Juliet' and investigate how pitch can be changed on simple percussion instruments during science lessons.
135. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Pupils' attainment is recorded after each unit of work on the same school format as for other curriculum subjects. These record what pupils have learned from one year to the next. Teachers' assessments of what pupils know and can do are accurate and they give good verbal feedback to pupils after their performances. The resources for music are in a good condition and there are enough tuned and untuned percussion instruments for class performances

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. During the inspection week, it was only possible to observe games lessons. Dance, gymnastics and swimming lessons were not observed. Therefore, judgements are based on limited observations of the physical education curriculum, teachers' planning, assessment records and discussions with teachers and pupils. These indicate that by the end of Year 6 standards are average and have been maintained since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve appropriately.
137. By Year 6, pupils are able to perform a range of basic skills such as throwing, catching, balancing and travelling in a variety of ways and direction with suppleness, control, accuracy and safety. They generally work well in teams and understand the tactics and rules of a variety of attack and invasion games. Standards in swimming are above average with most pupils being able to swim 25 metres and the majority more than 100 metres.
138. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, in one lesson observed teaching was good and in another teaching was unsatisfactory. This is similar to the judgement of the previous inspection. The majority of teachers set a good example to pupils by dressing appropriately and leading by example, but in a minority of lessons teachers did not wear appropriate dress and did not ensure that their pupils dressed appropriately. Teachers generally have sound subject knowledge. Most lessons start with an appropriate warm-up, but few teachers make pupils aware of the effect of exercise on their body. Not all lessons include a cooling down period. In the good games lesson observed in Year 5, the teacher ensured that there was good pace and that pupils had opportunities to evaluate each other's work and improve their skills from the comments made. This immediately improved the pupils' bat and ball skills and their ability to hit the ball and control its direction, which was then used to good effect in a rounders match. However, in the unsatisfactory games lesson observed in Year 4, the teacher did not teach or reinforce all the necessary skills required to play quick cricket.

139. In most lessons teachers manage pupils well and this results in good behaviour and interest by pupils. They work well together in teams and in small groups. Where pupils do not behave well it is generally because of boredom through having to wait a turn in a game or not having been taught the appropriate skills to fully participate in the game. No overall judgement can be made about swimming lessons at the adjacent army pool. An instructor, who is supported by the teachers, teaching assistants and a lifeguard teach swimming. However, pupils are set appropriate and challenging tasks, which inspire them to feel confident in the water and make good progress in lessons.
140. The school uses a good scheme of work written by the co-ordinator with support from the local education authority's advisor for physical education. It has been updated to include ideas from national guidelines and ensures continuity and progression. The subject is taught through a mixture of cross-curricular topics and discrete lessons. The previous report judged that there was too much emphasis on dance. This has now been addressed and the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the pupils. For example, dance lessons are linked to the topic themes of 'Rivers' or 'Egypt'. The subject is well resourced for games and gymnastics, with two large hard areas, a very large field and an adequately sized hall. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which includes athletics, cricket, modern dance, football, judo and netball. They are very well attended and are open to pupils of both gender and from Years 3 to 6. Good use is made of the two residential visits, which include orienteering, walking and elements of personal, social and health education. The use of ICT to support physical education is underdeveloped. The contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good; for example, through team games, dance and extra-curricular activities. The army supports the subject well. The Ghurkha regiment has built fitness 'trim trail' and the 9th Army Education Corps organises the annual sports day. Good use is made of a learning support assistant who organises lunchtime games. These help to develop pupils' skills in games and also have a positive effect on the behaviour of pupils. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. Although physical education is not a priority for the school at this time, he has ensured that it remains a high profile subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. Standards of attainment match the levels of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 6. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average and progress unsatisfactory, as pupils did not have enough understanding of other faiths. The school now has a well planned and organised curriculum in place ensuring that three religions are covered in depth and pupils gain a good insight into human experience. A review of pupils' work shows that this is implemented across the school. As a result of this, pupils are achieving satisfactorily and sometimes well.
142. Pupils in Year 3 learn about Christianity and Hinduism. They know that the Bible is a special book for Christians and that Hindus worship at a special place in their homes called a shrine. They develop their ideas of belonging to a community and describe it in terms such as 'having something in common with people in your own area'. In Year 4 pupils further develop their understanding of Hinduism through the symbols used on the Murti of Shiva. They know that Shiva's hair represents the River Ganges and that Hindus consider the river to be holy. They learn about symbolism used in other religions; for example, the significance of the Paschal Candle in Christianity. By the time they are in Year 5 they know and understand why Jews celebrate Hanukkah. They visit a synagogue and learn about the significance of the Star of David, the Torah Scrolls and the layout of the building. Pupils make their own designs for a Mezuzah. They write a list of their own beliefs; for example, some believe that people should not kill animals for their fur. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the three religions studied. They consider the concept of darkness as related to evil, the birth rituals of different faith communities and the significance of water as a symbol of renewal.
143. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory with some good features and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection when most of the teaching was unsatisfactory. Teachers plan and organise lessons well, ensuring that pupils learn about

aspects of different religions and gain insight into human experience. They have sound subject knowledge, which they use well to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on the symbolism of the Murti of Shiva, the teacher's own knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject had captured pupils' imagination, motivating several to research the topic on their own and significantly increase their knowledge. In one lesson in Year 6, the teacher's good questioning helped pupils to a deeper understanding of symbolism; for example, 'In baptism, what do you think the water is used as a symbol of?'. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss difficult issues in a sensitive and thoughtful manner. For example, pupils discussed some of the aspects of themselves or the wider world they would like 'washed away' such as 'a bad temper', 'asthma', 'world poverty' and 'famine'.

144. Teachers make good use of resources to explain, demonstrate or clarify issues; for example, an extract from 'The Dawn Treader' to clarify ideas about the symbolism of water and a statue of Shiva to clearly show the different symbols. Pupils generally respond well to lessons and are keen to learn about different religions and deepen their understanding of the meaning of life. Staff make good use of drama; for example, to recreate the Creation story. The main weakness in the teaching seen was a lack of questioning to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and a lack of challenge to encourage pupils to think more deeply about issues.
145. The co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce a scheme of work that matches the school's new experience based curriculum. She has ensured that there is an increased focus on relating learning about religions to pupils' own experiences. There are an increased number of visits and visitors such as the Year 5 visit to a synagogue in Reading and the visit of the Hindu Dance Group. Some use is made of ICT to explore visual sites when looking at places of worship. The school is increasing its range of artefacts and now has a good number of book resources. Religious education supports pupils' moral, social and cultural development well through discussion of issues, opportunities to work collaboratively and the study of different religions.