

INSPECTION REPORT

CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Portchester, Fareham

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116083

Headteacher: Mr Kevin Patterson

Reporting inspector: Mr Graham Haynes
18064

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 February 2003

Inspection number: 247612

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Castle Street
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Fareham
Hampshire

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Denise Fletcher

Date of previous inspection: 19 – 22 January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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18064	Graham Haynes	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9779	Suzanne Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
8002	Lionel Farroway	Team inspector	English	
			English as an additional language	
			Physical education	
21121	David Houghton	Team inspector	Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			Information and communication technology	
			Mathematics	
22180	Shree Lekha Mistry	Team inspector	Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			History	
			Science	
			Special educational needs	
27654	Robina Scahill	Team inspector	Foundation Stage	
			French	
			Religious education	
27895	Margaret Skinner	Team inspector	Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Castle Primary is a large school of 431 pupils situated in Portchester, on the M27 corridor between Fareham and Portsmouth. It caters for pupils from 4 to 11 years of age. The vast majority of pupils are white and of UK heritage. Sixty per cent of them come from the immediate area, and are from a wide range of backgrounds. Twenty-two per cent come from the Paulsgrove area of Portsmouth, where the socio-economic circumstances are considerably below the national average. The remaining eighteen per cent are from other areas of Portchester and Fareham. Just over two per cent of the roll come from minority ethnic groups. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry and a significant number of pupils have below average literacy skills. Five pupils speak English as an additional language with sound fluency. Boys outnumber girls by a ratio of 54:46 and this increases to 60:40 in Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (8.2 per cent) is below the national average. The 19.1 per cent of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly average. One per cent of pupils have statements of special educational need, which is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Castle Primary is an effective school. Pupils' standards of work are above average and they make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in a range of subjects across the year groups. The overall quality of teaching is good with some very good features. The headteacher provides very good leadership, ably supported by staff, and the work of the governors. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve good standards and make good progress in the Foundation Stage, and in a range of subjects across the year groups
- The school promotes very positive attitudes in pupils and their very good personal, social and moral development
- The overall good quality of teaching is a major contributor to pupils' attainment and progress
- The school fosters very good relationships with parents and the community
- A good quality and range of learning opportunities and an excellent extra-curricular activities programme are provided
- The headteacher provides very good leadership, ably supported by a committed and hard-working staff team, and the work of governors

What could be improved

- Standards in art at Key Stage 2 and in religious education across the school
- The rigorous implementation of planned assessment procedures for the foundation subjects
- The formalisation of a medium-term plan for whole-school development
- The implementation of risk assessment procedures

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998 and it has made good improvement since that time. The policies for the marking, handwriting and presentation of pupils' work are implemented much better, although the quality and consistency of the activities still vary.

Pupils have better and more frequent opportunities to work independently. Daily acts of worship satisfactorily fulfil statutory requirements. The cultural provision for pupils is much improved and is now good. The prospectus for parents has been improved and contains all the relevant information.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	C	D
mathematics	C	D	C	B
science	B	C	A	A

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

In 2002, the pupils' national test results in Year 6 were well above the national average in science, and average in mathematics and English. In comparison with similar schools, pupils achieved well above average in science, above average in mathematics and below average in English. The performance of girls in English reflected their ability but was below the national gender average and reduced the performance of the cohort as a whole. The performance of boys was better than that of the girls in mathematics and science and similar to their performance in English. The girls' performance in mathematics was below national scores. Since 1998, results in English have risen overall. Mathematics results show a fluctuating but rising trend, with a significant improvement in the 2002 results. Science results in 2002 were much improved from the previous year and continued a rising trend over time. The school has made at least sound progress in meeting its targets for English and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that good overall progress in relation to earlier attainment is being made by pupils of all abilities, reflecting their capabilities, in a range of subjects. Good standards of work were seen in mathematics, science, design and technology, French, music and physical education at Year 6. Unsatisfactory standards were seen in art and design and religious education.

The majority of children in the reception classes are likely to achieve above the national standards set by the early learning goals for five-year-olds. They have made good progress since entering the school in all six areas of learning. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, the Year 2 pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics were in line with the national average. They were also in line with results obtained by pupils in similar schools, with the exception of reading where results were below average. Since 1998, results in reading rose until 2000, but are now falling very slowly. Writing results have improved overall and, since 2000, are rising steadily. Mathematics results have improved year after year from a below average level. In 2002, the performance of boys was better than the national picture in writing and mathematics. The performance of girls was a little below that achieved nationally and reflected their capabilities. Inspection evidence shows that good overall progress in relation to earlier attainment is being made by pupils of all abilities, in a range of subjects, which reflects the abilities of the present year group. Good standards of work were seen in the Foundation Stage, and in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, music and

physical education at Year 2. Unsatisfactory standards were seen in religious education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show high levels of enjoyment and interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils show consideration for others and the school buildings.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. A significant feature of the school's work that helps to create a climate supportive of learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

The school is very successful in fostering positive attitudes, constructive relationships and the overall personal development of the pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good with some very good features. The match of work to pupils' needs is often good. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics and in literacy and numeracy skills reflects this overall good quality and is frequently enabling pupils of all abilities to make good progress and achieve well. In the Foundation Stage, teachers' planning is excellent. One very good feature of teaching across the school is the way in which pupils are managed.

The overall quality of pupils' learning across the school is good. The acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding, the effort made by the pupils and their interest and concentration are notable strengths of their learning, seen with very good levels of consistency in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes. The consistency of all of these features in pupils' learning is less evident in some Key Stage 2 classes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good balance and breadth. Provision is enhanced by an excellent extra-curricular activities programme and the teaching of French in Years 5 and 6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The needs of the pupils are met well through good planning of classroom activities, the individual support offered in lessons, and in withdrawal sessions.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good overall provision is made for the few pupils involved. The school has yet to develop a policy and systematic procedures to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, and the provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Cultural provision is good. Spiritual provision is satisfactory, but there is scope for more planned opportunities to highlight aspects of spirituality in subject teaching and in assemblies.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall provision for pupils' health, safety and welfare, but risk assessment procedures need to be formalised and implemented to meet requirements. The rigorous assessment of pupils' work in foundation subjects is lacking.

The school has a very good partnership with parents. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are effective. Teachers work hard to include pupils in a wide range of activities. They get to know their pupils well and show genuine care. They provide well for individual needs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, ably supported by a committed and hard-working staff team, and the work of governors. The school works to a well-defined improvement plan for the current academic year, but medium-term priorities have not been formalised into a written plan.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory, due to regular risk assessment procedures not being formalised and implemented to ensure that they meet the latest requirements. The school has already taken action to remedy this situation. In all other respects the governing body is working well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. A regular programme of lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and of teachers' planning takes place. Pupils' test results are analysed and the outcomes are acted upon.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Finances are very well managed. Resources are very well used to support educational priorities.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. Teamwork is a strong feature of the school. There is a high level of commitment to improvement and a very good capacity to succeed. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 181 parents' questionnaire returns showed that over 90 per cent of parents agree or strongly agree with just about everything that the school does. This is unusually strong support. • Ninety-nine per cent of returns noted that pupils are making good progress, and that the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour are both good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small minority of parents would like to see an improvement in the provision of activities outside of lessons.

The inspection team confirms the positive views expressed by the vast majority of parents. The school is very committed to consulting with parents and the partnership is very successful. Most parents play a significant part in underpinning the standards of work that their children achieve. The inspection team judges that provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. On entry to reception, the attainment of the children is widely spread, with a significant number of them below average linguistically. Children make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Most are likely to achieve above national expectations in all areas of learning by the end of the stage.
2. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, pupils' results were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with the standards of pupils in schools with a similar intake, results were average in writing and mathematics, but were below average in reading. The performance of girls in this cohort was a little below that achieved nationally and reflected their overall ability. The performance of boys was above the national average for boys in writing and mathematics. Since 1998, reading results rose until 2000, but are now falling very slowly. Writing results have improved overall and, since 2000, are rising steadily. Mathematics results have improved year after year from a below average level. Inspection evidence shows that good overall progress is being made by pupils of all abilities in relation to earlier attainment, in a range of subjects, which reflects the ability of the present cohort of pupils.
3. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' results were well above the national average in science and in line with the national average in mathematics and English. In comparison with similar schools, pupils achieved well above average in science, above average in mathematics and below average in English. The performance of girls in English was below the national gender average, reflected their ability, and reduced the performance of the cohort as a whole. The performance of boys is better than that of the girls in mathematics and science and similar in English. Since 1998, results in English have risen overall. Mathematics results show a fluctuating, but rising trend, with a significant improvement in the 2002 results. Science results in 2002 were much improved from the previous year and continued a rising trend over time. Targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics are sufficiently challenging and based on some good information about past performance. The school has made good recent progress in meeting its targets for English and mathematics.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that the overall standards of pupils' work in English, mathematics and science are above average at Year 2. The cohort of pupils is generally more able than the previous years. At Year 6, inspection evidence indicates that the overall standards of pupils' work in mathematics and science are above average, maintaining 2002 standards. Standards in English are average. This represents an improvement on the standards obtained in the 2002 national tests. The improvement is due to the cohort containing a better balance in the relative abilities of boys and girls and the initiatives taken by the school to improve teaching and learning in English.

5. By Year 2, pupils reach standards above national expectations in design and technology, music and physical education, and in line with expectations in art and design, geography, history and information and communication technology. Standards are below expectations in religious education. By Year 6, standards are above national expectations in design and technology, French, music and physical education, and in line with expectations in geography, history and information and communication technology. Music and physical education are well organised and well managed subjects that the school and its staff support very well. The high quality of teaching in lessons and activities stimulates pupils' interest, sets high expectations for learning, encourages their participation and results in the consistently good standards seen. The provision for French is better than in most schools and gives the pupils a distinct advantage in learning the language at a relatively early age. Standards are below expectations in art and design and religious education. In art and design, the co-ordinator is new in post and has not had time to ensure that the scheme of work is firmly established. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' work are not well established or rigorously implemented. Sketch books are not passed from class to class, making it difficult to track the skills that pupils have been taught. In some lessons, materials and media are chosen by the teachers, which limits pupils' choice and independence. In religious education across the school, the pupils' learning lacks continuity and progression. The curriculum has been insufficiently well organised and the procedures for the assessment of pupils' work need to be rigorously implemented. This situation is beginning to improve. The subject co-ordinator has very recently put in place a new subject policy and scheme of work. This good guidance has yet to have a full impact on raising standards across the school.
6. Across the school from Year 1 to Year 6, good overall progress is being made by pupils of all abilities in relation to earlier attainment, including those with special educational needs, in mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology, music and physical education. Design and technology and information and communication technology are developing well across the school due to the work of the subject co-ordinators and teachers and improvements in the organisation and provision for the subjects. Progress in art and design at Key Stage 2 and in religious education at both key stages is unsatisfactory due to the reasons included in the previous paragraph, which are being tackled by the school.
7. Since the 1998 inspection, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has improved in design and technology and music. Above average attainment has been maintained in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, science and physical education. Attainment in religious education has fallen to be below expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment has improved in design and technology and music. Above average attainment has been maintained in French, mathematics, science and physical education. Average attainment has been maintained in information and communication technology, but it has fallen in English, art and design and religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Attitudes to learning are a strength of the school and very good throughout. Inspection findings confirm the views of virtually all parents, that their children like coming to school. Pupils are usually enthusiastic about their work, want to learn and show high levels of interest and involvement. In particular, they enjoy the work they do on computers and opportunities for practical activities. They concentrate very well on tasks set, often becoming completely absorbed until the activity is completed,

sometimes being reluctant to stop at the end of a lesson. This and their enjoyment of the challenges set for them make a substantial contribution to how well they learn. On the very few occasions that interest wanes it is when lessons progress too slowly to maintain their full attention. Pupils enjoy opportunities provided for them to investigate and find out for themselves and as a result develop progressively as independent learners. Where there are high expectations for them to be neat and take care, pupils show considerable pride in the presentation of their work. This is not seen consistently across the school, for example in a few classes, where pupils are moving from informal to formal recording of their mathematics work. Pupils are very confident in the school environment and, as a result of this, their ability to make positive contributions to discussions develops well as they move through the years. Their enthusiasm for the exceptionally good range of activities provided in addition to lessons leads to a developing use of initiative and ability to take responsibility, for example when they arrive early for the after-school drama club and start rehearsing on their own.

9. Pupils of all ages respond well to the consistent expectations for high standards of behaviour, which results in a calm and orderly environment for learning to take place. In lessons, behaviour is always at least satisfactory and often much better. As a result, teaching time is used effectively. Pupils have a clear understanding of school rules and respond well. This is particularly so when, as in most instances, teachers implement the strategies for managing behaviour promptly. Out of lessons, pupils interact confidently with one another, staff and visitors, and are invariably well mannered, polite and courteous. In both playgrounds they usually socialise and get on well together, although the number of games of football going on at the same time amongst the juniors makes it difficult for those not wishing to participate to relax in comfort. This, and some unfocused play amongst the infants, results in the meticulous recording of many 'bumps and spills'. The pupils themselves are working to resolve this matter through the school council. There were three fixed-term exclusions during the last school year; in each case this measure was used only as a last resort. Pupils have responded well to the support given following exclusion. Although there are arrangements for detention at lunchtimes, there is no regular need for its use. Pupils show good levels of care for their environment, leaving little litter and respecting displays of work around the school. They clear away after themselves very well at the end of lunch and treat school equipment and materials with respect.
10. The quality of relationships and personal development throughout the school is very good and makes a positive contribution to learning. Pupils of all ages are confident to share their concerns with adults and thrive in an environment where bullying is unusual. The high levels of mutual respect between teachers and pupils lead to very effective co-operation and create a pleasant atmosphere for learning to take place. Pupils show growing confidence about sharing personal views and opinions and are happy to answer questions, even when unsure that they have the right answer. They show a respect for other people's right to be different or have views that differ from their own and can express opinions without being confrontational. This helps the few ethnic minority pupils to be readily accepted and part of the everyday activities. During group and paired work, pupils collaborate well usually sharing happily when needed. On occasion, the enthusiasm of the girls to get involved in practical activities results in boys taking a 'back seat' when they are working in mixed groups. The successful fostering of fair play and justice results in pupils being able to forgive and start again when relationships have broken down. Pupils show pleasure in helping their teachers with routine tasks and pride in the responsibility given through various monitor roles. They willingly offer help to each other where needed, for example with reading. There are pleasing levels of interest in the school community and pupils value the opportunity provided for them to have their say through the school council. Class representatives

carry out their duties conscientiously, and those with positions of responsibility show high levels of commitment. They particularly appreciate the training they have had for their roles and this has led to raised self-esteem. Social skills and a sense of responsibility grow progressively as they move through the years and in Year 6 pupils show high levels of initiative, for example in helping with the arrangements for chess matches with other schools and organising the dance club on Friday lunchtimes.

11. Levels of attendance and unauthorised absence for the last school year are broadly in line with the national average for similar schools. A proportion of parents take their children on holiday during the school term. Where the attendance levels of individual pupils are unsatisfactory, this holiday absence makes a substantial contribution. Punctuality is usually good and there is a sense of urgency about the arrival of most pupils when this is later than it should be. Overall, attendance rates make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school, with some very good features. All lessons seen were satisfactory or better. Just over three-quarters of lessons contained good or better teaching. Four out of every ten lessons contained very good or excellent teaching. Excellent teaching took place in two Reception lessons, a Reception to Year 2 song practice, a Year 2 mathematics and a Year 4 English lesson. Where teaching is excellent, lessons are based on a very high quality of planning that provided a close match of activities with pupils' needs. They are conducted at a brisk pace. Teachers have a very secure knowledge of the subject being taught and a very clear understanding of how to get the best from the pupils. High expectations are made for pupils' learning and behaviour. These lessons reflect the high quality of relationships between adults and pupils and consistently high levels of pupil management.
13. Very good teaching took place in all year groups and in a range of subjects that included almost all the areas of learning in Reception, and in English, mathematics, French, history, music and physical education. In these lessons, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they are teaching, as seen in a number of music lessons. The teaching of basic skills is often carried out very well, building effectively on the pupils' previous learning, for example as seen in a Year 2 games lesson. In this lesson, the teachers explained very clearly to the pupils how to hold a hockey stick. As the lesson developed, this basic skill was constantly reinforced to effectively consolidate the pupils' learning and bring about successful ball control with the stick. Lesson planning is at least good and contains work at different levels that caters for the needs of all pupils, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teachers employ a good range of teaching methods, including the use of questioning to test pupils' learning, and a mixture of whole-class and group work. Teachers make some very effective use of classroom support assistants, particularly to help those pupils with special educational needs. Resources and time are used effectively. Teachers often keep a careful check of pupils' work during the lesson and use this information to plan future lessons, especially in English, mathematics and science. Homework is set regularly, is appropriate to the ages of pupils and is marked satisfactorily.
14. In a few of the lessons, where the quality of teaching was satisfactory, there was a fine balance between the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson. A feature of these lessons was a slower pace of teaching and learning that resulted in pupils being less attentive to their work. Also, the use of plenaries was less well developed in recapping

the learning that had taken place.

15. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Support teachers and learning support staff have a good understanding of their needs and are often well briefed by class teachers. There is close and effective co-operation between the special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers in the drawing up of good individual educational plans. Teachers work hard with support staff to ensure that pupils are fully included and achieve well in all lessons. In a small number of cases pupils are withdrawn from the class, but teachers make sure that they do not regularly miss a particular subject because of this. Staff have a clear awareness of the need for pupils to either retain or further develop their self-esteem, and their interventions are sensitive yet rigorous. As a result, pupils learn well. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language receive some good support and often learn well, although this does vary from individual to individual. A small number of gifted and talented pupils have been identified. They benefit from extra mathematics coaching by the deputy head.
16. Stimulating and imaginative teaching of basic skills begins in the Foundation Stage for children in the reception classes. Teachers are very good at engaging children in discussions about a whole variety of activities and experiences. They encourage all children to develop confidence in thinking and learning for themselves.
17. In Years 1 to 6, teachers have good overall subject knowledge. Many use subject vocabulary precisely. Teachers usually explain lesson objectives well. They often use challenging questions to check, reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of concepts related to lesson objectives, especially in core subjects. These qualities result in pupils of all abilities responding very well, including the most able. In nearly all lessons, pupils were seen to make at least good efforts to carry out the work. Pupils' interest and concentration were very good overall, particularly in the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes. In these year groups, pupils show very good levels of independence as they set about their work. Teachers demonstrate a perceptive awareness of how to make links between subjects. They ensure that pupils make use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects, but some inconsistencies occur in the regularity of such use from class to class. For example, there are few examples of pupils doing extended writing in history and geography, as teachers find it difficult to allocate sufficient time for this in lessons. Teachers make sound use of homework to consolidate and extend the pupils' learning in reading, spelling and mathematics.

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

18. All pupils have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which fulfils the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, including religious education. Sex education is taught appropriately and effectively. There is an appropriate drug awareness programme. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory. There is a new policy, used in every class, which is accompanied by a comprehensive programme of topics for the weekly lessons.
19. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is good. The school has taken steps to link work in many subjects to literacy and numeracy work, in order to reinforce pupils' basic skills. Where this happens, very good teaching and learning take place, for example in science, history and geography. In Years 5 and 6, the curriculum is enhanced by the inclusion of French.

20. The overall quality and range of the curriculum provided throughout the school are good, including that provided for the Foundation Stage. Policy statements are in place for all subjects and are supported by nationally recommended schemes of work. The long, medium and short-term plans show effective links between the school's teaching programme and the National Curriculum attainment targets. Teachers plan their weekly activities well, with clear objectives, target different groups effectively, and have a clear understanding of what they expect pupils to understand by the end of the lesson.
21. The curriculum provision for the teaching of pupils with special education needs is good throughout the school, including for those with diverse and multiple needs. The school fully complies with statutory requirements. Learning support assistants and other support staff give effective help both to pupils and to teachers, but they do not always allow pupils the freedom to work independently. Members of staff know their pupils well, and have good relationships with the parents. This means that any problems are picked up and dealt with early on in the child's school career. Support is particularly focused on literacy and numeracy but is given in some other subjects where needed. Many pupils make good progress and some are removed from the special needs list once they no longer need support.
22. The curriculum provides equally for boys and girls. A small number of gifted and talented pupils benefit from extra coaching in mathematics by the deputy head, on a fortnightly basis. It is ensured that they do not regularly miss a particular subject because of this.
23. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. This significantly enhances the pupils' personal, social and intellectual development. They enjoy opportunities offered by clubs for football (both boys and girls), cricket, rounders, netball, gymnastics, hockey and Top Sport. About 80 pupils are members of the school choir and sing regularly at community events, including the Porchester Flower Festival. Pupils in Reception and Year 4 attend a classical music concert at Portsmouth Guildhall annually. There are chess, drama, dance and a variety of music clubs. Visits from a wide range of people such as police officers and fire crew complement the formal curriculum well. Visits to local places of geographical or historical interest are organised, for example to Portchester Castle. Residential trips include visits to Stubbington and Minstead. A day trip to Cherbourg provides added enrichment to the school's curriculum.
24. Links with the community and other local schools are very good. This is a result of the hard work and commitment of all staff involved. Close links exist with the pre-schools, whose pupils move on to Castle Primary School, and with the secondary school attended by most pupils when they leave. The school has forged very good links with the Hampshire County Cricket Club and benefits from its coaching. The pupils raise money for charities. Most of these activities are initiated and run by pupils with support from teachers. The combination of extensive extra-curricular activities, visits, visitors and community links has a very positive impact on the quality of pupils learning and social development.
25. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is part of the positive ethos of the school, and is of good quality overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound. At present, the school does not fully explore the opportunities for spiritual development. There is scope for more planned opportunities to highlight aspects of spirituality in subject teaching and in assemblies.
26. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. A sense of strong moral values

pervades the school. Teachers are positive role models, which reinforces pupils' moral development. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. School rules for behaviour are displayed throughout the school. This contributes to the good behaviour of pupils in the school. Issues such as sex and drug education are handled with sensitivity. They are set in a moral framework of self-respect, and responsibility to oneself and others in the development of stable relationships. Pupils are encouraged to behave, be responsible and work hard by the use of a system of team points and smile stickers. In physical education, they learn respect for rules and the notion of fair play.

27. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school creates a very good social atmosphere. Their social skills are developed in lessons by the many opportunities to work in pairs and groups, and by taking part in extra-curricular activities. The school council has just been established to discuss matters of importance to pupils. Many activities are socially inclusive; for example, in music there are free lessons from visiting specialists for Key Stage 2 pupils. The band practices are open to all and the music co-ordinator arranges music according to the ability and range of players. Female and male teachers who belong to the choir and band are very good role models. Such activities develop good quality relationships as pupils work together and with their teachers to a common purpose.
28. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils develop a very good understanding of their own and other cultures through lessons in English, history, art and music. Regular visits to places of cultural interests are arranged to support learning. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures of other lands and races are developed in geography and history through their study of St Lucia and Egypt respectively. The pupils take part in a range of activities such as focus weeks in science, mathematics, literacy and sports; and in drama productions. In music lessons, music from other cultures is introduced, for example music from France. In Arts Week, a whole week is devoted to music, stories and art of different cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school makes good arrangements to provide for the health, safety and welfare of pupils. Home visits prior to children starting in Reception ensure that members of staff know individual children and their family backgrounds very well indeed. The very positive relationships that exist in the school ensure that pupils are confident there is someone they can share concerns with if they need to. The child protection policy meets requirements and provides effective guidance for staff in the event of them having a concern. It is used as part of the induction of all new members of staff who have contact with pupils. There is, however, no formal arrangement for all staff regularly to revisit procedures. The person with overall responsibility for child protection is suitably trained and experienced. The school works well with support services where this is needed. There are effective arrangements for dealing with first aid emergencies and the administration of prescribed medicines. The school briefs staff about what is needed to support pupils with individual health problems, ensuring that they are not excluded from activities. Evacuation procedures are practised with sufficient frequency to ensure that pupils and staff know what to do in an emergency. School buildings are checked conscientiously each year to identify hazards. Procedures have not, however, been formalised to ensure they meet the latest risk assessment requirements. Neither the person with overall responsibility for health and safety, nor a representative from the governing body, has been suitably trained in health and safety. Equipment and appliances used in the school are tested annually as required. Good attention is given to safe practice in lessons.

30. Procedures for monitoring the attendance of pupils are satisfactory overall. Registers are taken twice daily and ensure that the school has an accurate record of those present in the event of an emergency. There are suitable procedures to record the very few arrivals after registration. Reasons for absence are always required and letters are sent home where these are not forthcoming. Although the school follows up unexplained absences thoroughly, there is no systematic routine for telephoning parents on the first morning they occur. There is suitable liaison with the education welfare officer (EWO) where attendance is very low. Where there are concerns that do not come within the scope of the work done by the EWO, the school writes to parents. The impact of unsatisfactory attendance is not always made clear to parents in the annual reports they receive about their children's progress. This limits opportunities to work with them about this.
31. The very high staff expectations for good behaviour are communicated well, beginning in Reception and continuing throughout the school. This results in the achievement of good standards. Classroom management routines are consistently well applied and effective, particularly so when they are used promptly. Pupils value the system of awards that acknowledges achievement in all aspects of their life and work at school. This motivates them well and raises self-esteem. The work done in circle time ensures that pupils explore bullying, understand why it is wrong and what they should do about it. They also develop a deeper understanding of friendships and the need to consider other people's feelings and views. This has a very positive impact on the quality of relationships seen in the school and the unconcerned acceptance that is evident in respect of the right of individuals to be different. The policies covering behaviour and bullying provide effective guidance for staff to ensure that there is a consistent approach from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. Procedures for dealing with the few instances of exclusion are in line with guidelines. Exclusion is used only as a last resort and the school provides effective support when pupils return. Parents are encouraged to be involved in seeking a way forward whenever behaviour causes concern.
32. There are good arrangements for the personal and academic support and guidance of pupils overall. The revised and newly introduced PSHE programme has incorporated citizenship. It provides the basis for effective guidance and personal development. Its implementation is in its early stages with individual year groups trialling materials across subjects of the curriculum, and in circle time, this year. The co-ordinator is aware of the need subsequently to audit provision for coherence and to develop assessment procedures. Teachers know individual pupils well and make effective assessments of their personal development in the annual written reports to parents about their children's progress. There are high expectations for pupils to take responsibility for classroom routines and opportunities for them to contribute to decision-making through the school council. Assemblies are planned well, provide thought-provoking topics and offer effective guidance about issues beyond the school community. The school plans well to ensure that pupils have increasing opportunities to take responsibility and use initiative as they move through the years and this results in an effective growth in their personal maturity.
33. Pupils are guided well with their studies, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Learning is supported effectively by the individual advice teachers give during lessons. Teachers explain what is to be learned and reinforce what has been covered at the end of the lessons. Teachers are usually alert to the changing needs of pupils and where necessary adapt lessons as they go along to meet them. Pupils are particularly well motivated by the praise they receive when they have done well. After mock tests, teachers discuss with pupils what they need to do to improve their work. In English and mathematics, pupils usually know their targets well, particularly when those

for groups are displayed on their tables. In addition, the school has a policy that effectively outlines for subject leaders the support expected for these pupils. The number of sets for Year 6 pupils in English and mathematics has been increased to make provision for those needing extra support in order to achieve expected standards in end-of-year tests.

34. Arrangements to assess pupils' academic progress and the use of this information to guide curricular planning are satisfactory overall. In the Foundation Stage, assessment procedures are good. Children are tested when they start in Reception and their subsequent progress is checked regularly. This enables staff to plan effectively and to predict future attainment levels, for example at the end of Year 2. The school's policy is for each module to be assessed in English, mathematics and science on a half-termly basis. Procedures are effective and give good information, particularly in English where they are less cumbersome. Assessments are moderated across subjects to improve accuracy. The school uses computer software to track the progress of individual pupils; those who are underachieving can be identified effectively. The school has plans to provide in-service training for all staff on the use of this system. For foundation subjects, assessments are made on two objectives only each year. Whilst this is a suitable arrangement, in practice it is not done consistently well across all subjects. In information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, history and physical education, teachers know pupils well and use this knowledge to support their planning. It is not, however, backed up by the use of thorough assessments of their attainment. In art there are sound procedures, but they are not used effectively. In religious education, assessment opportunities are built into planning well, but they are not used. The school analyses results of testing done at the ends of Years 2 and 6 to identify strengths and weaknesses or significant trends. These and differences between teachers' assessments and test results are followed up well. No analysis of the attainment of minority ethnic groups in relation to other pupils is made, but they are included in the general monitoring of pupils' work. This is because there is usually only one pupil involved in any year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents' views of the school expressed through questionnaires and at the meeting held before the inspection show there are excellent levels of satisfaction with what the school provides and achieves. Inspection evidence confirms these positive views. Almost all parents say they consider the leadership and management provided is of a high standard, that they are comfortable about approaching the school with concerns and that the school works closely with them. They are pleased that their children like going to school and say that they consider that standards of behaviour are good. Parents feel that their children are taught well, expected to work hard and that they are informed effectively about the good progress made. They also consider that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. A few parents would like to see a more interesting range of activities outside of lessons. Inspectors consider, however, that there is an excellent range provided either during the lunch break or after school. That these are mostly for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is appropriate, given that in earlier years pupils more frequently find the school day sufficiently tiring without additional activities.
36. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents through the information it provides is very good. Home visits before children start at the school and effective opportunities for parents to become familiar with the school before their children start in Reception get the partnership off to a good start. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents provide comprehensive information about expectations, routines and school performance. The newsletters that go home every two weeks are of a high standard and are supplemented with information about individual events, as they occur. The school ensures that parents have every opportunity to find out about significant events in their children's lives through information evenings held at the school, for example about end-of-key-stage testing, the residential visits made and the sex education programme. Information about what their children will be learning for the next half-term in each subject is very effectively communicated at the beginning of each half-term. There is also advice about how parents can support their children at home, together with relevant website information. There are very good opportunities for parents to see their children's teachers at the beginning and end of the day. Where needed, the school arranges for translation of key documents. Parents receive suitable information about the next stage of their children's education well in advance of them transferring to secondary school.
37. Annual progress reports for parents provide an effective evaluation of what their children know and can do in English and mathematics. In these subjects, there is usually a well-expressed target that identifies what needs to be done to improve. Parents show high levels of interest in their children's progress and value the opportunities provided to discuss the targets. Reporting in science provides useful information, although there is a greater emphasis on pupils' attitudes to work. In other subjects, reports are less detailed and more often inform about work covered by the class during the year. Pupils' personal development, their attitudes to work and behaviour are reported well. Although levels of attendance are suitably reported, parents are not told of the impact of unsatisfactory attendance on their children's progress. The school ensures that parents are informed about their children's results in national testing at the ends of Years 2 and 6.

38. The involvement of parents with the school has a good impact on pupils' learning. Parents are very interested in how well their children are doing at school. They show this through their high levels of attendance at parents' evenings and at other events in which their children are involved. The involvement of parents whose children have special educational needs is developing well, but they do not contribute to the review of their children's targets or the setting of new ones as yet. Close links are maintained with outside agencies such as a speech therapist. The 'Curriculum News' provided at the beginning of each half-term is valued by parents. About 20 parents help regularly in classrooms. There is good support when needed for the various trips and visits made out of school. The effective parent and teacher association, called Friends of Castle School, is run by a small group of parents and teachers. The social and fund-raising events it holds are successful and support the work of the school well through the materials and equipment contributed.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. The headteacher provides very good leadership, ably supported by a committed and hard-working staff team, and the work of governors. Effective teamwork is a very noticeable feature of the school. There is a high level of commitment to improvement and a very good capacity to succeed. The concerted actions of staff and governors promote high standards and a good overall quality of education for the pupils. The leadership provides clear direction for the work of the school that is based on the aim of providing pupils with the best possible opportunities to succeed. A strong ethos of care fosters the positive relationships which exist throughout the school and into its community. The tone of the leadership is effective in promoting equal opportunities and the inclusion of all pupils in the school's work.
40. The governing body is unsatisfactorily fulfilling one of its statutory responsibilities as regular risk assessment procedures have not been formalised to ensure that they meet the latest requirements. In all other respects the governing body is working well. It is committed in its support of the school and is well led by the chair. The October 2002 re-organisation of sub-committees and their terms of reference are working well in helping the governing body to organise its work efficiently and effectively. Minutes of meetings indicate full support for the headteacher and his staff. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. In addition, the governors are steadily developing their role of asking informed questions in order to help shape the direction of the school's work. Presentations by subject managers and visits to the school by some governors, are an integral part of this development.
41. The school works to a well-defined improvement plan for the current academic year. One of the strengths of this plan is that it is drawn up following extensive consultation. Actions are prioritised and carefully costed. Priorities are well thought out and represent an appropriate agenda for improvement. In discussions, it is apparent that the headteacher, his staff and members of the governing body have clear ideas about future priorities beyond the short-term improvement plan. These ideas have not been formalised and this makes for an unsatisfactory situation regarding the quality of planning, and in establishing a more strategic view of whole school development, into the medium term.
42. Good levels of monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and then taking effective action are happening, particularly in core subjects. This is carried out by the effective leadership team and by subject managers. Responsibilities are delegated well. Managers are clearly aware of their accountability and of the support they can

expect to receive. Co-ordinated actions include making lesson observations to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, the sampling of pupils' work, looking at teachers' planning and monitoring the progress made by pupils, for example by logging test results and setting targets for future learning. The impact of subject managers' work on standards varies from being very effective, for example in English, to being limited, for example in Key Stage 2 art and religious education throughout the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable. She maintains all the necessary paperwork and gives helpful support to class teachers in writing individual educational plans and at review meetings. However, because of current teaching duties, she is unable to observe or work directly with other teachers in order to monitor at first hand the implementation of individual education plans.

43. The use of financial resources is very well managed. The headteacher, staff and governors work together well to set short-term priorities and then support them with the appropriate allocation of resources. The progress of actions and their associated expenditure are efficiently and regularly monitored by the finance sub-committee of the governing body. Information is made available so that all are kept well informed. A recent local education authority audit confirmed the strengths of the financial systems that are in place. The principles of best value are applied well. A policy statement drawn up by the governors has helped to clarify what thinking and actions need to be taken in implementing best value principles.
44. The school has retained a good number of staff since its last inspection. The experience and expertise of teaching and support staff are used well to match the demands of the curriculum and to provide a wide range of learning opportunities for the pupils. The induction of new staff is thorough and effective in helping them to work to the values of the school. The system for staff appraisal and performance management is secure and of a very good quality. This ensures that school priorities and individual staff needs are recognised and included in the process. Staff feel supported as a result. They are also encouraged to try new approaches in their work, for example the performing arts are being developed currently and an application has been made to obtain an 'Artsmark'. An appropriate sum of money is budgeted for staff development and this is managed well by the deputy headteacher. Non-teaching staff provide very good levels of support to the work of teachers. Administration is effective and efficient, with an increasing use of new technology. Office staff provide a warm welcome to visitors and parents.
45. The accommodation provides very good facilities for the teaching of the National Curriculum and French. Rooms are sufficiently spacious, very well maintained and decorated. Caretaking and cleaning staff work hard to provide a clean and hygienic learning environment for the pupils. Thoughtful use is made of every indoor space; for example, an upstairs computer suite and a cluster of computers in a small space off a corridor significantly add to the school's provision. There is good outdoor space that includes three distinct playground areas and a very large grassed playing field. A particular outdoor feature is the millennium planting area, which will eventually grow into an outdoor teaching space.
46. The overall quality and quantity of learning resources are good. Resources are well used and support the teaching and learning of pupils of all abilities. The library is an attractive area. It is well managed, contains a good supply of books and materials and provides a good resource that enhances pupils' learning.
47. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to raise further the standards of work seen and the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) Improve the standards in art at Key Stage 2 and in religious education across the school by:

- fully implementing the schemes of work;
- ensuring that teachers' planning covers all aspects of the subjects;
- recording work more consistently so that pupils remember what they have learned;
- assessing the quality of provision;
- monitoring and evaluating the impact of the above actions on the standards of pupils' work.

(Paragraphs 5, 34, 79, 80, 122 and 123)

(2) Implement rigorously the planned assessment procedures for the foundation subjects.

(Paragraphs 5, 34, 80, 86, 93, 100, 104, 116, 121 and 125)

(3) Formalise a medium-term plan for whole-school development by:

- using the vision already apparent from discussions with the headteacher, staff and governors;
- building on the strengths of the current short-term plan;
- extending whole-school improvement planning into a three-year time scale.

(Paragraph 41)

(4) Implement risk assessment procedures according to requirements by:

- using the information provided by the local education authority, to bring school practices up-to-date
- providing appropriate training for key personnel.

(Paragraphs 29 and 40)

The school has already taken action to remedy this situation.

Less significant areas for development:

- to set in place formal arrangements for all staff to regularly re-visit child protection procedures;

(Paragraph 29)

- to include comments on the impact of unsatisfactory attendance in written reports to parents about their children's progress;

(Paragraph 30)

- to develop a policy and systematic procedures to ensure that pupils for whom English is an additional language receive appropriate support. (Paragraph 60)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

86

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	30	30	20	0	0	0
Percentage	6	35	35	23	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	431
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	31

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	63

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	36
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	29	28	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	27	27
	Girls	24	27	23
	Total	48	54	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (82)	95 (87)	88 (91)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	25
	Girls	23	23	22
	Total	48	48	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (82)	84 (95)	82 (85)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	28	34	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	27	28
	Girls	25	27	30
	Total	47	54	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (72)	87 (67)	94 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	27	28
	Girls	25	27	30
	Total	47	54	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (75)	87 (76)	94 (88)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
414	3	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0
0	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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.9
Average class size	30.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	294

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	873339
Total expenditure	871580
Expenditure per pupil	2157
Balance brought forward from previous year	38166
Balance carried forward to next year	39925

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	380
Number of questionnaires returned	181

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	60	39	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	45	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	47	7	1	2
The teaching is good.	71	28	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	42	3	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	19	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	25	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	43	2	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	83	14	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	26	0	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	33	7	0	8

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

49. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The children start school at various times in the autumn term according to the date of their fifth birthday and they all attend full time by the beginning of December. Most of the children have some pre-school experience, and staff ensure that they settle quickly into school by visiting them both in nursery schools and at home. The children come into school with broadly average skills and knowledge and throughout their time in the reception classes make good progress. Overall standards are above average. By the time the children move into Year 1, the majority have reached all of the nationally expected early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage and many have exceeded them. The quality of teaching is very good. All staff, including the learning support assistants, are very knowledgeable about the needs of the children and provide many worthwhile activities in all areas of learning. Planning is excellent; it is both clear and manageable. The assessment procedures are good. Progress is carefully recorded and used to plan new learning. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are effectively supported. The more able children are well catered for. This results in all children making good progress.
50. The curriculum includes a range of activities that covers all areas of learning. Whole class sessions are lively and interesting. Basic skills in language and mathematics are taught systematically and well. The staff use every opportunity to develop children's speaking and listening, and personal and social skills. Both reception classes are very well organised and managed. The staff work very effectively as a team. They plan and work together and know all the children well. Teachers have high expectations, plan lively, interesting lessons and set a good productive pace in lessons. The good balance of direct teaching and well-structured activities encourages children's self confidence and independence.

Personal, social and emotional development

51. Overall standards are above average. There is very good provision for children's personal, social and emotional development and, through consistently very good teaching, the children make good progress in attaining the early learning goals. The children settle quickly into the school's routines and they are very happy. Children have good relationships with each other and with adults. They concentrate, co-operate with each other, take turns and share equipment. They work and play together well, and delight in the achievements of others. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour and explain carefully to the children how to behave appropriately. Consequently, pupils respond happily to instructions and behaviour is very good. The children's personal development is encouraged effectively through well-planned activities, such as in their Set Play, Learning and Sharing Hour, 'SPLASH'. The staff provide a wide selection of activities and the children are able to make independent choices confidently. The children use their time well and are very keen to talk about what they are doing.

Communication, language and literacy

52. Overall standards are above average. The provision for children's language development is good. The children are often taught very well and make good overall progress. All of the children are confident speakers and listeners, and are beginning to read and write well. When sitting in small groups, or as a class, the children are able to join in with discussions and listen appreciatively to their friends. They listen attentively and, when required, join in enthusiastically with reading familiar texts. Children who learn more quickly read texts from the school's reading scheme; others use picture clues to retell stories in their own words. Almost all of the children write their own first name independently, but with varying degrees of accuracy and control. The more able confidently read back stories they have written. There are many opportunities for them to write independently and they are becoming increasingly confident in applying their knowledge of letter sounds to their writing. They are encouraged to find out how to write words by looking in the word bank. Children are motivated by the lively activities that encourage them to use their imagination to write their own stories. For example, they write about a 'Dragon Hunt' inspired by the story of a 'Bear Hunt'. Teachers provide good opportunities for the children to act out their stories and experiences.

Mathematical development

53. Overall standards are above average. Children make very good progress, particularly in early number work, because of the very good teaching. They all count forwards and backwards to 10 confidently, particularly when accompanied by hand clapping. Most children recognise and order numbers to 20. The more able understand numbers to 100 and enjoy playing the game of snakes and ladders. Computers are used well to consolidate their learning. There are many opportunities for the children to explore patterns, and many are able to create their own, using printing and threading activities. The children are beginning to understand about adding up and taking away, and the most able can add on two mentally. They use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary related to comparing and measuring, such as *bigger* and *smaller than*.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. The overall standards are good. There is good provision for developing children's growing knowledge and understanding of their world. The quality of teaching is often very good. The children learn how to use appropriate programs on the computers. They are very confident when using the mouse and the keyboard. The staff ensure that the children are able to use a variety of materials to build and make models, encouraging design skills appropriately. As a result, most children make good progress. Children understand which objects need to be pushed or pulled to make them move. Through well-organised activities in one lesson, they learned that air can make things move. For example, they made a simple rocket propelled by a balloon, and paper fish that moved by creating a draught. These activities culminated in a demonstration of a hot air balloon which they had made. They learnt that when the air was warmed inside the balloon went up and as it cooled it came down.

Physical development

55. The overall standards are good. Children are well taught and most of them make good progress. There has been a good improvement in this area of learning since the last inspection. Although the designated outdoor area was not used during the inspection, there is space for the children to use wheeled toys outside, when the weather permits. In an outside games lesson, children used the space well and showed increasing confidence and skill in controlling a ball with their feet. They remained very energetic, and after the main activity many were out of breath. Control skills are encouraged well, for example, the children can hold a pencil with increasing effect, they all use scissors correctly and safely and are adept at using all the construction materials.

Creative development

56. Overall standards are good. Children are often taught very well and most of them make good progress. The opportunities for children to develop their creative abilities are good, particularly in music. The children sing enthusiastically and tunefully. They are developing a sense of rhythm through the very good teaching. Children were able to reproduce different rhythms clapped by the teacher. They are beginning to play percussion instruments with the same care. In SPLASH activities, the musical choice is very popular with the children. They play and sing together in small groups without the teacher's direction. Art activities, such as using hand prints to make pictures of animals, develop their creative skills and give them the opportunity to work together. Children are encouraged to choose their own materials for making individual collage pictures. The role-play fire engine was used imaginatively by a number of groups of children.

ENGLISH

57. The proportion of Year 2 pupils attaining Level 2 in the 2002 tests was in line with the national average for reading and was well above for writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was above the national average for reading and below for writing. In terms of the year group as a whole, boys did better than girls because they were generally more able. In 2002, the boys achieved reading standards above their gender average whilst the girls fell below theirs. Both boys and girls achieve standards just above their gender averages for writing. Standards were below the average for similar schools in reading and above in writing. There has been a slight rise in the standards of both reading and writing over the past five years.
58. The proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in the 2002 tests was in line with the national average. Boys achieved in line with the national average for their gender. The overall performance of girls was below their gender average, reflected their overall ability in English, and reduced the overall performance of the cohort. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 or above was below that of similar schools and the progress made from the Year 2 tests to the Year 6 tests was below the national average. There has been a slight rise in standards over the past five years.

59. In the classroom, attainment is just above the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and in line by the end of Year 6. There is no significant under-achievement by girls. The majority of pupils enter the school with literacy standards just below national expectations, so pupils make good progress by the end of Year 2. The principal reason for this is the thorough teaching of basic skills in Years 1 and 2. Progress is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Reasons for this are the steady, but slower development of reading skills and a general weakness in the development of a wider vocabulary, which the school has recognised needs improvement.
60. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. Most of these pupils achieve standards commensurate with their capabilities by the end of Year 6. There are few pupils for whom English is an additional language. Most make good progress and achieve at least satisfactory standards, but this is not always the case. An area for development is to ensure that there is appropriate provision for all of these pupils. The school provides additional literacy support for lower attaining pupils, in identified groups in different year groups. This extra supports contributes effectively to their progress. Support for gifted and talented pupils is provided for in lessons.
61. By the end of Year 2, speaking and listening skills are above national expectations and they are well above by the end of Year 6. There has been an improvement since the last report. Pupils are attentive in class; they listen carefully and respond appropriately. Year 2 pupils speak clearly and most give reasons for their opinions. By Year 6, most pupils are confident and articulate speakers using standard English in formal situations.
62. Reading standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The good progress pupils make in the development of reading skills in Years 1 and 2 is a result of secure learning strategies. There is regular reading practice, a progressive development of skills, and good support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. In Years 3 to 6, strategies are less certain regarding the management of reading, and in ensuring that all pupils read more regularly, appropriately and sufficiently widely. Most pupils develop a good understanding of plot and character but are less secure in appreciation of text and genre. In Year 2, pupils learn to find information in books and by Year 6, most pupils access information from the library and other sources quickly and efficiently. There has been a consistent improvement in the organisation and provision of reading resources since the last inspection.
63. By the end of Year 2, pupils' writing is above national expectations. Most pupils are writing fluent sentences with the accurate use of capital letters and full stops. Pupils are learning to write in a wide range of forms that includes diaries, descriptive writing such as 'A Winter Morning' and the beginning of letter writing, such as 'Postcards from under the Sea'. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make slower progress but, by the end of Year 6, writing standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils write well in a wide range of forms. They write persuasively on the subject of fox-hunting and environmental issues and produce information leaflets on subjects, such as modern tap dancing. They re-tell traditional tales, such as the story of Isaac at the well, and compose their own poetry. Although most pupils write accurately and structure their writing appropriately, vocabulary choices are often limited and this affects the quality of writing for all but the most able pupils. An exception is journalistic writing, with Year 6 pupils producing excellent newspapers following a visit to the local newspaper offices. These are very well presented, using desk-top publishing techniques. There is regular handwriting practice and standards are more consistent than at the time of the last

report.

64. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 1 and 2, and is good in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, all the teaching is good and most is very good. In Years 3 to 6, there is less consistency and teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. There is some inspirational teaching, such as the use of dance drama to develop a finer appreciation of characters' feelings from the class reading book, or learning about biography writing through the television format of 'This Is Your Life'.
65. The quality of planning over time and of individual lessons is very good. This enables pupils to build progressively on the knowledge and skills developed in previous lessons. This is a particular strength of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2. Most teachers have good teaching skills and a good command of the subject, and this provides pupils with the confidence to try out ideas in secure learning environments. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher acts the role of a character from a book pupils know well. They, in turn, slip into the role of researchers. Most teachers provide a good range of stimulating and appropriate activities and there are good opportunities for pupils to participate actively in class and group discussions. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils have practised writing in a personal style and move on to writing in an impersonal style. The teacher links the discussion with an opportunity for pupils to research information on the internet and in reference books about space, which then supports learning in science. Teachers explain the learning objectives of lessons clearly so that pupils understand the purpose of their learning and are able to evaluate the progress they have made at the end of lessons. Their knowledge of their own learning is enhanced by effective assessment procedures. These enable teachers to set appropriate and realistic targets for pupils and to regularly review them. Underlying the effective teaching are the good relationships that exist in classes.
66. Pupils' behaviour is good. They respond positively to the high expectations of teachers in most classes. They concentrate well, try hard and contribute significantly to their own learning. Teachers incorporate the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively into the content of lessons, for example through discussion of topics such as the fears we all experience, and through shared activities, such as writing and discussing together. The curriculum provided is broad and generally well balanced. There is good provision for drama, and the development of information and communication technology is effectively integrated into the curriculum. The focus on expressive arts, particularly the class drama and extra-curricular drama, significantly enriches the curriculum. The school is aware that areas for further development include the need to further develop the management of reading and to adjust the balance of time spent between reading and writing in Years 3 to 6. Literacy levels are sufficient to support learning in subjects across the curriculum, but there is some scope to further promote the teaching of literacy as a part of learning in all subjects.
67. Leadership and management are very good. The subject is very well organised. The quality of planning is very good and there is very good support for teachers. There are good resources and accommodation. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

68. Standards have been rising steadily over recent years and are now above average at both key stages. This is similar to standards reported at the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, progress is sound overall but

more erratic with considerable variations from year to year, that reflects the differing abilities of year groups. In the 2002 national tests, standards were average when compared to schools nationally, but above average when compared to similar schools by the end of Year 6. This is because slightly fewer pupils achieved the higher levels of attainment. The school is aware of this and has taken steps to ensure that the more able pupils are given more suitable and sufficiently challenging work. Over time there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, although occasional differences account for some variations in the overall results. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language make at least sound progress.

69. In Years 1 and 2, lessons start with brisk mental calculations, such as forwards and backwards to a hundred, or consolidating their number bonds to 20, becoming increasingly sharp and reliable as they pass through the infant classes. In Year 1, pupils learn the early concepts of place value. Pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 2, successfully learn to add two digit numbers together using appropriate strategies such as partitioning confidently. They learn the names of simple two and three-dimensional shapes and some of their basic properties, such as the number of corners or edges. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of simple fractions such as halves and quarters. Less able pupils use number squares effectively to help them add and subtract numbers to 100. Pupils learn successfully to use non-standard measures, such as their feet, to measure distance and make good progress in the juniors to using measures such as kilograms and kilometres. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, they have a good understanding of fractions, their equivalents and how they relate to decimals and percentages. They build on their knowledge of the number system and use quick mental methods in their calculations successfully, such as number bonds, or adding ten and subtracting one when adding nine or by doubling or halving. Pupils use this knowledge effectively, for example in Year 3, to decide the processes to use when learning to solve word problems and by the end of the juniors the more able pupils are tackling reasonably complex mathematical investigations. In Year 4, they consolidate and build on their learning about angles. They make good progress and by Year 6 they use protractors accurately and have a good knowledge of different types of angles.
70. The overall quality of teaching is good, and this together with teachers' enthusiasm for the subject, are significant factors in the steady rise in standards. All teaching is at least satisfactory with nearly two thirds of the lessons being good or very good. One excellent lesson was observed. Teachers use a wide range of strategies, such as explanation, demonstration and exemplification, very effectively. Planning is good, which generally ensures that lessons are well-paced and take full account of the needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers use their knowledge of mathematics and of the pupils effectively to ask well-focused questions in order to assess understanding and to introduce new concepts. They use computer programs, such as a very effective program about angles, with confidence to support their teaching. Throughout the school, proper attention is given to mental calculations. Teachers generally have high expectations, although this is not consistent between year groups which results in progress being variable. In a few classes, where pupils are moving from informal to formal recording, pupils' books are untidy, work is badly presented and does not show the progression to be expected.
71. Most teachers constantly question pupils about the strategies they use and have sufficient confidence in their own knowledge to allow pupils to use any mathematically correct method, for example in a Year 3 class when solving simple problems. As a

result pupils learn well, gain confidence and are enthusiastic about their work. They respond positively and obviously enjoy their work. They are not only keen to answer but to explain how they reached their answer. Teachers make effective use of this enthusiasm by asking pupils to explain the strategies they have used and to decide on the most efficient strategy. In lessons, pupils work diligently and show high levels of concentration. Throughout the school they work very well when not directly supervised, and this enables teachers to concentrate and be more effective when focusing on teaching different groups.

72. The school has fully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this is making a significant contribution to the rising standards. Strong emphasis is placed on numeracy although due attention is given to most other aspects, such as space, weight and measures, and algebra. There was some limited evidence of investigational and problem solving activities and data handling. Teachers follow the planning carefully but are also alert to providing additional support when required, such as to the more able and to those with special educational needs. Assessment in the subject is very good and is used efficiently so that pupils' progress is monitored carefully in order to set challenging targets. Strengths and weaknesses are identified and the appropriate support is provided. The co-ordinator is an effective leader giving the necessary support in order to raise standards, for example by providing in-service training, taking groups of pupils or through supporting teachers in class. Good reinforcement is provided through other subjects such as science, geography, information and communication technology, and design and technology.

SCIENCE

73. The inspection found that by Years 2 and 6, standards achieved by pupils are just above the national average. High-attainers are extended well and are expected to achieve a higher level. In recent years, the results in national tests have been much better than in English and mathematics, and have moved to well above national average during the past three years. There is no marked difference in the achievement of boys and girls. The rate of improvement is in line with the national trend. The standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
74. During their time at school, pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs and the few for whom English is an additional language, make good progress towards their set targets.
75. Lesson observations, discussions with pupils and analysis of work indicate that Year 1 pupils develop a good understanding of what makes a fair test, through practical work. For example, they know that objects always fall down to earth because of the effect of gravity. They also find out that a fall can be speeded up or slowed down, and which is the best material for a parachute. Year 2 pupils learn about pitched and unpitched sounds with the help of musical instruments. They investigate further and develop good knowledge and understanding using a milk bottle filled with different volumes of water. Pupils in Year 3 have a good understanding of how shadows are formed, and that the length of the shadow depends on the position of the source of the light. Pupils in Year 5 show good understanding about the sun, earth, moon and their relative sizes compared to each other. In Year 6, pupils have a good capability for carrying out investigations, for example, when working with solutions to find the reversible and irreversible changes that take place.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is consistently good in Years 1 and 2, and ranges from good to very good in Years 3 to 6. Lessons are characterised

by a lively approach, good planning, clear learning objectives and skilled use of questioning. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils to good effect. Pupils are clear about what is to be learned. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are usually high. Pupils are encouraged to use scientific language, which helps them to improve their literacy skills. Most teachers are confident in planning and teaching science. Lessons are well organised, and a variety of methods and resources are used effectively. Teachers circulate well around the groups, giving them support and encouragement to do well. They ask probing questions to check understanding and to push learning further on. Pupils are managed well. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. There is usually a friendly but firm atmosphere, which pupils enjoy in science lessons. However, pupils become chatty and noisy in some lessons while working in groups, or waiting in between the activities.

77. The work for pupils with special educational needs is set carefully, and children are supported well by learning support assistants. In the majority of lessons, teachers use time well. Links are made to other subjects such as English, mathematics, information and communication technology and design and technology. The pace of lessons is brisk and this maintains pupils' interest and increases their work rate. Sufficient time is given to enable completion of set tasks. Behaviour throughout most lessons is very good and in some it is good. Most pupils are well motivated and remain focused on the activity for considerable lengths of time.
78. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. She provides clear leadership and the subject is managed well. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and works hard to help colleagues. She has been successful in ensuring that there is a good range of learning opportunities and the National Curriculum programmes of study are followed; this ensures continuity between Year 1 and Year 6. The school provides her with sufficient time to fulfil her duties, and this contributes well to the good provision in the subject by developing the practical approach to the subject. Good links have been established with the secondary school, which ensures that pupils are well prepared for transfer.

ART AND DESIGN

79. In Years 1 and 2, standards meet requirements and progress is satisfactory. By Year 6, pupils' attainment is below the expectations of the National Curriculum. This is a slight drop to the standards reported at the last inspection. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is more variable, both from class to class and from year to year.
80. The unsatisfactory standards and variable progress in Years 3 to 6 are due to several reasons. Firstly, the co-ordinator is new in post and has not had time to ensure that the scheme of work is firmly established. This is leading to variations in teachers' expectations about the level of skills to be taught to different year groups. This is well illustrated by the current main theme, which is 'Printing'. Whilst standards are sound in Years 1 and 2, skills are not being developed systematically through the school, and there is little variation in standards between these and older groups of pupils. Secondly, the assessment procedures are not well established or rigorously implemented, and this makes it difficult for teachers to monitor pupils' progress closely and to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. Thirdly, whilst most classes use sketch books, these are not passed from class to class which makes it difficult to track the skills that pupils have been taught. Lastly, in some lessons materials and media are chosen by the teachers which limits pupils' choice and independence.
81. In the short time that the co-ordinator has been in post, she has implemented a long-term plan to ensure that the curriculum meets requirements and she is in the process

of completing the medium-term planning. When implemented, these plans are likely to contribute to a rise in standards, because teachers will be clear as to the level of work to be expected from each year group. The co-ordinator is well aware of the need to raise standards in Years 3 to 6 and has already identified some areas of weakness, such as in the use of fabrics and in the development of specific skills, for example in printing. During the school's arts week pupils have the opportunity to work with visiting artists, such as the African artists which also contributes to their cultural development.

82. In the few lessons observed, mainly in the lower part of the school, the quality of teaching was sound overall. In Years 1 and 2, pupils used various implements such as straws to create flower pictures based for example, on the work of Van Gogh. In a Year 3 class, pupils were using very similar implements and the main reason for any difference in standards was because the older pupils had better motor control. Teachers manage pupils well and within lessons progress is sound although not always at the appropriate level. In Year 5, pupils develop the three-dimensional aspect of their work by making 'Grecian urns', and taking care with their finished product by linking the decorations to their work in history.
83. In the work seen, pupils take great care with their tasks and show pride in their finished paintings or models. They all behave well and show respect for each others' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

84. Although no lessons took place during the inspection period, evidence from pupils' work, photographs, and planning documents indicates that standards are above expectations in Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 to 6. The pupils achieve well with nearly all making good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were in line with national expectations.
85. In Year 1, pupils make simple, but well-constructed puppets linked to literacy lessons, for example 'Mr Gumpy's Outing', using felt and other fabrics. By the end of Year 2, pupils design and make models that show great detail and thought. They take great care with the finished product, for example, in using their information and communication technology skills to collect 'clip art' pictures that decorate the sides of their vehicles. They think carefully about how they use materials, such as pipe lagging, to make tyres for large wheeled lorries. By Year 6, pupils have built on these skills and make detailed working models using different mechanisms. In Year 5, pupils very successfully use different cam mechanisms to make working toys which are delightfully finished, through making good use of their previously learned skills using clip art pictures from the computer. In Year 6, they continue to develop their knowledge by making 'fairground' roundabouts of good quality, using simple gear mechanisms, again with great attention given to detail in the finished model. Pupils carefully plan their models and the older ones include detailed measurements and lists of the materials required. They carefully evaluate their models, making appropriate suggestions as to how they could have been improved.
86. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and is providing good leadership and management. She has just completed re-writing the curriculum to bring it up-to-date and to ensure that it is relevant. The scheme of work is very effective; it includes assessment opportunities for each unit of work and is an exemplar of good practice in supporting teachers and the development of the subject. The further development of the rigorous implementation of assessment procedures is an important feature for the subject's continuing improvement. Very careful planning, through detailed year group and individual lesson plans, ensures that skills are developed step-by-step and are not

repeated at the same level in different year groups. The curriculum is carefully balanced and includes all elements such as food and control technology. It is well supported by a good range of appropriate resources. Links are made through topics to other subjects, such as history, as well as reinforcing mathematical skills such as measuring. Full regard is given to health and safety through carefully written guidelines.

87. Although no lessons were observed, it is obvious from the care pupils take when making and finishing their models that they take great pride in their work. All are included, and where pupils are likely to need additional support this is identified early and the appropriate help is provided.

GEOGRAPHY

88. Standards are in line with national expectations throughout the school. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The pupils achieve soundly. There were no differences in the performance of boys and girls. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
89. Opportunities to observe teaching were limited. Only one lesson was observed in Years 3 to 6. Additional evidence was obtained from the pupils' past and present work, displays around the school, teachers' planning and school documentation.
90. Pupils in Year 2 have gained satisfactory levels of knowledge and understanding of people and places by contrasting Portchester and Titchfield. Pupils in Years 3 and 6 develop sound skills in geographical enquiry through using maps and diagrams, as well as secondary sources of information such as photographs videos, books and travel brochures. They learn well during field trips, for example, pupils in Year 6 visit Portchester Castle and learn about their locality. Through the study of St. Lucia, pupils successfully identify how and why places change, and explain how physical and human processes cause changes in environment. Their written work shows that pupils are able to make a strong case for their cause, for example why hotels should be built, or old factories to be kept?
91. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of teaching in the one Year 6 lesson observed was good, and pupils made good progress. The teacher made the objective of the lesson clear to the pupils at the start, and there were adequate and appropriate resources for pupils to use. There was good class management. The teacher asked probing questions to check understanding. There was good balance between direct teaching and independent learning.
92. Pupils' attainment and progress is enhanced by their positive attitudes to work. Most pupils enjoy the subject, work hard and co-operate effectively in groups.
93. National Curriculum requirements are met. The curriculum is broad and balanced. All pupils have equal access to the learning opportunities. There is a good range of school visits that complement class lessons and these enrich the curriculum. These provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their geographic knowledge and understanding. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are sound and should be rigorously implemented to help provide more information about pupils' achievements across the school.
94. The management and leadership of the subject are satisfactory, with some good

features. Although standards have not risen since the last inspection, there have been a number of improvements. For example, teaching plans have been rewritten in the light of National Curriculum changes, and the use of information and communication technology has been further developed to support learning. There is a clear policy in place and resources have been expanded and re-organised.

HISTORY

95. Standards of pupils' work are in line with national expectations at both key stages. Pupils achieve soundly. Their historical understanding is broadly in line with what is expected for their age. Pupils of all abilities make at least sound progress as they move through the school. Those with special educational needs are supported well.
96. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge about famous people and events, such as Christopher Columbus, Grace Darling and the Gunpowder Plot. Pupils in Year 3 are able to compare and contrast Victorian school life with today, by looking at a wide range of artefacts, and draw sensible conclusions. They develop a sound understanding that life for Victorian children was very hard and that the children had to go to work before going to school. In Year 4, pupils gain an appropriate knowledge and understanding of Ancient Egypt by observing pictures and artefacts. Pupils in Year 5 study Ancient Greece and show increasing factual knowledge, such as that modern democracy originated there.
97. As a result of the organisation of the curriculum, history was being taught in Years 3, 4 and 5, at the time of the inspection. The overall quality of teaching was good. All teaching seen was at least satisfactory, with a little more than half that was good or very good. The teachers subject knowledge is good, and teachers use a variety of sources to expand pupils' learning. Lessons are carefully planned with clear progression from one lesson to the next. The lesson objectives and unfamiliar words are explained at the beginning of the lesson, enabling pupils to have a clear idea of what they are expected to achieve. Appropriate resources are booked well in advance for the lessons. For example, in Years 3 and 4 pupils handle Victorian and Egyptian artefacts with great care. From this they are able to draw conclusions about school life in Victorian times and a greater understanding of Egyptian gods, pyramids and the embalming process. There is a good balance between teachers giving information and the opportunity for pupils to discuss and record their findings. A good feature of teaching throughout the school is an imaginative and creative approach to learning. For example, smashing of a Greek urn by the teachers in both Year 5 classes made a very dramatic start to the lesson. It reinforced how Greeks chose democratically to banish people in authority who abused their power, by writing their names in pieces of pottery. In the lessons observed, teachers have high expectations of pupils, who rose to meet the challenge set for them. However, in a few lessons pupils become noisy during group work, and do not pay full attention to the task in hand.
98. Pupils' behaviour is good and their positive attitude to work contributes to their learning. Most pupils work hard and concentrate well. Pupils show real interest and enjoyment in their work and relate well to each other when working in groups. Good displays around the school illustrate the work pupils have covered during the year.
99. Progress in the subject throughout the school is enriched by visits to places of historical interest such as Fishbourne Palace and Portchester Castle. The school provides sufficient funds for all pupils to participate fully in such visits. Literacy and numeracy strategies are used well in history to develop skills in all three subjects.

100. The quality of management and leadership of the subject is sound, with some good features. The subject is well organised with a clear policy and sufficient resources. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The curriculum and the use of information and communication technology are developing from a sound base. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are sound and should be rigorously implemented to help provide more information about pupils' achievements across the school. Requirements of the subject are fully met.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and are rising rapidly. Pupils' achievement is good. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Since the last inspection, a new computer suite has been opened that enables whole class lessons to take place. A very wide range of good quality programs has been purchased, together with other resources such as an electronic microscope and a digital camera. As a result, there has been noticeable improvement in the use of computers and the application of information and communication technology to support other subjects. All this is contributing significantly to pupils' confidence and to the noticeably improving standards. Good additional provision has been made by the installation of a mini-suite on the ground floor for teaching disabled pupils who cannot climb the stairs to the suite or for teaching very small groups.
102. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop their basic skills well. In the one lesson seen, the pupils confidently changed the colour, font and size of text and then saved what they had done, and they all log on and off without a second thought. Provision for young children is very good and includes programs that support teaching phonics and those that help in simple sentence building. There are good links with other subjects, such as mathematics, where pupils use programmable toys, such as a floor robot, constructively to support work on direction. As they move into Years 3 to 6, pupils use information and communication technology extensively, as well as developing computer skills in their own right, to support work in other subjects. Information and communication technology is given appropriate emphasis in nearly all schemes of work. In Year 3, for example, pupils confidently retrieve clip art pictures about the Victorians, and then develop their computer skills by enlarging or reducing them to an appropriate size before annotating them with text ready for inclusion in their topic. Pupils' work in mathematics is supported through the use of programs to create graphs from a set of information such as in Year 4 when pupils successfully used the technology to create line graphs to show variations in temperature. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils begin to use hyperlinks confidently and to save information from appropriate web sites on the Internet. Throughout the school pupils use other equipment skilfully, such as tape recorders.
103. Teaching is now good because of the support provided by the co-ordinators. Teachers are gaining confidence and have completed their initial training. They are enthusiastic and there is great demand for the use of the computer suite to support work in class. They have the confidence to retrieve the situation should programs 'crash' and are well supported by the co-ordinators if the need arises. Teachers have high expectations and all plan their lessons with the use of computers in mind, for example, in Year 5 when work on angles was started using a clear and illustrative computer program.
104. At present there are two co-ordinators and their infectious enthusiasm for the subject has spread throughout the school. They have worked hard to supply the appropriate resources, which have made a tremendous contribution to the 'giant leap' made in the

use of modern technologies since the last inspection. The main school photocopier for example is now linked into the computer network. There is now a very wide range of supportive software and hardware, such as the digital camera which pupils use confidently. The present scheme of work is being revised by the co-ordinators so that all aspects are thoroughly covered, such as control technology which at present is a weaker element. Rigorous assessment procedures have not been formalised. However, the school is aware of this and is taking steps to monitor pupils' progress, based on specific learning objectives more closely through their individual files, so that areas of difficulty can be identified more sharply and then addressed. Despite this anomaly, pupils are making good progress including those with special educational needs who are well supported during lessons.

105. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their work and there is always a buzz of excitement when they go to the computer suite. They work well and co-operate sensibly when working in pairs providing support for each other. They are managed effectively. All pupils have a positive attitude to their learning. They are fully aware of the progress they are making and the usefulness of the skills they are learning.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

106. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are introduced to the French language through speaking and listening activities. They make good progress over the two years and go on to secondary school with standards above those expected for their age. The level of their achievement at the end of Year 6 has been maintained since the last inspection.
107. Pupils listen to instructions in French and understand satisfactorily. They respond with appropriate replies to greetings and questions. In Year 5 pupils, introduce themselves and learn to say where they live. They follow examples from a pre-recorded video and repeat the phrases. Their pronunciation is satisfactory, but when they seek guidance from written prompts there is a tendency to read the French words in an English accent. Pupils recognise the written words and phrases they have learned and generally copy them correctly. Year 6 pupils give some details about themselves and their families and pets. They practise simple conversations by asking each other directions to various places in a town.
108. Teaching is good overall. Although teachers in Year 5 are not language specialists, they have the necessary knowledge to teach the subject effectively and to stimulate pupils' learning. In Year 6, the teacher's expertise enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. The pace of work is good and care is taken to consolidate new learning. The teacher conducts the lesson in French which increases pupils' familiarity with the language and encourages them to respond with good pronunciation. Vocabulary is reinforced by the introduction of lively songs. The teacher's enthusiasm for the subject is conveyed to the pupils who respond well, work hard and enjoy the lessons.
109. Resources such as videos and tape recordings are used effectively. The annual trip to France for Year 5 pupils motivates them and gives them the opportunity to practise their learning in a real context. The good liaison with the secondary school ensures pupils continue to build on their good start in French.

MUSIC

110. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards above the national expectations in all aspects of the subject. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards in listening and appraising were barely in line. Pupils in Year 6 attain very

good standards in the performing skills of singing and playing a wide range of instruments before an audience. Music is a strength of the school. Like most of their peers, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, whilst the more able pupils make very good progress. Overall achievement is good.

111. Year 2 pupils recognise and name a wide variety of unpitched instruments from many lands. They can sing with verve and control two part songs, retaining the correct rhythm and pitch. Pupils in Year 1 develop their listening skills, specifying the mood suggested to them by the music. They sing very harmoniously in assembly and with great pleasure, either excellently directed by a reception teacher or composing a calypso to the beat of the deputy head's guitar.
112. In Year 6, pupils had listened to music by Beethoven, the Nutcracker Suite and studied 1960's music, especially the 'Liverpool Sound'. All Year 5 pupils play the correct notation for a variety of tuned instruments including the xylophone, glockenspiel and recorders or maintain the rhythm on untuned instruments, when developing the accompaniment to the assembly song, 'What's the use of Wings?' Each class throughout the school takes turns to lead the weekly music assembly, watched by their parents.
113. The quality of teaching and learning seen was usually good, varying from excellent to satisfactory. All lessons were very well planned, but the more successful lessons were delivered at a brisker pace often by teachers with good musical knowledge. In a very good lesson in Year 2, the teacher constantly increased the challenge so that the pupils, who were very well behaved, moved swiftly from one activity to the next making very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieved well with good support from the teaching assistants.
114. A great strength is the wide variety of experiences and opportunities in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, including recorder or guitar lessons led by staff at lunchtime. Many pupils have free brass, woodwind, string or piano lessons from visiting specialist teachers. The outstanding band, supported by some staff, performed an arrangement of Glen Miller's, 'In the Mood', specifically written for them by the music co-ordinator. The very good choir, including some staff, meet regularly to practice a very wide repertoire from Carol Concerts at Church to the 'Rocky Monster Show' musical. These regular events performed to large audiences help to develop the pupils' confidence and ability to work collaboratively.
115. Music is well used to enhance the curriculum. Year 6 music is linked to their geography topic of St Lucia, and French songs for their language studies. Pupils in Year 3 learn Victorian music hall songs linked to history. Pupils play instruments from, and listen to, music of other cultures, like the visiting Ghanaian musicians during the Creativity Week workshop, linking it with drama and dance. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Although some use is made of information and communication technology for composing, this is an acknowledged area for development.
116. The very knowledgeable subject co-ordinator has developed a very good new scheme of work. She is well supported by some very talented musicians on the staff. The tracking of pupil's individual progress is not well developed. The school is well resourced. Music is a source of great pleasure and social development throughout the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is above national expectations. Most pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. There is sufficient support for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress and attain standards commensurate with their capabilities. In Year 1 physical education, pupils are developing good control over their jumping, running and skipping movements. In dance, they listen carefully to the music and most synchronise their movements to the rhythms. Pupils' 'Robot' dancing is expressive and thoughtful, and they are learning to develop sequences of movements. In Year 4, pupils discuss, create and perform good dance sequences in groups, and in Year 5, pupils dance freely and expressively to music from the 'Bond' films. In games, pupils in Year 3 are developing a good sense of ball control, dribbling round markers, passing and trapping the ball, and throwing and catching. In Year 5, pupils practise netball skills, co-ordinating jumping and landing with catching and throwing. Some pupils have well-developed tactical skills of defence and attack.
118. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. There is some inconsistency, with teaching ranging from satisfactory to very good. All the teaching and learning in dance is very good.
119. Longer term planning and individual lesson planning is good, enabling pupils progressively to develop a wide range of skills. Most lessons are very well structured and teachers are well organised. In a Year 5 games lesson, pupils practise ball skills before devising their own mini-games to consolidate the learning earlier in the lesson. In dance, teachers build sequences of movements stage by stage and sometimes link the dance theme with other subjects. In Year 4, for example, pupils build an Egyptian dance sequence with pupils as mummies coming out of sarcophagi. This provides an effective link with their history topic. Such imaginative approaches motivate pupils and enhance their learning. A strong feature of teaching is demonstrating skills. Most teachers have a good command of the subject and their skill contributes to pupils' learning. In some lessons, pupils have above average expertise and their demonstration enhances other pupils' self-evaluation. In a Year 5 games lesson, the girls from the school netball team demonstrated skills of jumping and landing, catching and throwing and tactical skills very effectively. Most pupils enjoy physical education and their positive attitudes contribute significantly to their learning.
120. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils work well together in teams and exhibit a very good sense of self-discipline. These dimensions are enhanced by the excellent extra-curricular provision for both boys and girls, and the high participation rates in a wide range of sporting activities. Outdoor activities, such as orienteering, are supported by residential visits for Year 6 pupils. There is an award programme in place to support swimming and school cricket awards for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school has received the 'Active Mark Award' and participates in the 'Superschools' sponsorship programme. The school has established a good range of community links that include coaching from the Hampshire Cricket Club.
121. The leadership and management of physical education and sports are very good. The mainstream curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements and is very well organised. There are sufficient resources and good facilities. The school receives a significant sum through sponsored activities each year. There is an appropriate health and safety policy. The school has maintained the above average standards described in the last report and has improved resources. An area for further development is the rigorous implementation of assessment procedures, in order to gain more information about the pupils' achievements, on which to judge their performance. There has been

good improvement since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. Standards are below the expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory. Their learning lacks continuity and progression as they move through the school. The curriculum has been insufficiently well organised to ensure that learning opportunities consistently build on the pupils' previous learning. Detailed guidance for teachers and their lesson planning has been lacking until recently. The subject has not been a priority for development for some time. This situation is beginning to improve. The subject co-ordinator has very recently put in place a new subject policy and scheme of work. This good guidance has yet to have a full impact on raising standards across the school.
123. An analysis of pupils' work showed that very little had been recorded in most classes since the beginning of the year. Discussion with pupils, work in their folders and displays around the school show that pupils' understanding and attainment are below expected levels at the end of Year 6. There are considerable gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding. When talking to pupils, they do not recall learning about the variety of faiths and festivals. They are neither sufficiently aware of the Christian faith nor do they remember stories from the Old and New Testaments. However all classes have learnt about various aspects of the Christmas story including, in Year 5, the similarities and differences between the accounts of St. Luke and St. Matthew. Year 2 pupils have considered places that are special to them and compared Christian and Jewish places of worship, symbols and books. Other classes have studied Bible stories. Pupils in Year 1 have learned about the parables Jesus told and these are well illustrated and displayed. There was only one display of work in religious education in classrooms or around the school.
124. No lessons were observed because the curriculum is organised in blocks of time. It was not possible to make judgements about teaching and learning.
125. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. However, the religious education co-ordinator has worked hard to update the policy and scheme of work, which is well matched to the agreed syllabus. In order to fully support her colleagues, she has written detailed plans which include relevant questions and assessment opportunities for each lesson. These planned assessment procedures should be rigorously implemented, because pupils' work is not yet assessed formally. Teaching and learning are not monitored closely enough to ensure that religious education contributes as much as it could to pupils' literacy skills, or to their spiritual and cultural development.