

INSPECTION REPORT

NEW MILTON INFANT SCHOOL

Town: New Milton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115928

Substantive Headteacher: Miss J. Yeandle

Acting Headteacher: Mrs V. Hood

Reporting inspector: Mr G. D. Timms
21038

Dates of inspection: 16 – 19 June 2003

Inspection number: 247598

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev J. Buxton
Date of previous inspection:	2 February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21038	Mr G. D. Timms	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology The Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' standards. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve?
12682	Mr J. Griffin	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and resources.
28320	Mr R. Willey	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Music Physical education Educational inclusion	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
13122	Mrs S. Matthews	Team inspector	English Art and design History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22948	Mrs M Vallis	Team inspector	Religious education Geography Special educational needs	
21267	Miss P. J. Miller	Team inspector	The work of the speech and language unit	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is bigger than most primary schools. There are 330 pupils on roll, aged from four to seven, when most transfer to the junior school on the same site. There is a unit for younger pupils with speech and language difficulties, which takes pupils from the age of three until they are ready to start school. In addition to the unit, there are 101 pupils on the register of special educational needs and this is above average. Two of these pupils have statements of special educational need requiring extra funding. The school provides extra support through a nurture group, intended to develop pupils' social and behavioural skills and thus improve their learning. There are few pupils from ethnic minorities and very few who are at an early stage of learning English. Where appropriate the school provides extra support for such pupils. The pupils come from a range of backgrounds but, overall, the attainment on entry is well below average when compared with schools nationally. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than is usual is high.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective and has maintained many of the positive features evident during the last inspection, although the attainment of pupils entering the school, and the socio-economic circumstances of a significant number, has worsened. This situation has been maintained in the face of many staffing difficulties with regular and extended absences of senior management and teaching staff. The quality of education is good and the leadership and management of the school are good. The school has benefited from very effective support from the governing body. The quality of teaching is good overall, and very good in the nurture group, speech and language unit, and in the Foundation Stage. Overall, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reception are above those expected in pupils' creative and physical development. Standards in art and design, design and technology and physical education at the end of Year 2 are above those expected. The school provides very well for creative development throughout all year groups.
- The leadership is good, and the school is well managed. The governing body offers very good support for the school.
- The quality of teaching is very good in the speech and language unit, the nurture group and in the Foundation Stage. There is good teaching throughout the school.
- The curriculum is very well planned and there is a very good range of learning opportunities. The provision for pupils' cultural development is excellent.
- Pupils' personal development is very good. The relationships between pupils, and pupils and adults are very good. Pupils' behaviour is good.
- The provision for the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 is good and is resulting in a good proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in the annual tests. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is also very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics, especially among the average and lower attaining pupils.
- The day-to-day use of computers in other subjects.
- The subject co-ordination which requires reviewing when staffing is settled.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998. Since then the level of improvement has been good, despite the staffing difficulties faced by the school. This is the result of the good management strategies in place and the hard work of the staff. A number of significant issues were raised and these have been largely addressed. The provision for the higher attaining pupils has been very successfully improved, as is shown by the test results. The financial planning has improved and now provides the governors with a good overview of spending. Standards have risen in most subjects, at least in line with the improvements found nationally. Report writing is good and targets are set. All statutory requirements in documentation for parents are met. In addition, the very effective nurture group has been set up to improve provision for pupils

with social or behavioural difficulties that act as a barrier to their learning. There has been very good progress in the speech and language unit. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	D	D	D	D
Writing	D	C	D	C
Mathematics	C	B	E	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The test results in 2002 showed that standards in reading and writing were below average when compared with schools nationally, while in mathematics, standards were well below average. This reflects fact that although a broadly average proportion of the pupils reached the expected level, insufficient pupils reached the higher levels. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards in reading and mathematics were below average, while in writing they were broadly in line with the average. These figures do not reflect the good level of achievement evident since the pupils entered the school. For example, in reading 62 per cent of the pupils achieved the expected level of progress predicted for them after their assessment on entry to the school. Thirty-four per cent exceeded the level predicted for them and only four per cent failed to make sufficient progress. It is a similar picture in mathematics. This indicates that, although the average points score is below average, the pupils do make good, and at times very good, progress through the school.

The inspection evidence supports this. The current standards are broadly average in English and science, and have been maintained since the last inspection, despite the fact that the assessment of children when they start school shows that the knowledge and skills of many are now lower than those of their counterparts some years before. In mathematics, the standards of the higher attainers have improved but the average and lower attaining pupils are not making sufficient progress and this is resulting in a picture of below average attainment. Standards in science, information and communication technology, religious education, geography, history and music are all broadly in line with those expected, reflecting good progress. In art and design, design and technology and physical education standards are above those expected, and this represents a good level of progress. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in the speech and language unit, and in the nurture group, due to the very good teaching. In the rest of the school, they make good progress against the targets set in their individual education plans. The expertise available is very well used to support pupils who join the school at an early stage of speaking English, and they make equally good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy the imaginative tasks and particularly the role-play opportunities provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Overall, the behaviour is good and the school is an orderly and friendly learning environment.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The development of independence, co-operation and the very good relationships are strengths, especially in the reception classes.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The attendance figures are below average.

The pupils are positive about school and about their teachers. They listen and concentrate well, and are developing good learning habits.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. The grouping of pupils in Year 2 in classes according to their prior attainment is effective in English, and in mathematics it is providing the higher attaining pupils with a good level of challenging tasks. However, in mathematics it is not helping raise the standards of the middle and lower attaining pupils sufficiently. The skills of literacy are very well taught and those of numeracy are taught satisfactorily. The teaching in the speech and language unit, in the nurture group sessions, and in the reception year is very good. The teaching in the rest of the school is good, overall. A major strength of the teaching is the relationships between teachers and children. The pupils are confident and feel comfortable taking an active part in lessons, and in most lessons a productive working ethos is evident. In a few lessons, the behaviour of a minority of the pupils hinders their progress, and occasionally the tasks provided for pupils do not match their prior attainment, thus proving too easy or too difficult. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and that for the pupils with English as an additional language is often very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The basic curriculum is enriched through the emphasis on the arts, the imaginative teaching, the use of the outdoor areas and the range of extra-curricular activities provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school has provided generously from its own resources for pupils with very significant special needs. The provision of the nurture group is very effective in offering such pupils extra support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Effective and efficient use is made of the staff in the speech and language unit to support pupils at an early stage of learning English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for pupils' cultural development is excellent, and covers their own and other cultures, especially through art and the work in reception. The provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school is very effective in monitoring pupils' personal development. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good.

The partnership with parents is good and this has a positive impact on standards. The work of the speech and language unit is very good, and this contributes to the children's very good progress. The links with the parents of these pupils are particularly strong. There are very good links with the local community. The personal, social and health curriculum is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and	Good. The acting headteacher and other senior staff have worked hard to

management by the headteacher and other key staff	maintain the school's clear educational direction and focus on raising achievement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors provide the school, the acting headteacher and the staff with a good level of support and they have a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school makes good use of available data, analyses test results and tracks pupils' progress well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The available funds are used well to provide pupils with an appropriate education, including those with special educational needs.

The level of staffing and the adequacy of resources are broadly appropriate for the size of the school. The buildings are well kept and provide a bright learning environment although there are temporary classrooms in use. The role of the subject co-ordinators has been affected by the staffing difficulties, and this needs reviewing when staffing permits. However, the temporary co-ordinators have worked hard to continue developing their subjects. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

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 like school. • The teaching is good, even though the staffing has been disrupted by a lot of absence. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with a problem or a query. • The school expects the children to work hard and achieve their best. • The children are becoming more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of interesting activities outside of lessons. • They would like more information about how well their child is getting on. • Children do not get the right amount of homework. • Some parents feel that the recent staff absences have made it difficult for the school to work closely with them and that the leadership and management of the school have been affected.

The parents are largely positive about the work of the school, although also concerned about the recent staff turbulence. The inspection findings support the view of good teaching, high expectations, children growing in maturity and responsibility, and their being happy coming to school. There is a good range of interesting activities outside of lessons and the homework provision is broadly appropriate for the ages of the pupils. Parents get very good quality information about how well their child is doing. The staff have worked hard to ensure that the staff turbulence has had a minimal impact on the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the school varies widely but the assessment of them soon after they start school shows that the average attainment on entry is below that for the local authority as a whole and for some pupils it is well below that expected nationally. Their physical development is good, however. The levels of attainment pupils demonstrate when they start school are below those found at the time of the last inspection.
2. In the reception classes, children make at least good, and often very good progress. They make very good gains in all of the expected areas of learning but a significant number do not attain the expected early learning goals in communication, language and literacy or in their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, the very strong creative aspects of the teaching ensure that the majority reach the expected level in their personal, social and emotional development and their physical development is often good. They make very good progress in their creative development and achieve a standard of work that is often above that expected for their age.
3. The national test results for Year 2 pupils in 2002 fell when compared to the results in 2001. They were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. However, these figures hide the good progress evident and the good level of achievement shown by the results when they are compared to the predictions made for the pupils when they were assessed soon after starting school. In mathematics, for example, 59 per cent of the pupils achieved the expected level and 37 per cent exceeded expectations. Only four per cent failed to make the expected progress. This reflects well on the stability and quality of the teaching, even through the staff turbulence of the last two years. There is a similar picture in reading.
4. A particular strength in the standards is the proportion of higher attaining pupils who reach the higher levels. This is helped through the setting by prior attainment found in both English and mathematics in Year 2. Teachers are able to set sufficiently challenging tasks for a narrower range of ability than in most classes. This has resulted in around 30 per cent of the pupils reaching the higher levels in reading and mathematics, and around 17 per cent in writing. These are much higher than the expectations predicted after the assessments made when the children started school.
5. The current standards show that in English, science, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, geography, history and music standards are broadly in line with those expected by the end of Year 2. In art and design, design and technology, and physical education standards are above those expected. This reflects the school's strengths in its creative, cultural and art work, and the physical skills that pupils have when they start school. The very good creative and art work found in the reception year is continued and built upon throughout the school and standards are high. Standards in mathematics reflect those found in the tests, with the higher attainers doing well, but the middle and lower attaining pupils achieving less well, resulting in an overall picture of standards that are below average. Although standards in ICT are sound, the use of these skills across the curriculum is underdeveloped and opportunities to use computers are missed.
6. The pupils who are from ethnic minority backgrounds including those at an early stage of learning English, make equally good progress as their peers. This is due to the support they receive from staff in the speech and language unit, and to the awareness of class teachers who involve them appropriately in lessons and especially in the speaking and listening activities. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the clear targets set them regularly on their individual educational plans. Pupils with speech and language difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties make very good progress. This is because they thrive within the security and structure of the nurture group and are well known and supported by adults and peers within the mainstream setting. Pupils make good progress with their academic work because teachers often adjust tasks to a pupil's individual level or make it accessible by very good support. Pupils also progress well because there is a balance of working within mixed ability groups, where

they benefit from the example of more able pupils, or in small groups targeted at pupils of similar ability where frustration is minimised.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils form very good relationships, show positive attitudes towards school and their work, behave well and their personal development is good. The good partnership with parents together with the very good provision for their personal development at school make significant contributions to these positive attitudes and values.
9. Pupils' attitudes to school are good overall. Based on questionnaire returns, most pupils like school. Discussions with them confirm that school plays an important part in their lives. For example, they ranked school ahead of hobbies, level with friends and only behind family in a list of the important things in their lives. They are positive about their teachers' fairness, kindness and helpfulness, including the good explanations they give when pupils do not understand. They are also positive about the school lunches, the opportunities to help teachers, and the playground equipment and games. The very good relationships amongst nearly all pupils also make a significant contribution to their positive views. Pupils' attitudes seen in lessons are good overall. In nearly all lessons pupils listen and concentrate well and are keen to respond to teachers' questions. Pupils' favourite subjects and lessons are those where they are practically involved, such as, art, physical education and 'circle time', which provides them with good opportunities to discuss their feelings and concerns in a safe, supportive atmosphere. The best attitudes and behaviour occur in lessons where expectations are high and pupils are busy and engaged in a variety of activities, which provide the right level of challenge for them. Special educational needs pupils and those with English as a second language are justifiably positive about the extra support they get.
10. Behaviour is good overall. The good and reliable behaviour of nearly all pupils is an important element in the prevailing positive atmosphere for learning. In most lessons, nearly all pupils are well behaved, and in many behaviour is very good. In a minority of lessons, especially in Year 1, teachers work hard to address the behaviour of a few pupils and very good support is offered through the nurture group. Pupils form orderly lines and move about in a calm and responsible way. Behaviour of nearly all pupils at lunchtime, playtimes and in assemblies is good. There is no evidence of any bullying, racist or sexist behaviour. Nearly all pupils take good care of property and resources and help keep their school in attractive condition. Parents and pupils confirm that bullying incidents are rare and, where they have occurred, have been well handled by staff. There have been no exclusions for many years. Most parents are positive about pupils' behaviour, but a small minority express some concerns about the behaviour of a few pupils.
11. Relationships between adults and pupils, and among pupils, are very good overall. Adults act as very good role models. Teachers value pupils' work and effectively praise effort and good work. For example, pupils in Year 2, speak positively about the support they get from teachers and the fair way in which they are treated. As a result, even in reception classes, the majority of pupils are comfortable working in small groups, expressing views and asking questions of their teachers, for example. This assists their learning. Very good relationships among pupils is a very positive feature.
12. Pupils' personal development is good overall. The excellent provision for their cultural development, together with very good provision for spiritual, social and moral development make a major contribution. Nearly all pupils achieve the early learning goals related to their personal, social and emotional development, by the end of reception class. A discussion with a group of Year 2 pupils reveals that they have already got a strikingly clear and disapproving view of what represents unacceptable behaviour and why. Most pupils know and calmly carry out the daily routines expected of them. Pupils show concern for others, if they are ill or otherwise upset. Pupils regularly and without prompting, hold doors open for each other and adults. In lessons, pupils in all year groups, show excellent respect for the beliefs of different religions and cultures. Where the teaching encourages independence in relation to learning, even by the end of the reception year most pupils respond positively. Pupils grow in confidence as they get older, becoming increasingly comfortable taking responsibility as they move through school. For example, a group of Year 2 pupils regularly set out the chairs in the hall whilst pupils in all year groups help their teachers with classroom duties.
13. Attendance is unsatisfactory overall. At 93 per cent, in the current year, it is below the national average. Whilst absence is dominated by illness, holidays during term time provide an important

secondary reason. The unauthorised absence level is broadly in line with the national average. Most pupils come to school on time and settle to their work promptly and calmly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of the teaching is good, with a significant amount that is very good or excellent and very little that is unsatisfactory. This reflects very positively on the teachers, both permanent and temporary, and on the consistency of the management of the school, given the disruption due to staff absences. Although almost half of the teaching staff are temporary teachers, almost all of the teaching is satisfactory or better, including 77 per cent that is good or better and 53 per cent that is very good or excellent. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The teaching in the reception classes, and that in the nurture group, is very good.
15. This good and very good teaching has a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The very good relationships created between staff and pupils encourage children to take a full part in lessons and to be willing to answer questions in whole class sessions. In the reception classes, the very bright learning environment encourages pupils to show interest in their work and celebrates their work through good displays.
16. Since the last inspection, teachers have worked hard to ensure that the teaching of the more able pupils is more effective. This has resulted in a good improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in the national tests. The grouping together of the higher attaining pupils for English and mathematics is very effective and has enabled teachers to target their teaching at a narrow range of abilities and to focus on more challenging tasks. This grouping is based on pupils' prior attainment. However, the grouping of the other pupils, particularly in mathematics, has been less successful in raising standards. The school is aware of this and the mathematics co-ordinator has plans to research the reasons for this in the near future.
17. Where the teaching is less successful, tasks are not well matched to the pupils' prior attainment, as happened in one lesson where the activity using money exceeded the pupils' knowledge and recognition of coins. In other lessons, pupils were using data handling software on the computer that did not meet any real purpose or develop their learning sufficiently. In a few lessons, the behaviour of a minority of the pupils with behaviour problems disturbed the learning of others, but this is usually well handled by the teachers. The teaching in the nurture group is exceptionally strong in helping to deal with such disruptive behaviour.
18. The strongest teaching is lively, exciting and "pacey". It encourages pupils and gives them a real motivation to learn. The teaching of the creative arts in the school is particularly effective and the school is filled with imaginative work in art, music and writing. The teaching of literacy is also strong and teachers ensure that writing skills are used across the curriculum. Imaginative tasks are set, such as writing invitations to Cinderella's Ball, or lists of the jobs her Ugly Sisters made her do. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory and there are times when pupils use numeracy skills in other subjects, but this is less well developed than it is in literacy.
19. The homework set is broadly appropriate for the ages of the pupils. The marking of pupils' work is often done with them, and this enables teachers to make appropriate learning points and to assess how well the pupils are working towards the targets set for them. Appropriate records are kept, although the recording of pupils' learning in the non-core subjects is underdeveloped. Even the temporary teachers seem to know the pupils and their backgrounds well, and there is clearly a very strong team ethos within the school that has contributed to the successful progress still being made even in the face of so much staff turbulence.
20. The teaching in reception is very good. The teachers devise a wide range of very imaginative and exciting tasks for pupils, usually linked to one theme, and this provides coherence to the learning, making important links between the areas of learning. The very good teaching contributes to the very good progress made. The teachers make excellent use of the outdoor facilities, gardens, wild areas and playgrounds. For example, very imaginative use is made of the wild wooded area by classes using the fairy tale theme as a basis. Children are asked to search for items to make spells in the cauldron, or at other times, to sit quietly and read. Other tasks require them to co-operate and these

provide very good personal development opportunities when children can use their initiative to complete tasks set.

21. Pupils with special educational needs learn well because teachers and support staff are knowledgeable about their needs and are aware of how individuals learn best. Teaching and learning are exceptionally good within the nurture group because of outstanding teaching by a highly knowledgeable teacher who is sensitively aided by very effective support staff. This means that pupils who enter school with very significant difficulties thrive on teaching which stimulates all their senses and which they clearly enjoy. They are then more able to relax, learn and integrate successfully into mainstream schooling. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is also good and has a positive impact on their language acquisition.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are very good. Pupils benefit from a variety of learning experiences that are well planned and meet their needs very well. The school provides the full range of areas of learning for reception children, and the full range of the National Curriculum for pupils up to the age of seven. It meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Provision for children who are under five is very good, particularly in the creative aspects of their learning and the use of the outdoor education facilities. The school provides very well for those with special educational needs in the classroom, and in the nurture group that expertly supports pupils who find some aspects of school life more challenging. Since the last inspection the literacy and numeracy strategies have been effectively introduced and provision for pupils' cultural education is now excellent. The exciting and colourful displays around the school reflect the range and quality of activities enjoyed by all pupils and the use of music, often from non-European cultures, creates an atmosphere in the school that is very special. The school provides a very rich learning experience for its pupils.
23. Learning opportunities are planned well and the topic-based approach creates very good opportunities for pupils to develop a range of skills and knowledge. Teachers plan across the year groups well and there are managers for individual subjects. The school is managing the curriculum well despite the number of temporary teachers. Nationally recommended schemes are used alongside well-established topics and themes that bring together the learning from a variety of subject areas in a way that benefits all pupils. For example, although taught time in science is a little below that recommended for pupils of this age this is not affecting standards because pupils study science in other subjects, such as when they look closely at a flower in a lesson on observational drawing. Pupils are specifically grouped by ability for literacy and numeracy lessons and they work in groups of pupils of similar ability in most activities. This approach is ensuring that higher attaining pupils are achieving well.
24. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The range and richness of the mainstream curriculum suit their needs well. When necessary, it is adapted to meet individual requirements but always ensuring that pupils have full access to all activities. This might be by flexibility in recording work, for example by the use of a scribe, or by providing sufficient adult or peer support to ensure inclusion. Small groups or individuals sometimes benefit from additional practice, for example of basic skills or speech and language. However, the school monitors these sessions to ensure that the benefits outweigh any disadvantages of being withdrawn from class, and that they do not interrupt the same lessons regularly. The school has provided generously from its own resources for pupils with very significant special needs.
25. The nurture group, which was set up after much thought, planning and training of staff, ensures a highly appropriate curriculum and time for pupils to develop social, language and behavioural skills within a totally safe and supportive environment. However, it is not isolated from the rest of the school and pupils move in and out of the group as needs change. The whole school community benefits from this provision because vulnerable pupils are better able to cope within mainstream making life easier for all teachers and pupils and sending out the clear message that individuals matter. Very constructive relationships with pre-school providers and the junior school smooth the transition of pupils with special educational needs. Personal relationships between staff are very good so knowledge, ideas and resources are pooled effectively. Links with external agencies are

characterised by mutual high regard and trust, for example with the educational psychologist and speech and language therapists, so that staff and pupils benefit significantly from this expertise and collaboration.

26. The provision for the teaching of literacy skills is very good. Literacy lessons are very well planned and there are extra sessions for writing and reading. Speaking and listening skills are encouraged in lessons and in assembly. Skills, such as extended writing, labeling and note taking, are developed very well in the varied learning activities. Pupils read to adults frequently and there is a clear focus on encouraging reading skills and a love of books. Regular activities such as story time and 'show and tell' are enjoyed by pupils and promote literacy skills very well. Pupils know that they can find information in a variety of ways and by Year 2 they can use the Internet and the catalogue system in the library well. The provision for teaching of numeracy skills is satisfactory. The use of data handling skills is evident in science lessons and good use of computers enables pupils to create effective bar charts and graphs.
27. Provision for the personal, social and health education of pupils is very good. This area is taught in specific lessons, is included in many lessons in other subjects, and is essential to many activities such as the healthy schools project. Social and health topics are discussed in subjects such as science and religious education as well as in class assemblies and circle time. The school has all the required policies such as, for example, for sex education. Planning is very good and pupils are very well prepared to move to the next stage of their education because they have been well informed and have had the opportunity to reflect on personal and health issues.
28. The school provides a good level of extra-curricular activities. French lessons are provided by an outside agency. Pupils can join in choir, music and dance activities after school, and recorders and dance sessions are well attended. A range of play equipment is also available for their use at break times. Trips and visitors enrich their learning and during the inspection visits to the local park were used in a variety of subject areas particularly geography and English. Educational visits are very popular and pupils enjoy going to Beaulieu and to the beach at Barton. The school environment is an excellent resource for lots of activities as it has a range of different garden and wild areas. Pupils value the secret garden as a haven to escape from the more actively used play areas.
29. Provision for equal opportunities is very good. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and those with special educational needs are well supported, usually in the classroom but there is also very good extra provision. Able pupils are identified and work is planned to ensure that they reach their full potential. The school has the required equal opportunities policies. The provision of books and other resources to ensure that pupils learn to value other cultures is excellent and pupils have contacts with a school in Africa. Boys are making especially good progress in reading. The school has full facilities for the disabled and pupils learn alongside adults with disabilities who regularly work in the school. Pupils are clearly made aware of all equal opportunities issues.
30. There are very good links with the local schools and the local community. Links with pre-schools and nurseries are very good and teachers meet to discuss approaches to different subjects so that pupils can progress easily into the next stage of education. There are good links with the junior school and local colleges and pupils and students work in the school. The local church is used as a learning resource and the school works closely with the emergency services to ensure that pupils are aware of possible dangers. Visitors come into school to talk about a variety of topics, pupils raise money for a variety of charities and there are valuable links with local supermarkets and businesses.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. There are well-planned, daily school assemblies that provide opportunities for pupils to develop their self-awareness, values and beliefs by reflecting on what they have heard during the lighting of a candle and a short time of silence. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of religious beliefs during religious education lessons as well as in assemblies. Celebrations associated with each faith are treated with equal respect. In many lessons pupils are given opportunities to experience some planned opportunities for awe and wonder. These include a visit to a Year 2 English lesson by 'David Livingstone' that gave great stimulus to the diary writing activity which followed. The atmosphere created for a Year 2 religious education lesson by the teacher gathering pupils around a table on which were placed a Bible and a lighted candle and then talking to them in hushed tones, was also one that developed their sense of awe and wonder. Pupils are rightly proud of their school and their work, which they take care to present well.

32. Provision for moral development is very good and pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong. All staff are good role models for pupils to follow. Pupils are directly involved in setting class rules which reflect the school's high expectations of behaviour. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and older pupils usually set younger ones a very good example. All classes in the school have lessons for personal development and circle time. The programme allows for frequent discussions about behaviour that is either desirable or to be avoided and helps pupils to think through the consequences of their actions. Pupils listen respectfully to each other's views and this enhances relationships and fosters honesty and trust very well. There are excellent relationships among all members of the school community, regardless of age or background, and pupils feel secure and valued.

33. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Teachers take care to ensure that pupils are fully involved in lessons. Good guidance is given in assemblies and lessons to help pupils understand relationships and teamwork and to help them cope with difficult situations. In lessons, pupils are given many opportunities to brainstorm together in pairs or to work in larger groups. This leads to very effective learning because of pupils' excellent relationships and their attitudes to work. Both teachers and learning assistants handle challenging behaviour, when it does occur, very well. Good behaviour is rewarded through a system of stickers and "smiley faces". Emphasis is given to promoting pupils' self-esteem by providing opportunities for them to exercise leadership and responsibility.
34. The rich variety and quality of cultural experiences presented to pupils are exceptional. Through many subjects, pupils are given a wide range of experiences of cultures of different times and places as well as the culture that surrounds them. Much work with a focus on Africa was seen during the inspection and included CD music in assembly, work on David Livingstone in history, stories in literacy such as "The Lion that roared too loud", masks in art, life in Kenya in geography and African dance in physical education. Social awareness was also being developed through the school's close working with the charity "Out of Africa". The pupils' own different ethnic backgrounds are often strongly reflected in the cultural experiences presented to them. Pupils are introduced to many aspects of a good range of faiths, including the food, dress and art associated with them. Well-presented, imaginative wall displays enrich pupils' experience and learning. During Arts Week, the school celebrates dance, music and story. World Week preparations for later in the term include an Indian storyteller, Egyptian and Spanish dancing as well as stories from around the world. Clubs for recorders and dance extend pupils' learning of the arts. Visitors are used well to extend pupils' cultural awareness beyond their everyday experience and they are taken on many visits during the year covering most subjects of the curriculum. The school has worked very hard to make pupils aware of the multi-cultural nature of life in Britain today.

The speech and language unit – 'The Early Learning Group'

35. The Early Learning Group provides for pre-school children with speech and language difficulties in a nursery setting. In the previous inspection report, it was noted that the children made sound and often good progress in all areas of learning, with particularly good progress in language development, and personal and social development. There has been very good progress since the previous inspection. The positive qualities have been maintained and the leadership of the group is still strong. The contribution of the speech and language therapist has helped to draw the work on children's speech and language targets more closely into all teaching and play activities. Staff training has further developed the skills of each member of staff and improved the quality of teaching. The work of the assistants is directed effectively to specific areas of speech and language, and physical development. The children have regular contacts with pupils in the mainstream classes.
36. The quality of teaching is never less than very good and there is excellent teaching of groups by the teacher and the speech and language therapist. The assistants make a high quality contribution to teaching and the teamwork is excellent. Children enjoy a wide range of activities that includes outdoor play, role-play, stories, and games. With carefully planned support, the children improve their skills as they take part. For example, role-playing shopping is very popular and helps children's memory. Staff develop creative activities that interest and motivate children. For instance, the Bob the Builder project inspires children to write letters, role play being a builder, and use a tape measure. It gives them opportunities to work collaboratively as they take part in physical activities.
37. Throughout each day there are many rich opportunities for discussions that motivate children and build their confidence to communicate. There is a very good mix of self-chosen and teacher-directed activities. Adult prompting and support help children to persist and the fast pace of the work is never at the expense of the children's personal and emotional well-being. There is a great sense of fun throughout the day. Humour is shared, for example, when a child enjoys saying that Humpty Dumpty cannot listen because he has no ears.
38. The strong focus on words and concepts in both planning and teaching supports children's language development. There is very good use of adults modelling and demonstrating activities. For example, the teacher shops so that the children can decide if she has remembered the correct items. Such activities are used to help children develop their decision-making skills. The use of praise for specific achievements helps all children to understand what they have done well. For example, an assistant

- tells a child 'that's a lovely 'm', which leads the child to persist and later say 'mum' clearly. All staff regularly praise the acts of 'listening' and 'looking'.
39. The teaching approaches used particularly help the children's speech and language difficulties. For instance, pictures and real articles are used to reinforce understanding. This helps the children when they sing 'He's got the whole world in his hands' with pupils in the reception classes. Actions are clearly demonstrated, gestures enhance meaning and signing reinforces messages. Stories are used effectively to help the children learn about the sequencing of events. Songs are chosen carefully to give a mix of known nursery rhymes that will help the children in their play group settings, and others that are chosen to give the children opportunities to learn and practise skills. For example, the song 'What shall we do Mr Punchinello' gives the children chances to use and make choices, and practise turn taking, decision making and physical skills. Careful plans ensure that children will develop their skills in all areas of learning. For example, counting is integrated well into other activities, as are the use of colours, knowledge of the environment, and physical skills such as drawing and cutting. The computer is used effectively to practise information technology and other skills, and to explore known stories, such as 'The Three Bears'.
40. There is very clear guidance for behaviour and for how children treat others that is in line with the school policies. A quiet but firm approach helps learning and behaviour. Social activities are integral to the work of the unit and children respond well to the warmth and encouragement from the staff. Assessment is very thorough in each session. Children who hold back in their responses are praised and this immediately improves their performance. Teaching is adjusted in response to observations. Time is used well. For example, at the beginning of the day the speech and language therapist, and assistant who works on language based programmes, immediately focus on specific children as they come in, while others play and have support from other staff. All staff have a very clear knowledge of the children's targets, so they can use any available time to the best advantage. Their difficulties are very individual and the areas of difficulty cover all the different aspects of speech and language. Individual targets on individual education plans are therefore given a high level of importance and the children make very good progress against these.
41. The children have very positive attitudes to work and attendance at the group is good. Records indicate that some children have behaviour difficulties but the group observed was very well behaved. Children listen and look very well. This is helped because objects are used to attract their attention, for example, Humpty Dumpty at the beginning of a story session. The children approach adults with a good level of confidence, considering their communication difficulties. They delight in their ability to develop new skills of communication. For example, one child is greatly pleased when he can say a short sentence. Curricular planning effectively draws together work from the Foundation Stage with a published language scheme. Targets on children individual education plans are integrated well into curricular plans and teaching. There is effective long, medium and short-term planning and all staff contribute to daily planning.
42. Pupils are assessed on entry to the group by the speech and language therapist and re-assessed towards the end of the year. There are full records that indicate children's achievements and are shared with parents. Data is collected on how the progress of children from the Early Learning Group compares with other groups. There are positive systems to communicate with parents and share ideas. Parents are welcomed informally at the beginning and end of the day. This brings opportunities that are exploited excellently. For example, a parent who wants to make a fish with her child at home is given materials and ideas. The decorated fish is successful and highly praised by staff the next day, so all feel a sense of achievement. For parents who are not able to visit school regularly, the home/school book gives very good opportunities for communication. Homework is provided through speech and language activities if parents request it and advice is given about how to present the activities, to reduce the pressure on children and parents.
43. The management of the group is strong and effective. There is a clear vision for the work of the unit and very good plans for development. Staff have very good opportunities for training within the group and on formal courses. As one assistant works in the main school with the support of the speech and language therapist, expertise is shared well with mainstream teachers, and also used to support pupils with English as an additional language. Links with the local education authority are very positive. The high quality input from the educational psychologist who helps at each stage of the process, from first referral to when children leave the group, is much appreciated by staff. There are regular contacts with the children's playgroups that help the children in those settings. The accommodation is satisfactory and staff make very good use of the available space. The outdoor

play area is used imaginatively and shared effectively with other year groups. Resources are very good, and published materials are boosted by purpose-made materials developed by staff.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The care arrangements for pupils are very good overall. Assessment procedures and their use are now good in the majority of subjects, particularly in the tested subjects. This is a significant improvement, since the previous inspection. Procedures to promote and ensure pupils' well-being are very good. The school has very good arrangements for induction to reception and other classes. Transfer arrangements with the adjacent junior school are well established and effective. Pupils confirm that they are well cared for when they are ill or otherwise distressed. School works hard and deals very effectively, in the nurture group, with the small minority of pupils whose social and other difficulties represent a major barrier to their learning, if left unaddressed. Child protection procedures, and those for looked after pupils, are good and the school has addressed issues resulting from staff absences effectively. The procedures to follow and the designated staff member are known by adults in the school. Good links exist with social and other support services, such as, the school nurse and the Education Welfare Officer.
45. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are good. Teachers make pupils aware of health and safety issues in lessons, such as, in physical education, design and technology, and science. This effectively contributes to the development of a safety conscious attitude among them. The phasing of playtimes means that the playground is an inherently safer place. Key risk assessments are in place, including those for school trips and visits. Fire alarm testing and evacuation practices are carried out regularly. First aid arrangements are well established and appropriate.
46. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and discipline are good. Mutual respect and tolerance are the practical basis of all behaviour in school and nearly all pupils respond positively. On-going praise, in lessons and assemblies are routine features. Measures to create and maintain discipline are appropriate, proportionate and consistently applied by most staff.
47. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, including bullying and racism, are very good. The two very clear school rules are very well known and respected by nearly all pupils and adults. The small minority of pupils, with significant behaviour difficulties, are clearly identified. There is a clear proportionate set of sanctions, in relation to classroom and playground behaviour. The lunchtime staff are very well supported by teaching staff and senior management in relation to playground incidents. Parents are effectively involved where concerns arise. Rare incidents of bullying or racism are openly tackled based on conflict resolution principles. Pupils confirm that they feel comfortable reporting incidents of bullying or other anti-social behaviour, which they clearly see are a breach of the two school rules. Parents and pupils confirm that the measures taken to resolve such cases are usually very effective.
48. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality are good overall. The education welfare officer is effectively involved in helping to resolve the small minority of cases where there are persistent attendance difficulties. The school identifies and closely monitors the attendance of a larger cohort of pupils. Pupils get certificates in recognition of full annual attendance. However, there are areas for improvement in the management of attendance. Whilst registers are appropriately completed, this information is not converted into a form that supports easy analysis.
49. Provision for the small number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is very good. The school pays careful regard to their educational requirements and ensures, through regular reviews and very specific individual educational plans, that these needs are communicated to all who need to know and are met.
50. The assessment co-ordinator has only taken on the role recently. She has focused on encouraging the development of systems which make clear to pupils what is expected of them in lessons and what they are expected to learn. This then provides a clear focus for the teachers to evaluate their teaching and the pupils' learning. The future plans include teachers more regularly meeting to share examples of written work and mathematics, to agree the standards and levels attained. This is done on a termly basis with the whole staff at present and this provides teachers with a picture of each pupil's achievement during the year. These samples are moderated by subject co-ordinators. The assessment of work in the other subjects is more inconsistent.
51. The baseline assessments, made soon after children begin school, are used appropriately to enable teachers to provide appropriate tasks to build on the knowledge and skills children already have.

Predictions about pupils' likely attainment for the end of Year 2 are made following this early assessment and this enables the school to set targets that are sufficiently challenging. These targets cover the whole year group, but the school has also recently begun to set individual targets in English and mathematics. The school completes good analyses of annual test results, providing staff and governors with information about attainment and progress by the end of Year 2. The test results are compared year to year and to show value-added information about how well the pupils have progressed over time. Overall, the assessment procedures are sound.

52. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are very good overall. Pupils and their needs are very well known to most staff. A very good outline on pupils' personal development forms part of the annual report to parents, for example. Good work and attitudes are celebrated, on a weekly basis, in assemblies. This recognition and reward provide pupils with frequent and public confirmation of what is good in their lives and helps raise their self-esteem. Pupils' personal, social and health education, delivered in the form of 'circle time' and well regarded by pupils, makes a very good contribution. School trips and clubs make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Parents are justifiably positive about school's part in helping pupils become mature and responsible. They are particularly impressed by school's emphasis on respect for everybody and pupils' growth in confidence, based on getting all pupils to participate, within a supportive community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. As at the previous inspection, the partnership with parents makes a good contribution to the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. Although staffing instability is currently causing some parental concern, school's links with parents are very effective and most parents effectively support the school and deliver on their key responsibilities.
54. Parents are broadly satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. Inspection findings and the output from school's annual questionnaire are much more positive than the inspection questionnaire returns. Whilst there is no criticism of the temporary staff, there is no doubt that the on-going instability in staffing is a concern and has had a negative impact on parental responses to a number of the survey questions.
55. Nearly a quarter of parents replied to the questionnaire and 28 attended the pre-inspection meeting. They confirm that their pupils like school and make good progress. They consider that school has high expectations and helps pupils become more mature and responsible. They are positive about the teaching and most feel comfortable approaching school with suggestions, questions or concerns. They are also positive about the improvements, since the previous inspection, including additional challenge provided in lessons for more competent learners and the improved learning environment. Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views. However, nearly a third of the questionnaire respondents do not consider that school provides an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. Inspectors judge the range of extra-curricular activities to be good and better than normally provided for this age of pupils. Nearly a quarter consider that they are not well informed about their pupils' progress. Inspection findings confirm that the quality of information provided on pupils' progress is very good. Around a sixth express concerns about homework, leadership and management and the extent to which school works closely with parents. Inspectors judge homework levels to be satisfactory. Leadership and management is good and school works closely and effectively with its parents.
56. Links with parents make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The school works hard and very effectively to find out and address the needs of its parents. For example, it carries out an extensive annual survey of parents' views. The survey outcomes are shared with parents and issues identified are included in the school improvement plan. This is exemplary practice. Teachers are accessible, approachable, listen and usually effectively address parents' concerns. Pupils' reading diaries provide a routine communication link between home and school. Parents are fully involved when concerns about pupils' progress, behaviour or attendance arise.
57. The quality of information given to parents to support pupils' progress is very good. On-going contacts and termly parents' evenings mean parents are given very good opportunities to get regular updates on progress or concerns. The quality of pupils' written annual reports is very good. Reports convey a clear sense of what pupils are doing and give very good outlines on pupils' academic progress and

personal development. Areas for improvement are systematically and clearly identified. The practice of inviting parental comments is another positive feature. Termly curriculum information provides parents with a very good outline of pupils' future school work. Some additional clarity about arrangements and expected levels of reading at home as well as consistency in spelling methods would further improve the information provided to support pupils' progress. Regular newsletters keep parents effectively informed on on-going school life. The attractive prospectus gives a clear outline on school's expectations and character. The governors' annual report to parents gives a clear outline of the issues they are working on.

58. Parents' involvement makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and the life of the school. Discussions with pupils, indicate that most have somebody at home who checks that set homework is done. Many parents attend and enjoy Christmas activities, other performances and sports days. Parental attendance at the termly consultation meetings is generally good. A number of parental helpers assist in classes and on school trips and visits. The active friends' group provides good support by organising a range of social and fundraising events. These activities also help to establish and maintain good informal links between staff, parents and pupils, as all parties are involved in many of the events. The events, therefore also contribute to pupils' wider social and personal development. Most parents are keen for their pupils to do well and respond positively to individual requests to discuss issues, such as pupil progress, behaviour and attendance. Parent governor positions are routinely filled, sometimes following elections, which is another good indicator of parents' willingness to support school. Nevertheless, a minority of parents do not deliver on their key responsibility of ensuring their pupils attend school routinely, leading to below average overall attendance.
59. The school has good systems in place to help ensure that parents of all pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all procedures and that their views are sought and respected. Parents concerns are taken into account when placing children on the special needs register and they are invited to formal and informal reviews of progress. They are made aware of individual educational plans and adjustments to them.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have worked very hard to lead the school during a time of uncertainty due to staffing problems caused by a wide range of medical, or other problems. They have provided real stability for the school and have worked hard to ensure that the pupils' education has not suffered unduly. The school has a clear educational direction to its work, teachers have supported each other, especially those new and on temporary contracts and the focus is clearly on ensuring the children attain the levels of which they are capable.
61. The delegation of responsibilities, particularly for subjects, has been affected by staff absence, and teachers have done well to maintain the management of subjects at the present level. There are teachers whose responsibilities are very heavy at present and, when the staffing permits, the school would benefit from a whole-scale review of the management and co-ordination of all aspects of its work.
62. The senior staff monitor the work of teachers very effectively given the present disruption to staffing. The acting headteacher has continued the programme of monitoring set up by the headteacher, and has received support in doing this from the local authority. This has meant that she has a good grasp of the performance of teachers and strengths and weaknesses in their practice. The performance management policy is effective and has resulted in changes and improvements to practice and the setting of appropriate objectives for the teachers. The Foundation Stage is well led by the co-ordinator and the work is monitored effectively.
63. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very knowledgeable, hard working and highly efficient. The systems she has put in place to ensure the early identification of pupils with special needs and the provision she and the school ensure for them are proving to be very effective. The considerable paperwork associated with special needs is readily accessible, comprehensive and clear. She leads by example but disseminates her knowledge wisely. Currently, the co-ordinator carries a very heavy workload of teaching, overseeing and supporting the high number of pupils with special needs, alongside her other responsibilities. She is particularly well supported by the governor with responsibility for monitoring the special educational needs provision.

64. The governing body have been very supportive and effective throughout the staffing crisis, even to the point of sharing care-taking duties during the period when the school did not have a caretaker in post. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and of the issues facing the school in the future. Discussions with governors shows that they are aware of the need to try and build closer links with staff and parents, and, where possible, to spend more time in school, although work and other commitments make this difficult for many governors. The governors have an appropriate committee structure, with different people acting as chairs, and all keep good minutes and report appropriately to the full governing body. Meetings are run effectively and efficiently by the Chair and good minutes are kept.
65. The school improvement plan contains clear action plans and a sensible number of appropriate priorities, with clear costings, responsibilities and success criteria based on statistical data where possible, making improvement measurable. This is monitored through the headteacher's and acting headteacher's reports, and through the subject co-ordinators' termly written reports received by governors. However, the governors are not very involved in the production of the plan in the early stages. They have a more effective input to the aspects of the planning covering the buildings. At times, co-ordinators make presentations to the governors describing recent changes or innovations in their subject. Governors have links to particular subjects and co-ordinators, which enables them to monitor the work of the school in some detail. The school ensures the governors are aware of the test information and any analysis that is done.
66. The financial administration is efficient and effective. The school's administrative officer acts as clerk to the governors, and as support to the finance committee. She provides regular reports on the progress of the budget, so that the committee can monitor it effectively. The governors and staff have only recently become aware of the principles of best value, but these are evident in the school's work and are now identified more closely.
67. The school has made effective use of a wide range of advice and support from the local authority recently. This has encouraged teachers to review aspects of their work, such as the setting arrangements in mathematics. It also supports the inspection view that the school is open to new ideas and staff are happy to discuss their work in an open manner. The analysis of data is at an early stage but the school is more aware of the progress made by children than has been the case. The use of ICT is at an early stage and there is inconsistency in the planning and recording of work, which is understandable given the temporary nature of so many of the staff.
68. There is an adequate match of teaching and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. There is a good blend of experience and youth among teaching staff and this is reflected in the deployment in year groups. However, the significant instability in staffing, especially in Year 1, has a negative impact on the pace and continuity provided to effectively support pupils' learning. The number of learning support assistants has increased significantly, since the previous inspection, and they are of very good quality. As a result, in most classes very effective additional support is available to address the needs of pupils with learning or behaviour difficulties. The efficient and dedicated contributions of administrative and other staff make a very good contribution to the smooth running of the school. Their contributions are highly valued by the acting headteacher and her teaching staff.
69. Accommodation is satisfactory, positively supporting learning. The main accommodation provides a pleasant, bright, clean and generally spacious learning environment. Displays in classrooms and corridors are of generally good quality. The adequately sized playground is well furnished with play equipment, making playtime and lunchtime more interesting for pupils. However, the lack of toilet facilities in the temporary classrooms has a negative effect on pupils' comfort. Excellent use is made of the very good areas created by the school, together with the junior school, such as the pond, wild area in a small wood, quiet garden and adventure play areas. The range, quality and accessibility of learning resources are satisfactory overall. They are good in physical education, music and to support pupils with special educational needs. Learning resources are satisfactory in most other subjects except in science, where there are shortcomings in the resources for practical and investigative activities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. In order to raise standards and improve the provision still further, and in addition to maintaining the many positive aspects of the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) raise standards in mathematics by improving the achievement of the lower and average attaining pupils; **

(Paragraphs 3, 5, 16, 86-92)

- (2) improve the use of computers and ICT skills across the curriculum;

(Paragraphs 5, 125)

- (3) when the staffing is settled, review the subject and other responsibilities delegated to co-ordinators and senior managers.

(Paragraph 61)

** This area has been identified by the school as being in need of improvement.

In addition to the above key issues, the governing body should consider adding the following minor issues to their action plan:

- improving the resources for the teaching of investigative science;

(Paragraphs 69, 97)

- seeking to improve attendance levels.

(Paragraphs 13, 48)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	53

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	13	27	18	17	1	0	0
Percentage	17	36	24	22	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	330
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	82

Special educational needs

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	101

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	62	56	118

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	51	55	56
	Girls	46	47	47
	Total	97	102	103
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (83)	86 (91)	87 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	54	57	59
	Girls	46	47	49
	Total	100	104	108
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (89)	88 (93)	92 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	276	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

No ethnic group recorded

1

0

0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	246

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	890 723
Total expenditure	915 581
Expenditure per pupil	2 631
Balance brought forward from previous year	37 367
Balance carried forward to next year	14 234

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	330
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.	67	32	0	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	45	46	5	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	55	10	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	54	14	3	3
The teaching is good.	55	37	4	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	31	17	5	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	32	8	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	36	4	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	38	38	10	6	6
The school is well led and managed.	33	46	10	6	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	44	4	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	31	21	10	22

Other issues raised by parents

Parents are concerned by the high level of staff absence, both of senior staff and of classroom teachers. They show sympathy towards the individuals involved, and for the way the school is coping but have concerns about the continuity and consistency of the provision for their children.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Personal, social and emotional development

71. The teaching is very good and the majority of the children are on line to achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year. This has been maintained since the last inspection. The school puts a strong emphasis on this area of learning and this has a very positive impact on pupils' social and personal development in Years 1 and 2. The children are very clear about the school and class routines such as, for example, the registration sessions at the start of the day. They settle into school well and the relationships between children, and between children and adults are positive. They seem genuinely happy to meet each other at the start of the day.
72. In assemblies, children learn about ideas such as sharing, through stories such as the Sermon on the Mount and the parable of the loaves and fishes. In lessons, the very strong and enthusiastic teaching creates many opportunities for children to develop wonder at nature. For example, great excitement was evident when one class realised how fast their beans were growing. The teachers provide good opportunities for imaginative role-play and the children learn to take turns and collaborate through a range of good activities. A major strength of the provision is the use of the outdoor areas for collaborative games and activities designed to develop co-operation between children.

Communication, language and literacy

73. The teaching is very good and the majority of the children make good progress given their low attainment on entry to the school. Although their achievement is good, a significant minority do not fully attain the expected early learning goals. This is similar to the picture found at the last inspection. However, the work done to develop reading and writing skills provides a good basis for further learning in Years 1 and 2. Children are developing sound listening skills but often their speech is still quite immature. Good, imaginative role-play activities help develop pupils speaking skills as they play together.
74. There is a very good emphasis on traditional stories and fairy tales in much of the planned work. During the inspection, the story of Cinderella provided the basis for lessons in all areas of learning, including dance. A good writing activity led them to create some fairy tales with a beginning, middle and end. Classrooms have good, well-resourced writing areas to encourage children to choose emergent writing activities. Teachers use display to encourage the learning of key words, through labels and lists, and through displays based on the reading scheme. Phonics are taught well and most pupils can sound out letters, although they are at an early stage of blending these into words and parts of words. Children enjoy reading and being read to. The teaching of basic letter formation is also very good. Writing tasks given to children are imaginative and encourage them to take part. For example, they write invitations from Cinderella for the ball, and they write the Ugly Sisters' list of jobs for Cinderella to complete.

Mathematical development

75. The teaching is very good and the majority of the children make good progress. Most of them should achieve the early learning goals expected by the end of the reception year. This has been maintained since the last inspection. Good interactive displays encourage children to try mathematical activities such as sorting three- or two-dimensional shapes, and making shapes with cubes to match outlines on cards. Other friezes of fairy tales encourage counting by, for example, including lots of pictures of ants or ladybirds. Good use of computers is evident in the creation of pictograms to show the number of minibeasts. The pupils are able to print these with support. In lessons, children learn to count forwards and backwards to 20 and beyond. As is so often the case the teacher dreams up fun activities to accompany the work. In this case, one child dresses in role-play clothes as others count and then removes the clothes as they count backwards. This results in very good development of vocabulary as they discuss whether the child was slower or faster than the count. Children can recognise coins and the less able use coins in a shop role-play to buy items

with support. Other pupils play a money game selecting coins to make 10p, while the higher attainers are able to recognise two-digit numbers in money but find it difficult to select the correct change.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. The teaching is very good and the children make good progress towards the expected early learning goals, although a significant minority will not fully attain the level expected. This has been maintained since the last inspection. Children have a developing understanding of scientific principles. They use interactive displays to test magnetic and non-magnetic materials. In one lesson exploring a frozen egg children showed genuine awe in the imaginative but appropriate comments they made as it melted. Other teachers have created displays showing wooden or metallic materials. In one good topic, they select appropriate clothes to keep a park keeper dry. Children use computers confidently and can create pictograms by clicking and dragging pictures. They listen to tapes and tell stories onto tape. After an adult had typed children's stories they clicked and dragged scenery and characters to illustrate the story. This linked well to the fairy tale topic.

Physical development

77. The children have very good opportunities for taking part in a range of physical activities designed to develop the sound skills they have on entry. They make good progress and a majority are on line to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the year. This has been maintained since the last inspection. During art and design activities they learn to use a range of tools and media with care and precision. For example, children were observed colouring African patterns very carefully as part of a joint topic on different countries. In the hall, children take part in a full range of gymnastic and dance activities with a good level of awareness of their bodies and the movements of others. They warm up appropriately and have a sound understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies. In gymnastic lessons, teachers make use of good opportunities to teach positional language, such as in, out, over and under. In one excellent lesson, children were also very aware of safety issues when using the apparatus.

Creative development

78. The provision for pupils' creative development is a major strength throughout the reception classes and the very good and very imaginative teaching results in very good progress and the majority of the children achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of the year. This has been maintained since the last inspection. Excellent outdoor provision, including the imaginative use of a wooded, wild area, the pond, secret garden and hard play areas, offers teachers a wide range of opportunities to develop pupils' creative skills. In the wood, they collect items for spells to help the fairy godmother to weave her magic. During an afternoon lesson the four classes become different countries and the pupils move from one to another with their passports, taking part in a range of creative activities. This also offers a very good level of personal development as they take responsibility for their learning by selecting the activities they want to do, in the rooms they choose. Teachers also offer a lot of opportunities to sing and learn traditional and counting rhymes and songs. They learn to play a range of percussion instruments. Some of the artwork is excellent. In particular a project based around the work of Mondrian shows a tremendous range of skills in use of colour, pattern and three-dimensional work.

ENGLISH

79. Current standards are in line with those found nationally at the end of Year 2. The inspection findings confirmed that the standards have improved from those found in national tests in 2002. However, pupil attainment on entry is low and these results reflect the good level of achievement observed during the inspection and the very effective teaching and learning seen in lessons. While being taught how to read and write with confidence, pupils are also encouraged to be creative and imaginative and to write in different ways for different audiences. Writing is very well taught, the literacy strategy has been effectively introduced and there are effective systems for monitoring what is taught and for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection.

80. Pupils are good at speaking and listening because all teachers encourage this. Children have many opportunities to discuss their ideas in class and some contribute confidently in whole school assemblies. In the reception classes pupils are provided with a secure basis for work in the National Curriculum and in both year groups speaking and listening skills are developed through discussion activities, for example in circle time. Pupils are able to speak confidently to adults and in assemblies because they are given lots of opportunities to do so. Year 2 pupils can generate ideas in brain storming sessions such as, for example, when they plan the question that they will ask Livingstone about his diaries and life in Africa. The highest attaining pupils are able to explain their ideas when talking about their favourite books and individuals can provide clear instruction to help visitors find their way around the school. In Year 1, a pupil who is clearly talented in art gave a clear explanation of how to use drawing pencils. Pupils are given many opportunities to be involved in activities that involve listening and the cafe role-play areas in Year 1 provide lots of opportunities for conversation. Phonics work is very important and pupils listen very carefully to letter sounds and use these skills to help them in reading.
81. Skills in reading are in line with those found nationally for the majority of pupils although there are some excellent readers in both year groups. Most pupils enjoy books and take pleasure in reading. The higher attaining pupils read with real confidence and expression. Lower attaining pupils use a variety of strategies to support their reading including the use of phonics and picture clues. The school uses a structured reading scheme and pupils also choose from a range of books, fiction and non-fiction, in the classroom and the library. Experienced non-teaching staff support pupils very well in class and pupils take home a variety of books to share with their family. Reading is carefully monitored and pupils make good progress because they frequently read to adults, including parent volunteers, in school and at home. Some pupils belong to public libraries and use the school library frequently. Their research skills are good. However, although the range of books available in class is very good, pupils interviewed could not explain how to find a fiction book in a library. Pupils with below average attainment, or special educational needs, benefit from the high quality of support. Individual and small group support in the nurture group enables most to progress well enough to return to their classes for at least part of the day. Reading is taught and managed very well. The achievement of boys is particularly good, reflecting this high quality of provision. Pupils understand and use terms such as 'blurb' and 'illustrator' and one higher attaining pupil was even able to explain the role of a publisher.
82. Standards in writing are satisfactory. Some individuals produce excellent, detailed and accurate work and pupils are progressing well. Achievement in writing is good because pupils complete specific practical written tasks in most subjects. Written work is usually presented well, with most pupils being able to use joined up writing appropriately and some are very good at using word processors for writing in different font styles and sizes. The majority, including those with special educational needs, can write sentences and sequence simple stories because they have frequent opportunities to write and because these skills are well taught. In literacy lessons there is always a good link between the reading activity and the writing task, which in turn links with a theme or topic, for example a recent visit to the local park in Year 1 and the Africa topic in Year 2. Pupils can write for different purposes and audiences including letters and lists of instructions. An activity around Dr Livingstone gave pupils an excellent example of the purpose and routine of diary writing. Spelling and punctuation are taught well. Year 2 pupils are able to explain the use of the speech marks and exclamation marks. Pupils understand punctuation well but they do not always use it in their own writing. The range of written work is very good with a good balance between practical tasks and creative work. Displays of poems on Africa and skeletons show that many pupils are very imaginative. Computers are used to help pupils improve and extend their written work although insufficient use of this was observed during the inspection.
83. Teaching is very good. Teachers monitor learning very well. Pupils' work is assessed and marked accurately and this information is used in the planning for groups within the class. There is a good match between the teaching strategies in use and the needs of the pupils and this helps them to progress well. Pupils with special educational needs are given the kind of support that enables them to make real progress. The work of support staff is often exceptionally good and excellent teaching and learning in literacy was observed in the nurture group. Pupils are set by ability for work in the literacy hour. This is very effective for the higher attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties but is not sufficiently refined to always meet the learning requirements of some lower average pupils who are still not quite meeting their targets.

84. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic and they have the opportunity to become independent in their learning because of the way the lessons are managed. Pupils enjoy activities, books and stories because of the enthusiasm of their teachers. The quality of learning is very good. Basic skills are taught very well because class teachers have a good understanding of all aspects of the subject and because they make lessons enjoyable. The teaching of both reading and writing is particularly effective because of the care that goes into the planning for the literacy hour. In the most successful lessons pupils make very good progress because of the quality of questioning, the effective use of resources and the quality of support staff.
85. The management of the subject is very good and the co-ordinator provides excellent leadership. Staffing changes have had only a minimal impact on standards because of the quality of procedures for assessment and of planning across the year groups. Resources have been chosen well and they are used very effectively. Pupils' work is enriched by links with other subject areas that have been developed very well. Monitoring and planning have ensured the maintaining of standards at a time when there are more lower attaining and special needs pupils in the school.

MATHEMATICS

86. The standards achieved by the higher attaining pupils are good and more of the Year 2 pupils achieve these above average standards than is found nationally. However, the lower and middle attaining pupils do not attain the levels found among most pupils nationally, and this results in an overall picture of below average standards. These results reflect the wide range of ability found among the pupils, with a good number of able children and also a large group of less able pupils. The school is aware of this and is researching into reasons for the lack of progress shown by the less able, including reviewing the setting by ability in Year 2. This has clearly helped the higher attainers, but, following advice from the local authority, the school feels that the less able pupils are not making sufficient progress.
87. An analysis of the progress made over time shows that standards improved steadily since the last inspection, from a below average position to an above average result in 2001. However, the results then dipped in 2002, although the early indications are that they have recovered somewhat this year. The reasons for the fall are not clear but the unsettled nature of the staffing has had an impact on the teaching, particularly over the last two years. Another reason for the dip is changes to the level of attainment on entry to the school and the high mobility of pupils, with a significant number joining the school after the reception year.
88. Analysis of the progress made by the 2002 Year 2 pupils shows that only four pupils did not make at least the expected progress, based on the predictions made after their assessment in reception, while 59 per cent achieved the expected level while 37 per cent achieved a level higher than that expected. This represents a good level of achievement, given the pupils' attainment on entry to the school, even though standards were below average. A similar analysis of the present Year 2 pupils shows that although more pupils made less progress than that expected, 15 per cent, 69 per cent made the expected progress and 15 per cent made better than the expected progress. Given the turbulence caused by staffing issues in the school, this represents a sound level of achievement. In both 2002 and 2003 a greater numbers of boys than girls made above average progress, but the inspection evidence failed to find any significant reason for this.
89. Year 1 pupils have good opportunities to learn data handling skills through the use of bar charts to represent information. They can use parts of their bodies for measuring and have a growing level of understanding of number. For example, in September the average attaining pupils can count to 20 using cubes but by June they can add three single digit numbers. Higher attaining pupils can add and subtract two-digit numbers. Less able pupils are able to make calculations to give a given answer below 20 but are still reversing numbers regularly. The presentation of written and recorded work improves over the year, especially of the higher attaining pupils. Teachers make good use of practical activities such as working with money by, for example, using the role-play corner as a café.

90. Year 2 pupils make good progress over the year. From basic addition and subtraction skills at the start of the year, the pupils learn to solve money problems including the halving of numbers and the multiples of the 3x and 4x tables. They can recognise right angles and are able to sort three-dimensional shapes by, for example, the number of faces. Higher attaining pupils are confident recognising odd and even numbers, and simple fractions, although lower attainers are still working appropriately on early addition skills. The work in the books shows that pupils are often presented with tasks appropriately based on their prior attainment. During the inspection pupils developed their knowledge and understanding of a range of data handling skills, such as tallying and drawing bar charts. They show a sound ability to interpret the information provided in charts. In one very good lesson, pupils gained a very good understanding of Venn diagrams through practical work on large chalked circles outside the classroom.
91. The quality of the teaching is good overall but unsurprisingly given the staff turbulence there is some inconsistency in the provision. Even so, the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has enabled teachers to provide continuity even with the number of temporary staff. For example, some pupils have worksheets that are undated and not stored in order, whereas other staff have good storage systems. The school makes every effort to overcome the problems caused by temporary staffing through planning as year teams and the good sharing of plans between teachers. However, this can also cause difficulties if the planning is inappropriate and the teacher does not alter it, as happened in one unsatisfactory lesson where the tasks were too difficult given the pupils' prior attainment. The use of computers to support the teaching is growing but at times it is not effective or at an appropriate level for the pupils. For example, Year 2 pupils were completing the same data handling work as Year 1, and it did not add anything to their learning. Teachers often use practical and problem solving activities and these are good for developing their mathematical thinking.
92. The school is tracking pupils' progress from the predictions made for them after their assessment in the reception classes, through the targets set for the end of Year 1, to the test results at the end of Year 2. This provides teachers with a good picture that, although in its early stages, should enable staff to target particular pupils who are underachieving and to recognise and support the more able pupils. The tracking is also helping with the setting of pupils by their ability in Year 2. The subject co-ordinator is acting on a temporary basis but has worked hard to improve the provision and raise standards further. She has monitored the work in the school and has fed back the findings to teachers. In particular, she has supported temporary teachers through advice and helping with resources. The priorities for the subject are good and the school has made good use of advice from the local authority.

SCIENCE

93. Inspection evidence indicates that, compared with schools nationally, current standards are average by the end of Year 2, although they are below average at the end of Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs, achieve well compared with their prior attainment.
94. The science curriculum is based on the latest national guidance and was updated in 2002. Key learning objectives are identified for each year group and pupils' attainment is assessed at the end of each unit of work. Pupils' workbooks in both year groups show good coverage of work on life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes but pupils in Year 1 do not spend sufficient time carrying out their own investigations. This is because the school's resources are insufficient to allow pupils to work in small groups. Pupils in Year 1 have a good understanding of magnetism, habitats, life-cycles of plants and insects and the properties of materials. They record information using Venn diagrams and charts as well as written explanations and this provides a good opportunity to use their numeracy skills. Higher achieving pupils are expected to write at greater length than those attaining less well. Good links were made with design and technology, and geography, in the Year 1 lessons. Pupils considered how to develop fair tests to determine which material would produce the best slide for a toy bear.
95. Pupils in Year 2 cover all aspects of the science curriculum well. They study electricity, the conditions a plant needs for survival and changes of state. They can explain why a bulb will not light in a circuit and indicate where the connection should be made. They know about the dangers associated with electricity. They sort materials according to their properties and can describe the life-cycle of a butterfly. During the inspection week, they were considering the best way to muffle the

sound from a radio. The aim was to design a fair test to decide between different materials. Pupils suggested three materials to be tested and gave clear explanations as to why the distances at which the sound should be tested should be constant. This problem made a good link with 'Fantastic Mr Fox', which they were reading in class, and reflects the cross-curricular philosophy of the school. Although computers were not used in the lessons seen during the inspection, there was evidence of science data from previous lessons displayed on computerised graphs. Pupils record their work using a variety of different writing styles including, lists, notes, instructions and simple reports.

96. The teaching of science is good throughout the school. Lessons seen, teachers' planning and the work in pupils' books indicate that teachers have a good understanding of the subject. Lessons are designed to develop knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers plan work across the year group to ensure equality of access to the curriculum. All pupils in a class cover the same work but activities and methods of recording are sufficiently open-ended to allow them to achieve at levels according to their abilities. Teachers know their pupils well and have good relationships with them and the learning support assistants who make a valuable contribution to morning lessons. They use questioning effectively to draw out and develop pupils' understanding, use subject specific vocabulary well to establish the scientific concepts being taught and have high expectations of their pupils who respond by completing tasks carefully. Pupils work well together and support each other when working in pairs or groups. Work is regularly marked and although mainly only ticked, sometimes affirming comments are also added.
97. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject's requirements and a clear vision for its development. She monitors work in the subject by planning lessons with the staff in each year group, seeing samples of pupils' work regularly and working with the higher attaining pupils from each class in Year 2 in the Spring Term. She does not, however, have any opportunity to observe other staff teaching. Learning resources are inadequate which is restricting the amount of investigative science pupils can carry out. The school shares a woodland area and pond with the neighbouring junior school. It is used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of living things, habitats and environment. Visits to the seaside enrich pupils' experiences of science. A system to track pupils' progress across all the attainment targets has been introduced into Year 1 this year and will be continued when the pupils enter Year 2. No formal target setting, however, is yet in place.
98. Inspection evidence indicates that the co-ordinator's careful analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of provision for the subject and the quality of teaching by all staff have improved standards this year. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Displays of pupils' artwork are a major feature in the school; they are very well mounted and illustrate both the large range of work and the links with other subject areas. Pupils' work in art is good and at the end of Year 2 it is above that expected, both in pupils' knowledge about art and artists, and in basic skills. Pupils achieve well and work observed in classrooms and displayed around the school for both Years 1 and 2 is colourful, imaginative and very varied, reflecting pupils' skills in collage, drawing, painting, printing and work with clay. Pictures of owls painted by Year 1 are particularly good. Pupils have a very good introduction to art in reception and then develop a range of skills progressively in Years 1 and 2. Work in observational drawing is good because pupils use these skills frequently and refine them as they progress through the school.
100. Pupils illustrate stories used during literacy lessons and religious education, and they produce vivid artwork related to the topics that they have studied. Year 2 work related to their African study is very effective. In Year 1, pupils have worked on portraits in pastels, collage and using computer software. They have followed a range of examples from the Renaissance to the twentieth century including Archimbaldo, Picasso and Hockney. The range of work is good and pupils are confident in a variety of types of work including making a detailed study of Van Gogh's Starry Night. They are using sketchbooks and they understand about mixing colours and creating shading effects when using pencils. Pupils in Year 1 show a particularly good understanding of how to use drawing pencils to make different effects and Year 2 are confident in making clay pots and masks.

101. Pupils are competent in a range of styles and media. During the inspection they were observed using clay, pastels, paint and drawing pencils, and Year 1 were due to learn how to produce a colour-wash effect. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the acquisition of skills in practical tasks and in knowledge about the lives and work of artists. Higher attaining pupils can write about aspects of the work of famous artists and there are clearly some pupils who have a real talent for drawing.
102. Pupils learn well because creative work is closely related to other subjects but is also taught for its own sake with an appropriate focus on skills. They show a clear enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to attempt a variety of activities. Their varied experience, which links words, ideas and practical activities, helps them to become confident and independent. Work seen and lessons observed during the inspection show that teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and that they are able to promote a good quality of learning. There is a real focus on the teaching of skills. Pupils are encouraged to look carefully and then copy the techniques used, thus extending their own skills. Teachers model or demonstrate the required skills for example in the use of drawing pencils. Art is planned in a way that meets the learning requirements of all pupils including those who have a real talent for the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported. The availability of support staff and parent helpers improves the learning experiences of all pupils.
103. Basic materials and equipment are readily accessible and some art books, posters and prints are available. Some effective use of art-related computer software was observed during the inspection. One pupil was able to use it to draw an African drum well but another found the software difficult to use. These resources are used well to ensure that the curriculum in art is rich and varied and that it makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils. The multicultural aspects of artwork are excellent.
104. The management of the subject is good. Monitoring is effective and there are links with the junior school to discuss progress and the use of sketchbooks. A member of the governing body maintains an interest in art and has proved very valuable in helping with resources. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection particularly in the planning and development of resources for the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Standards of attainment are good when compared with those in most schools. This indicates improvement in the subject since the last inspection when attainment was found to be satisfactory. Pupils' work is of a high standard and reflects no significant gender differences. Pupils, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, achieve well compared with their prior attainment. They develop their knowledge and the skills with which to apply it to practical situations.
106. The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities that focus on pupils' skill development and ensure the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. Tasks are appropriately challenging and often related to other areas of the curriculum. Information and communication technology is used to enhance teaching in the subject. It provides logos and texts that raise the quality of presentation and is also used to present data. During the inspection pupils in Year 1 were constructing playground equipment whilst learning to apply the principles of fair testing to a slide in science. By the end of Year 2, they have experienced working with such different materials as textiles, food, card and plasticine and are beginning to use simple tools to assemble, combine and join materials. They understand why they should use tools safely and wear protective clothing. When working with food they understand the need for good hygiene. Design briefs are thorough and well annotated and pupils account for the choices of materials and tools they use in construction. Evaluation of work, which includes suggestions for improvement, is done in discussion with the teacher and then recorded.
107. The teaching is good. This reflects the improvements made since the last inspection when it was thought to be satisfactory overall. Planning for lessons is carried out across year groups ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. Teachers display good subject knowledge, and introduce and reinforce subject specific vocabulary well. Learning objectives are shared with pupils who are

motivated by the questions and drive of the staff. Praise is used well to encourage pupils to think creatively. Pupils sustain concentration well, respond enthusiastically to tasks set and enjoy the corporate experiences afforded by the subject.

108. An enthusiastic and well-organised co-ordinator constantly reviews topics to ensure that they develop skills effectively. She replaces or modifies those that do not offer sufficient challenge or extend pupils' learning, for example making 'Mr Grindling's Lunchbox', from a popular story, has replaced designing Joseph's coat of many colours. The new topic makes good links with literacy as pupils write a letter to Mr Grindling in which they explain why they have chosen the materials they have used and joined them as they have. Following an audit in 2002, the co-ordinator re-organised the resources for each topic. These are plentiful and, as they are stored in a locked central location, accessible but safe. Lesson plans are detailed and learning objectives relate well to the scheme of work that the school uses. More rigorous assessment procedures were introduced into Year 2 this year and these are to be extended into Year 1 from September. The co-ordinator has created a full portfolio of pupils' work containing examples from each project that can be used as a source of reference by all staff. Standards have been raised since the time of the last inspection as a result of the very good subject co-ordination, good teaching and a very good range of learning opportunities well focused on skill development.

GEOGRAPHY

109. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Judgements about teaching and resourcing are similar to those made at that time and improvement since that inspection is satisfactory.
110. Pupils in Year 1 follow routes round school and the local area. They understand that features can be represented by symbols and invent their own, for example using different colours to show playground equipment or a maze. They look carefully at photographs and match them with features they see during their walk in the local area. Pupils construct simple sketch maps and complete tally charts of banks, pelican crossings or traffic lights, reinforcing their number skills as they work. They make suggestions about what is good in the area and what might be changed, choosing to retain the war memorial because, we should remember 'those who fought for us.'
111. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand that maps are of different scales and for different purposes. There is insufficient use of aerial and other photographic evidence and a need for a greater range of maps, to extend their knowledge even further. Higher attaining pupils confidently use co-ordinates to construct a map of a treasure island. They can identify similarities and differences between the life of children in school at New Milton or in Kenya. Pupils of lower ability, and those with special educational needs, are able to complete similar work because of very good support or because the work is adapted slightly, for example drawing pictures instead of using symbols to indicate features on their maps. The good attitudes pupils show to their work, their willingness to offer suggestions and co-operate with their peers contribute positively to the standards that they achieve.
112. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, it is clear from looking at pupils' work and displays, and the good learning that results from additional cross-curricular days, that they are making good progress by the end of Year 2. All teachers are particularly good at making work relevant to pupils and using the local environment to the full. Parents are appreciative of this and contribute to learning by a ready willingness to accompany pupils on trips. The school bear reports back from a number of holiday destinations and pupils identify countries they have visited on a world map. Topic work helps pupils make connections between a number of other subjects but teachers are careful to ensure that pupils have access to the discrete skills and knowledge of geography. For example, an 'Africa' day enabled pupils to use reference skills to identify the highest mountain, the longest river, the types of food eaten and the number of countries in this continent. In one lesson, the use of video enabled them to compare their school day with that of an African child, but shorter extracts and time for discussion would have helped them to interpret more fully what they were viewing. Literacy skills are reinforced as pupils follow the route taken by a book character, then compile their maps of his encounters on the way. Good relationships are a feature of all lessons and the high quality of support staff enhances the learning of pupils of all abilities. Assessment has rightly been highlighted as an area for development as there is currently no formal means of recording pupils' attainment.
113. The temporary co-ordinator is not only maintaining standards but is actively seeking to develop the subject in order to improve them further. She has sought and received advice which has led to

planning and interpretation of the very good curriculum being simplified. This makes it easier for teachers to implement it successfully.

HISTORY

114. Few lessons were observed during the inspection but examination of pupils' work shows that they acquire a good knowledge and that their skills are sound. They achieve well because they study specific themes such as the Victorians and also learn about the past as part of broadly based topics. Written work and overall standards are at the national average.
115. In Year 2, work on Africa has introduced them to the life of David Livingstone. Because of this experience they know that they can find out about events in the past through diaries and by asking questions. They made very good progress in a role-play where they had the opportunity to meet the famous explorer in person. Pupils study some local history, finding out about changes at the local park. Learning is helped by the use of a range of resources, many of which are borrowed, often from parents and the community.
116. The learning is very good throughout the school, with the majority of pupils making good progress. The written work of pupils shows that they are developing a secure foundation of knowledge about aspects of life in the past and about how historians find out about it. They study a variety of people and events and there are good links with other subjects, including science. In studying the dinosaurs they found out how remains were discovered at Lyme Regis and how this introduced a new approach to the study of fossil evidence. As a result of this range of activities they acquire a good understanding of change over time, although the lower attaining pupils find this difficult to express in writing.
117. Younger pupils are encouraged to acquire the basic skills of the historian, including the sequencing of stories and events. By Year 2, they can compare aspects of life today with life in the past. Individual pupils are able to write about events such as the Gunpowder Plot. Higher attaining pupils have some idea why it happened although other pupils find this more difficult. A high attaining pupil has produced a very detailed account of the life of Queen Victoria including information on her home on the Isle of Wight.
118. Creative work related to work in history is often very good and written work is usually well presented because pupils have very positive attitudes and want to do well. They are encouraged to talk, read and write about the past and therefore the subject clearly makes a very good contribution to the development of their literacy skills. Pupils took part in a role-play about a Victorian life as part of a local museum visit that helped them to understand that life for children was very different then.
119. In the two lessons observed, pupils made excellent progress because they were actively involved in a very well planned literacy-based lesson. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the high quality of support that enables them to participate in all the activities. The teaching is clearly very good. Teachers are knowledgeable and the range of skills covered is comprehensive. Pupils are given interesting tasks and planning is very effective. Teachers provide different tasks and resources to suit the range of ability within the class.
120. The management of the subject is good. Assessment is being developed well and there are good links with the junior school. Teachers are sharing the development of resources and teaching strategies across the year groups. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. The teaching of history is successful in that pupils have a good knowledge of the past and a real understanding of its relevance to them.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

121. Standards are broadly in line with those expected for pupils of this age. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection, although the teaching and resourcing of the subject have improved. The present acting co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that the available equipment is

more reliable than in the past. However, the development of the subject has been slow, partly due to staff changes and absence.

122. In Year 1, pupils have used art software to create some good quality self-portraits alongside their other artwork. In addition, a game activity enabled pupils to design parts of a children's park, showing how ICT can be used for design purposes.
123. Discussion with Year 2 pupils shows that they have a sound knowledge and understanding of a range of software, and of how to navigate through the activities using the mouse and following icons, buttons and instructions. They have used software to support their work in reading, number, use of a word processor and science-based activities. They can click and drag pictures of electrical wires to create circuits to light a bulb, for example. Discussion with pupils throughout the school shows that they are enthusiastic and interested in the subject and enjoy working with computers.
124. The scrutiny of Year 2 work shows that they have used data handling software to track the growth of sunflowers, producing a bar chart of the growth. This also offered a good opportunity to link pupils' numeracy skills with their ICT work. They measured the growth and then presented and organised the information effectively and to a good standard.
125. The quality of teaching is good, overall. No direct teaching was observed in Year 1 but in Year 2 teachers showed a good knowledge of word processing skills, enabling them to explain skills at an appropriate level for the pupils. In one very good lesson, the teacher linked these skills well to the history topic about David Livingstone. Very good use is made of key vocabulary so that pupils become familiar with terms such as 'font', 'delete' or 'text', and the question and answer method used made the session appropriately interactive. Most of the teachers are developing their use of computers to produce good quality and appropriate worksheets for a range of subjects. However, the planned and purposeful use of computers in other subjects is still underdeveloped. The use of the Internet is still being developed and teachers' knowledge of appropriate websites is being shared with other staff.
126. The acting subject co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. He has good plans for the use of available grants to improve the provision of software. The school is also aware of the need to use technology other than computers, such as digital cameras and tape recorders. A small amount of monitoring of the teaching and learning has taken place in the past. At present, there is little assessment or recording of pupils' progress and the planning takes insufficient note of pupils' prior attainment.

MUSIC

127. Very little music was observed during the inspection. The evidence from assemblies shows that by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in singing is similar to that in most schools and their achievement is satisfactory. At the last inspection, attainment in music was higher than that in most schools and pupils were achieving well. Since then, however, the long-term absence of the co-ordinator has affected delivery of the subject, although standards have been maintained. She is the only member of staff able to play the piano but pupils were still singing enthusiastically in assemblies to recorded music.
128. Some staff lack confidence in teaching the subject, and their lack of expertise prevents them from developing pupils' knowledge and understanding. No discrete music lessons were seen during the inspection, although one lesson was observed when music was taught alongside art and computers. It is not possible to base a secure judgement on the quality of teaching throughout the school on this one lesson. Class teachers are solely responsible for teaching music and the only outside help comes from a volunteer who is helping with recorder groups.
129. The school is well resourced. Each class has its own box containing small instruments whilst larger ones are stored centrally in the hall. There is a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments including some from other cultures and traditions. A box of African instruments has been acquired recently and has enabled music to be reflected in the school's 'Africa Week'.

130. Music is valued within the school. Teachers with some musical expertise, playing such instruments as guitar and recorder, are enthusiastic. Pupils in Year 2 are given the opportunity to learn to play the recorder. During the co-ordinator's absence, a volunteer plays the piano for the recorder group. However, the size of the group, about 50 pupils, restricts individuals' progress. Previously, there were more, smaller groups. The school also has a choir that rehearses for two to three months before events. Pupils enjoy these opportunities for extra-curricular music and they enhance the musical provision of the school.
131. The acting co-ordinator is a temporary teacher at the school. She has been given time to write a new action plan for the subject and is to present this to the governors. She is not given opportunities to observe lessons, however, so has no overview. No means of recording the skills of individual pupils has yet been developed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. During the inspection, lessons in gymnastics, dance and games were observed. A number of lessons were taken by temporary or part-time teachers, and these did not result in the same quality of learning observed in other lessons. However, the overall quality of provision in the school is good. As a result, by the end of Year 2, the attainment of the majority of pupils in gymnastics and dance is above the standard achieved in most schools. Standards achieved by pupils in games lessons are average. Children, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, take a full part in all activities and achieve satisfactorily. In a lesson with the nurture group, the high quality of teaching and support enabled pupils, whose attainment was below that of most pupils, to achieve well. The promotion of their self-confidence and self-esteem was very good throughout the lesson due to the excellent use of praise. The good standards in pupils' attainment described at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
133. As they progress through the school, children are given at least a satisfactory range of opportunities to acquire and develop new skills and apply them to their own performances. They understand the rationale for warming up and down before and after exercise and demonstrate good body control as they stretch, balance and jog whilst doing so.
134. The quality of teaching is varied but never less than satisfactory. This is the result of using well-structured lesson plans from a commercial programme to enable teachers without good subject knowledge or expertise to deliver satisfactory lessons. Learning objectives are always shared with pupils. Teachers' explanations are usually clear and they use praise well to encourage and motivate. Pupils who put much thought and effort into their work are used effectively to demonstrate techniques that help others improve their performance. Good use is made of resources, including the learning support assistant. The limited expertise of some teachers, however, results in coaching opportunities being missed.
135. Physical education makes a positive contribution to pupils' social, moral and spiritual development. Levels of co-operation and collaboration in lessons are good and help to develop positive attitudes to working with others. Rules are understood by pupils of all ages and are followed in a sensible and mature fashion even when pupils are not being directly observed. There are good opportunities to interpret music during dance lessons that add to pupils' cultural experience. Last year there was a high focus on dance in the school's Arts Week, and this year, a local group is visiting the school during World Week to perform dances from different parts of the world and run workshops for some of the pupils. A parent, who is a trained dancer, runs a weekly dance club for pupils in Year 2. Pupils have regular access to high quality apparatus and climbing frames on the playground and this has a very good impact particularly on skills in gymnastics.
136. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator has seen all classes doing at least one aspect of physical education this year. As a result, she identified the need for development in the teaching of games skills and the school is now trialling commercial materials that give good support to non-specialist teachers. Methods for assessing pupils' skills are also being considered. Currently

teachers are aware of whether pupils are above or below average and whether any have particular strengths or weaknesses, but this is an informal means of assessment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Boys and girls of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This picture has been maintained since the last inspection and improvement overall is satisfactory.
138. Pupils in Year 1 identify places that are special to them, such as their tree house or the wardrobe. They know that churches are special to Christians and that artefacts associated with religion should be treated with respect. They name the major Christian festivals and know a few well-known Bible stories. Pupils in Year 2 are increasingly aware that people from other religions worship in ways that are different but special to them. They know that Hindus celebrate Holi, and they have good knowledge of Diwali. Very good links with the local vicar who visits the school regularly mean that pupils are at ease when they visit the church for a conducted tour. Pupils name parts of the church and know that it is used for a number of special occasions such as weddings or funerals. They understand and identify symbols such as the cross and identify 'things you kneel on' and pictures of Jesus as objects that help people to pray. The careful work they produce because of this visit highlights their good attitudes to the subject. Pictures show close observation and written work is reflective. 'I felt scared but happy' wrote one pupil.
139. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although there is a small amount of good teaching. In one lesson, for example, a respectful, calm atmosphere was created through the lighting of a candle and very quiet talk. Excellent relationships allow pupils to express their thoughts and images of God confidently and expressively. Teachers liaise very well with the highly competent support staff and use methods that enable all pupils to be included. In one lesson, pupils learnt of Joseph and his multi-coloured coat through art and drama activities, showing their confidence in role-play and competent speaking and listening skills. Pupils try hard, show good attitudes and usually behave well during the lessons. Although teachers generally display confidence in their knowledge and understanding when teaching, there is room for more development of subject knowledge. Assessment is also an area for improvement as it is under-developed at present.
140. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is not a specialist and works part time but has worked hard to build up resources to a satisfactory level and to improve and simplify planning. This means that it is easier for all teachers to prepare their lessons according to the syllabus and to plan for pupils of all abilities. Very good liaison with the junior school means that there is efficient sharing of some resources. Areas identified for improvement by the school include comparing the pupils' understanding of Christianity and Hinduism, monitoring of teaching and collecting evidence of pupils' work for assessment.