

INSPECTION REPORT

EMSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Emsworth

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116260

Headteacher: Mr B. Young

Reporting inspector: Elizabeth Camplin
3586

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th December 2002

Inspection number: 247631

Short 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:	Victoria Road Emsworth Hampshire
Postcode:	PO10 7LX
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. H. Benzie
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd January 1998

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Emsworth Primary School caters for pupils aged four to eleven. Numbers of pupils at the school are subject to frequent change due to a relatively high number of families moving in and out of the area but there are 271 registered at present, making the school bigger than the average primary nationally. There are 35 children in the reception year. Six attend part-time and twelve are taught with pupils from Year 1. One pupil is of Bangladeshi origin and all other pupils are white British or European. Altogether, 32 pupils have come to the school from Italy, Germany, France and Russia. One is a refugee from Latvia. None of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English, though eleven receive a small amount of special tuition each week. Pupils live in the long-established residential district of Emsworth, on the outskirts of Portsmouth, Hampshire. The area is neither affluent nor disadvantaged. It has an average family mix and the percentage of pupils who have free school meals is also broadly average. Children enter reception attaining typical standards for their age. The number of pupils with special educational needs is below average and there are no pupils with statements. The number includes, however, several disaffected boys who require significant support for emotional and behavioural difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that offers its pupils a good quality of education. Teaching is good overall and is enabling pupils in Year 6 to attain above average standards in most of their work, though they should be reaching higher standards in writing. The headteacher has developed a determined and capable team of teachers who all take a fair share in managing the curriculum effectively. They are focusing on the right priorities to motivate pupils and raise standards further. Governors manage their responsibilities well and provide good value for money in return for the school's financial resources.

What the school does well

- Standards have risen in recent years in reading, mathematics and science because the headteacher and teachers have become increasingly effective at analysing and addressing the school's capacity for improvement.
- In reception, children love to learn and are equipped to achieve their best, personally and academically.
- The whole curriculum is planned to provide a wide variety of interesting learning experiences. Many are carefully designed to promote every pupil's enthusiasm for school.

What could be improved

- Teaching, to help pupils to understand fully how to improve their writing, present information in a clear and organised way, make choices and work independently.
- Communication with parents, so that they understand fully how they can help their children to learn effectively.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to the parents and carers of all pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected previously in January 1998 and has made good progress since then in overcoming barriers to learning. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved during the past four years at a better rate than the national average. The school has improved its approach to managing the support for pupils with special educational needs and in recording pupils' progress. Teaching is better. Most lessons build well on pupils' prior learning in literacy, numeracy, science, and on their use of enquiry and thinking skills. There

has been satisfactory progress in encouraging pupils to write for a clear purpose and in enabling higher attaining pupils to achieve to capacity. The school acknowledges that more needs to be done to fully achieve these aims and both are appropriate priorities in the school development plan. More productive use is made of the school grounds, as a resource for learning, than was the case in 1998. Further improvements are underway.

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	E	D	D	D
mathematics	D	A	C	C
science	D	A	B	B

Key

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

In 1998, standards in national tests were well below average in all three subjects. Now, pupils in this school achieve as well, overall, as in schools where pupils have similar starting points. The main weakness is in writing. Pupils are capable of achieving higher standards in the way they organise information, explain ideas and use handwriting skills. Targets for next year are suitably challenging. Furthermore, the work seen indicates that pupils are achieving well and are on course to attain the school's goals for standards above the average for Year 6 in reading, mathematics and science. They are likely to be average in writing rather than the higher level predicted. There has been rapid improvement in test results in Year 2, where standards are high in reading and so high in mathematics that they are in the top five per cent compared with similar schools. Writing and science are the weakest test results in Year 2, yet these are still average compared with all and similar schools. Pupils in the current Year 2 are also above average in reading, mathematics and science, and average in writing. They are achieving well. Children in reception are also making very good progress and are likely to exceed the standards expected for their age in all the areas of learning. They are achieving particularly well in the foundations for mathematics, literacy and personal, social and emotional development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good overall. Pupils up to seven are full of enthusiasm, as are most of the older pupils. A very small minority is not so well motivated to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory and improving. The behaviour of a small group of boys was a cause for concern in 2001/02 and led to a high rate of exclusion.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are much better at thinking about others, at learning to take ownership of their own behaviour and working towards targets for improvement, than they were a year ago.
Attendance	Very good. It has been at least a percentage point above the national average for three successive years.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is more consistent in English, mathematics and science than it was in 1998. The percentage of very good or better lessons has doubled. Positive relationships with pupils, and teachers' approach to acknowledging good behaviour and effort in lessons are strengths throughout the school. From reception to Year 2, lessons in literacy and numeracy are thoroughly planned to match the needs of all groups. Expectations are high for what pupils can learn and teachers' comments in exercise books reflect these aspirations. Targets are almost always communicated in ways that are easy for infants to understand and achieve. Over a third of lessons in Years 3 to 6 are successful for similar reasons. Therefore, pupils use time purposefully and make good progress. While never less than satisfactory, two out of five lessons are less good because pupils have too few opportunities to review their progress or clarify their thinking. Teachers make decisions for pupils about the best ways for them to communicate what they are finding out, rather than pupils being given the chance to decide for themselves. Some, particularly boys, then tend to lose interest or concentration.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There are significant strengths in the ways that literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are linked to learning in practical subjects. The school draws very well on the expertise of people outside the school community to make opportunities for learning more exciting.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties receive very good support from teachers' assistants and from teachers when they work with them directly. Some class targets are too difficult for this group to achieve regularly. This has a negative effect on their self-esteem.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Their inclusion in mixed ability groups means that these pupils benefit from the support of their friends. A world club run by bilingual teachers gives them a chance to use their home languages as well as English and to share ideas in a relaxed and comfortable setting.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school is investing considerable time and energy into providing a range of opportunities for pupils to learn how to contribute positively to the quality of life at school and the wider community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils' welfare and well-being are at the core of the school's aims. Teachers have many constructive ideas for helping pupils to work towards achievable targets. There is some lack of consistency in enabling pupils to produce their best work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The current headteacher has successfully led the drive towards higher standards by his personal example, advice and support for colleagues. He is handing over to the new headteacher a capable team with a clearly shared vision for an even more successful school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors meet regularly with staff to obtain detailed and up-to-date information about how well the school is performing. They are receptive to new ideas for change and development.
The school's evaluation of its performance and extent to which it applies the principles of best value.	Satisfactory. Evaluation is good and understanding of the principles of best value is sound. There is a thorough analysis of how well results achieved in national tests reflect pupils' potential. Relevant targets are set to maintain strengths and to eliminate weaknesses. Not enough thought has yet gone into identifying the best ways to consult parents about how to help their children to make consistently good progress.
The strategic use of resources	Sound. The school constantly reviews the use of classroom resources and staff time in order to make the best use of both. It finds it difficult to eliminate a budget deficit because of the fluctuating numbers on roll.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting and understanding of writing has improved in lower year groups. • Reading is good and standards have risen in mathematics and science. • Children like school and enjoy good relationships with each other and adults. • All members of staff are very approachable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour, particularly at playtimes. • Information about how to help with homework, what pupils are to learn each term, and the school's approach to challenging its highest attaining pupils. • Opportunities for learning outside of normal lessons and for parents to see their children working.

Fewer than fifty parents returned questionnaires and only nine attended the meeting with the registered inspector. Their views may not be fully representative of the majority. Inspectors disagreed with parents about access to learning outside normal lessons but found that they were accurate in their assessment of the school's relative strengths and weaknesses.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Standards have risen in recent years in reading, mathematics and science because the headteacher and teachers have become increasingly effective at analysing and addressing the school's capacity for improvement.

1. Since 2001, results of national tests for pupils age seven and eleven have been at least average overall compared with all and similar schools. In Year 6, pupils are now achieving standards that are satisfactory for their ability and in Year 2, pupils are achieving well.

2. Results in 2002 at the end of Year 2 reflect rapid improvement in standards achieved in reading and numeracy. There is also improving performance in the percentage of pupils attaining at least the minimum standard expected in writing. In Year 6, mainly due to differences in the percentage of pupils in the year group with special educational needs, standards were not as good as they were in 2001. They were still good enough, however, for improvement since 1998 to stay ahead of the national trend. When taking pupil mobility into account, pupils in Year 6 performed at levels that represented good progress in reading, mathematics and science compared with the standards they achieved in Year 2.

3. The reason for improvement is that teachers study the test results to identify the errors that pupils make. Then they draw valid conclusions about what they have to do to improve their teaching in order to help pupils overcome difficulties. They have concentrated on setting relevant learning targets for each year and assessing how well pupils are working towards them. Assessment systems are more effective than they were at the time of the last inspection. They have strengthened teachers' ability to match teaching objectives in lessons to pupils' previous learning.

4. Pupils in infant classes are making the most consistent progress towards targets set for them in literacy, numeracy and science. Teaching is consistently good in all three subjects in all five classes. In junior classes, pupils are making at least satisfactory progress too. They are making good progress in reading, mathematics and science and steady progress in writing.

5. In every class, teachers make sure that work in speaking and listening, reading and writing are integrated in interesting ways. Pupils enjoy stories, drama and poetry because teachers choose titles and extracts that have universal appeal. By the age of seven, pupils know how to tackle unfamiliar words, using their knowledge of letter sounds and blends. They also look closely at illustrations to help them interpret what is happening. They are as familiar with non-fiction as with fiction and their comprehension is good. Teachers group pupils by ability and plan activities with a similar theme but that provide just the right amount of challenge for each. For example, pupils in Year 2 were joined by a lower-attaining group from Year 3 and they all had learning objectives related to writing instructions. They derived a lot of pleasure from discussing their different approaches to explaining how to wrap a Christmas parcel. Each group learned from the other that a variety of versions can work equally well. Older pupils have learned a lot about Shakespeare's plays this term. They enjoyed explaining the pleasure they gained from reading parts of Macbeth. They were keen to describe, for example, his use of vocabulary to convey tension and evil in the witches' scene. They adapted his style effectively in their own simple playscripts and rhymes. Some read from a display of their verse with appropriate expression and they were able to point out the distinctive features that they admired in each. One was particularly striking, as its stanzas increased in length to imitate the shape of a witches' hat.

6. In the main, teachers plan activities in mathematics and science very thoroughly. They think carefully about how to introduce pupils to precise vocabulary and working methods that will enable them to continually reinforce and extend their understanding and knowledge in each subject. They ask questions that require pupils to think, share ideas and practise different ways of finding solutions to problems or investigations. They consider the learning styles of pupils of different gender and are getting better at devising stimulating activities that appeal equally to boys and girls. In this way they are generally successful in motivating all pupils to do the best they can to learn.

7. Mathematical and science skills are now taught well across the school. The best examples of successful mathematics lessons were observed in two mixed-year classes. One was a very good lesson for pupils in Year 1 and reception. The other excellent example was for a class in Years 3 and 4. The teacher wanted the younger pupils to learn to use everyday language to describe position. A range of relevant words was prominently displayed where all pupils could see and discuss them. The teacher skilfully led pupils through a demonstration of ways in which Elmer the elephant could move forwards or backwards, cross, go up, over, under, or between different obstacles in his path. She then provided pupils with games to play where they could make up different routes Elmer the elephant might take in his journeys through the jungle. Pupils were captivated by this activity. For twenty minutes they all worked constructively in pairs to practise the language used by the teacher. They became increasingly confident and accurate as they shared ideas. At the end of the lesson all pupils had made good progress in using a variety of words. The highest attaining were introducing new words, such as opposite and behind. The lower-attaining group learnt to describe a sequence with at least five relevant words. With only one small prompt from the classroom assistant he had been working alongside, one young volunteer went in front of the class and recounted *“Elmer went through the cave, up the hill, under the bridge, over the log, through the water, between the bushes and back to his home.”* This was very good achievement.

8. The second lesson focused on extending pupils' ability to use and write the vocabulary of time. They were encouraged, according to their levels of ability, to consider how to read one to five minute intervals in either analogue or digital time. The highest attaining pupils worked independently, except for the occasional intervention from the classteacher. They made constructive use of information they had brought from home, about the times of TV programmes, to investigate starting and finishing times of some of their favourites. They sorted them into groups of different duration using digital clocks and then recorded them. Pupils with special educational needs worked directly under the watchful and supportive eye of the teacher's assistant. She managed them well so that, using plastic clock faces, they made up 'time stories'. They each took turns to move the hands in five-minute intervals to correspond with the sequence of ideas they invented. The average group worked with the teacher to reinforce their knowledge of the movement of the minute and hour hands on analogue timepieces. Adults made the learning fun and purposeful, so that all pupils cooperated and concentrated very well throughout the lesson. They were far more confident in telling the time at the end of it than they were at the beginning.

9. The success of practical teaching methods was confirmed during meetings between inspectors and small groups of pupils of different capability and backgrounds. Each one was quick to solve problems mentally and to explain how they reach their answers. They drew well on their knowledge of tables, fractions, and units of measure, such as area, weight and length as they talked about investigations in design and technology, science and geography. They vividly remembered work they had done about the human body. Two boys, both of whom were not high attainers in literacy, were eager to explain diagrams, charts and captions about the skeleton and organs, such as the heart and lungs. They used precise

vocabulary and spoke confidently. They understood their future targets for mathematics particularly well and were highly motivated to reach them.

In reception, children love to learn and are equipped to achieve their best, personally and academically.

10. Since 1998, the results of tests taken when children enter the reception class at Emsworth show that they perform as well as the average child of their age in Hampshire. In the current reception year there are a high percentage of children who fit into the average band. There is a relatively small percentage below and above the average. Irrespective of their ability band, the children are all learning rapidly as a result of very good teaching by the whole team of adults who work with them. Standards are likely to be above expectations by the end of the year.

11. Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Teachers manage it expertly which is why standards are likely to be high by summer 2003. Both teachers and teachers' assistants get to know each child very well and are very successful in making children feel at home and good about themselves. They achieve this by establishing clear routines in the classroom. Children are secure in their knowledge of how to behave as they work and play together. One small group showed this very well when they played with picture cards away from the direct support of the teacher. They needed no reminders to share them as they looked for pictures beginning with the letter 'b'. They talked quietly amongst themselves so as not to disturb the group that was reading with the teacher. Adults are also skilled at organising equipment so that the things children need to discuss, explore, and share are easy to access and put away. Children respect this and are quick to tidy up the classroom at the end of each session. They take a pride in their environment because adults lead by example and go to considerable lengths to make the classrooms inviting for them.

12. Progress is just as good in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Children are well on course to exceed the expected standards in both these areas. It is impressive to see how imaginatively the teachers plan for them. At the same time they integrate opportunities skilfully for other areas of learning in many of the activities undertaken. In a literacy lesson, for example, the teacher engaged children in a stimulating discussion about the week's shared book, called 'The Big Box' by Roderick Hunt. As well as emphasising speaking, listening, and reading she wove in opportunities for counting, recalling work the children had done in the foundations of science, and suggesting ways to extend their skills for making things and participating in role-play and drama.

13. In the same literacy lesson, the teacher's manner of questioning and use of gesture and praise was delightful as she encouraged children to read the story along with her. She invited comments about the characters and plot, and skilfully built on lower-attaining children's knowledge of the initial sounds in their Christian names to work out the words on each page. A little girl whose name begins with 'F', for example, successfully recognised 'Floppy' the dog, whilst a boy whose name starts with 'C' read and spelt out 'Chip'. An average child, who is just beginning to gain confidence in working out a whole sentence, came to the front to read, "Biff and Chip are carrying big boxes." He was asked if he could work out how many words there were in the sentence. He gave the correct answer and then explained that he had looked for the spaces between each, and that was how he had worked it out. As the story evolved, children saw that the cardboard playhouse collapsed in the rain. "I wonder why," asked the teacher with a grimace. Quick as a flash, several hands shot up, and one boy explained very clearly, "It was not waterproof!" The children went on to discover why the tent that replaced the soggy boxes would survive the elements better than cardboard. Then, when the book was finished, several children happily set off to the hall with the

teacher's assistant to make a cardboard house and kennel from the collection of boxes provided. As they played, they recalled the sequence of events, and joked about the outcome. In all respects, children learned very well in an enjoyable and productive hour.

14. A numeracy lesson had all the same characteristics and made stimulating use of a variety of resources. The teacher wanted to reinforce knowledge of counting to 20; an ambitious target for so early in the year. She also aimed to build as well as possible on pupils' knowledge of shapes and the language of comparison. She caught the children's interest from the moment the lesson began by asking them if they would help 'Sammy Snake' to learn to count. She used a washing line with the numbers 0 to 20 hanging from it to let Sammy practise counting along it. The children loved telling Sammy when he made a mistake, such as missing out the number 16. The teacher used vocabulary such as digit, and the next number, and made sure children used the same vocabulary as they answered her questions with a high degree of accuracy. She retained children's interest by changing activities and focus at just the right time. She used number rhymes, dressing up clothes and 'props' to sing songs that consolidated knowledge of the names for shapes. Then she went swiftly on to extend this knowledge further by playing a 'feely game'. Children used their sense of touch to predict several different shapes hidden in a canvas bag. Several of them thought very hard as they described to their friends what the shape they were holding felt like. Their friends listened well to guess a circle, triangle or square. The teacher was pleased with their success but she was also sensitive to difficulties. She deduced, quite rightly, that they needed further experience of explaining why a small rectangle and a larger rectangle shared the same attributes. Children were confused by the fact that the two long sides of one plastic shape were shorter than the two short sides of another! This was a stimulating and well-managed little session. Though children did not set pencil to paper they learnt a lot and the teacher was clear what she needed to teach next to help them to go further.

15. The work in children's books indicates that teachers also have high expectations of children when they record ideas and findings. Between September and December, for example, the brightest children made considerable progress and are achieving a high standard in writing. From sequencing just three pictures and writing a few letters the most advanced children have developed a neat handwriting style. They form words legibly and space them out appropriately. They use lively language, and a good knowledge of fiction, to produce their own short 'stories', such as "The owl swooped down. Baby said I love you Mummy." Lower-attaining children also attempt to write words independently, to illustrate their drawings and little models. Pictures and captions, for Floppy the dog, and My Teddy are legible now whereas at the start of the term nothing they drew or wrote was easily recognisable. All children's books are very well presented. Teachers show they value children's efforts by recording the date regularly, and adding a smiley face. They usually remember to write a heading on every piece of work.

16. Overall, the school is serving children in this age group very well.

The whole curriculum is planned to provide a wide variety of interesting learning experiences. Many are carefully designed to promote every pupil's enthusiasm for school.

17. The headteacher's view is that the best and most innovative parts of the curriculum are its subject links and he is increasingly proud of the success of the focus on pupils' personal development. He and the staff team are committed to the principle that every pupil has an equal right to learn through a balanced and stimulating curriculum. That is why the school requested that inclusion should be a focus of the inspection.

18. Parents were consulted about their perspective. Those who met with inspectors were united in a view that academic standards are rising because pupils' attitudes to school are improving. They are heartened by the change, after a very shaky period in the school's recent history when the school made a total of 58 exclusions; two of them permanent. Parents have seen the school move forward in helping their children to manage their behaviour, develop confidence in their own abilities, and begin to flourish in a culture of respect, trust, responsibility and independence. They attribute these positive developments to the efforts teachers are making to provide pupils with clear and consistent guidance about how to conduct themselves and make the most of their talents. They believe that incentives, such as star charts and good conduct awards, are working. Pupils agree that they are too. The action plan for personal and social development is having the desired impact.

19. The success of the school ethos and vision is evident from the lively, cheerful atmosphere and much of the practice inside and outside the classroom. There is a clear, structured programme of support for disaffected pupils. A member of the staff team has been specially trained to give these pupils time to work through their problems by working and playing in a small group, at playtimes and during some special periods of the day. These pupils are also supported well in classrooms. This is leading to a gradual but sustained improvement in their behaviour and ability to persevere with a task. Exclusions have reduced significantly as a result.

20. Collective Worship is organised well and helps to reinforce the school's high expectations for care of others and the environment. In an assembly for junior pupils, the deputy headteacher held them enthralled as he showed slides of pupils in and around the school. They showed pupils doing things that they recognised were helpful, such as picking up litter or playing happily in a threesome in the playground. Some things were unintentionally thoughtless, such as pupils rubbing shoulders along a display of work as they walked along a corridor. The deputy headteacher quietly and effectively enabled pupils to reflect on what makes school a welcoming place for all who work in it and what can still be better, if everyone plays their full part.

21. Older pupils take care of younger ones, and help them to feel important members of the community. For example, there is a system of infant/junior partners. Recently, this resulted in pupils from Years 5 and 6 writing stories about 'Mr. Grinling', which they later read to the younger children. They also transformed a corner of the music room into a colourful 3-dimensional display to bring the stories to life, much to the children's delight.

22. The School Council has a representative from every class whose task it is to gather pupils' views about school life and to suggest what can be done to improve it. They take their role seriously and think the classmates who elected them appreciate their contribution. They played a significant part, for example, in deciding what kinds of attitudes and behaviour are necessary for pupils to help adults to achieve the school's vision. They helped to make the jigsaw puzzle posters that can be seen in every classroom. These communicate, in simple everyday language, how all the important aims and values of the school fit together. On a very practical front, members think their lobbying also resulted in better use of toilet facilities! The school is also proud of the way the Council organised fund-raising activities to purchase new playtime equipment. Pupils and staff all think access to these has done much to improve the quality of play at playtimes.

23. The introduction of a World Club at lunch-time has given pupils from overseas backgrounds a special sense of identity and belonging. They work with part-time teachers from the Language Support Service to integrate learning about their own languages and customs with English and the topics they are following in classrooms. They invite friends along so that it is a lively, multi-cultural group. Pupils gain pleasure from mixing together in an

informal and relaxed setting. Parents value and support the club too. Some have visited the school to talk about their lives and languages and these visits are popular with pupils and help them to respect diversity rather than ignore it.

24. Links between subjects and other clubs and school events are often imaginative and rewarding. They are successful in appealing to pupils' different interests and learning styles. The choir attracts an impressive 100 members, and the orchestra has 20 instrumentalists who willingly give up part of their lunch-break to practise together. A total of 40 pupils take lessons in a wide range of string, woodwind and brass instruments, including a beginner group of recorders. They are eager to perform at Harvest Festival and the Christmas Carol Service. There are always lots of volunteers to join in the annual drama production in the summer term. Some boys, who can be difficult to motivate, especially to sit down and write, were particularly enthused by a 'science day'. Every class chose different kinds of special investigations and invited parents along to observe. The boys vividly remembered making posters to advertise the day. When asked to choose some writing that they were really proud of, it was work about the skeleton and how to keep healthy that they immediately chose to share.

25. Practical and creative subjects and physical education are taught well and are popular with pupils. It is easy to see why. Girls and boys in Years 5 and 6 enjoyed and learnt a lot from this term's project in design and technology. They worked through the whole process involved in introducing a new brand of biscuits to consumers. They made effective use of a wide range of skills as they investigated a need, generated ideas about production costs and methods, and evaluated the quality of the outcomes. One class was observed participating in lively and perceptive dialogue about the criteria they would use when deciding to buy their biscuits. They were all as enthusiastic as the teacher was to share ideas and views. Pupils in reception and Year 1 were just as involved and interested in sharing and learning from each other in a movement lesson based on Elmer the elephant stories. They identified the different kinds of animals and birds who would live in their imaginary jungle. They suggested and tried out movements to depict each one, and the group of 'explorers' had all the gestures and mannerisms needed to show good understanding of their real life roles.

26. The participation of the whole school in fostering its image cannot be better exemplified than in the tree of life display in the school hall, and in the soon to be erected ceramic logo at the entrance to the school. An art student from Chichester College worked with every pupil in every class to make face plaques for the tree, and tiles for the yacht that is the crest on sweatshirts and school documents. The standard of work is high and shows that, when they are enthusiastic, some aspects of achievement are outstanding.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Teaching, to help pupils to understand fully how to improve their writing, present information in a clear and organised way, make choices and work independently.

27. The school development plan has four main priorities. These are to raise standards in writing throughout the school, to improve test results in science in Year 2, to cater effectively for the most able pupils, and to strengthen provision for personal and social education and citizenship. They are absolutely the right initiatives and many strategies in the action plan are working well. Progress with the plan for science, for example, is good. Improvements with the other three priorities are not so far advanced. Their reviews have either not been sufficiently critical, or plans are at such a very early stage of development that they have not had time to make an impact. The 'Healthy Schools Award' and 'The Eco School Award' are examples of the latter.

28. It does not take long to see that the policy of setting the same writing targets for the whole class is not working well for all pupils. The age and ability range in each junior class, in particular, means that the targets are too difficult to be achievable in the short and medium term for a significant proportion of pupils. Although higher attaining pupils have the incentive of seeing that they are on track to meet all the goals, pupils who are lower attaining rarely do. They certainly know what is expected, and many try to meet the goals, but it is likely to be the end of the year before they do so. The more conscientious and self-motivated of them persevere. The deteriorating or inconsistent quality of work shows that a significant minority loses heart.

29. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent too. Some is thorough and matched very closely to next steps in learning. Some lets lower-attaining pupils down. There is not enough attention to commenting clearly on each sign of improvement, however small, that would raise pupils' self-esteem. Neither is there consistent thought given to setting new, small challenges that would help to motivate pupils.

30. In addition to the class targets, the first page in the older pupils' literacy exercise book describes the teachers' expectations for setting out and organising work. These include dating every piece, underlining sub-headings and completed work with a ruler, and presenting work as neatly as possible. These are often ignored by a substantial number of pupils, including the higher attainers. It was not at all clear from talking to pupils that they ever go back to the targets to refresh their memories of what good work should look like. Teachers are giving inconsistent messages about independence and personal responsibility by not addressing the need for pupils to be self-critical and as accurate as possible. In a lesson for Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils were finding the area of rectangles and right-angled triangles. They were interested in their tasks and engaged in very purposeful discussion. They did not, however, use a ruler to divide the shapes they were working on. This resulted in an inferior quality of recording. Incentives, such as awarding stars or points for good effort, are not being used to motivate pupils. They lack opportunities to reward themselves for improving presentation and the legibility of writing where it warrants a neat hand.

31. Some learning activities that have considerable potential to raise pupils' awareness of different ways to communicate information and ideas, do not succeed as well as intended. This is because teachers usually decide what methods pupils are to use. They miss ideal opportunities to enable pupils to make decisions about what they think would work best for them. They occasionally overlook the use of resources that they have set out on tables for pupils to refer to for stimulus. When working with the whole class or more than one class at a time, adults also tend to dominate the talk. Even though pupils are co-operative they are not bubbling over with enthusiasm, as all pupils are in the best lessons. These things happened, for example, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were learning about flood prevention. Though they made sound progress in understanding what happens when homes are affected by floodwater, their debating and writing skills were not so well promoted.

32. In some lessons advice is lacking about how to set about a shared writing activity. In a class of pupils from Year 3 and 4, for example, all the pupils were asked to draft out a plan for a play script. They had some good ideas about characters and plot, but not such a clear understanding of how to manage the time and task. Some spent far too long deciding the names of characters rather than just describing them by their role or status, such as pupils, teachers, and the headteacher. They also wrote too many details into the section for the introduction. By the end of the hour many had not progressed beyond this point, so had not covered the middle and concluding parts of the story. Though they did not waste time, or behave irresponsibly, they had not progressed as much as they, and the teacher, had hoped.

33. Many lessons end with a clear and helpful summary of what pupils have achieved. The effectiveness of other lessons that include some very good features of teaching and learning is reduced by a hurried or inadequately planned last few minutes. A very challenging and successful lesson about writing instructions for wrapping a Christmas parcel ended prematurely because of the bell for assembly. Pupils had to quickly stop reviewing their work and the teacher had to rush her concluding remarks. In a mixed class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, the management of discussion about posters relating to the Romans failed to inspire pupils. They could not see them well enough to be clear whether they met criteria to be visually appealing and to convey historically accurate information in an interesting way. Neither were pupils in a position to make suggestions for further improvement.

34. Lastly, the scrutiny of work and dialogue with pupils made it clear that teachers do not yet put into consistent practice the school's good intentions to give higher attaining pupils opportunities to submit information in a greater variety of forms. There was sparse evidence of pupils completing thought-provoking and extended writing about a topic of their own choosing.

Communication with parents so that they fully understand how they can help their children to learn effectively.

35. Although parents enjoy helping their children, they are unintentionally prevented from making as significant a contribution as some would like to make. A few are of the opinion that there are differences in teachers' practice that need discussing and sorting out. Some parents think they have excellent information about the topics that their children will study. Others say it is written in jargon that is not easy for a lay person to interpret. Some find homework is set regularly and helps their children to gain independence. The experience of others is that it is erratic and they are not sure when to expect it. The school prospectus is not helpful either. It mentions the reasons for homework, but does not make it clear when or how it will be set or the role parents have in supporting it.

36. The prospectus is well laid out and it has clearly taken time and effort to prepare. It is not a very stimulating document, however, and leaves several important questions unanswered. The section about the behaviour policy, for example, stresses the need for it to be supported fully by parents and families. It does not provide any details of the incentives provided at school to promote self-discipline, good behaviour and positive attitudes. Unless their children tell them, therefore, it is hard for parents to establish whether school methods and their own are consistent. The information about extra-curricular opportunities fails to make clear which year groups qualify to participate, or how frequently they take place. The section about the policy for special educational needs gives an impression that it is only pupils with difficulties in language or number work who will be assessed and given a suitable programme of work. There is no hint of the school's approach to involving parents in setting targets for development, or participating in the review of their success.

37. In practice, most parents make sure that they make contact with the school and respond when they are called upon to discuss concerns about behaviour. When they meet with the headteacher and teachers, most feel that the school listens to them and welcomes their involvement. This was true of a child who was temporarily excluded last year. It is not every parent's experience. One wrote to say that she feels her child is often unhappy at school. Her view is that her anxieties have not been taken seriously. Whilst this could not be substantiated, it should not be dismissed.

38. Members of the governing body are aware that communication with families has potential to improve. There have already been discussions with the current headteacher about ways to do this, including the use, for example, of an inclusion survey. Parent governors have also undertaken some informal research. They have several ideas for bringing parents into school more frequently and are sympathetic to requests that parents sometimes make to visit assemblies. This is an ideal time for a fresh perspective and debate about how to give the partnership with parents a boost.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

39. Strengthen the school development plan to address the following points:

- (1) Improve teaching to the quality of the best lessons to help pupils understand how to improve writing, present information in a clear and organised way, make choices and work independently, by:
 - Setting achievable targets to match pupils' different needs and rates of progress;
 - Achieving greater consistency in the quality of marking;
 - Consulting with pupils about ways in which they can be more purposefully involved in checking their own progress;
 - Reviewing the organisation of learning activities, so that pupils have more opportunities to make choices in the way they present information;
 - Thinking more carefully about the advice pupils need to help them manage time effectively when working independently;
 - Making the best use of time at the end of lessons for reviewing what pupils feel they have gained and what they are ready for next.(Paragraphs: 27 - 34)

- (2) Improve communication with parents so that they fully understand how they can help their children to learn effectively, by:
 - Revising the school prospectus so that it contains more information about school policies and procedures;
 - Implementing plans to consult with parents to discover their ideas for improving the partnership between home and school.(Paragraphs: 35 - 38)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	5	8	0	0	0
Percentage	6	22	28	44	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. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents 6 percentage points.

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)	264
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	23	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	17
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	38	40	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (71)	100 (83)	100 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	17
	Girls	19	20	19
	Total	34	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (79)	90 (83)	90 (79)
	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	21	17	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	17	20
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	28	32	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (78)	84 (89)	97 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	19
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	26	28	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (82)	74 (89)	89 (93)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	203	56	2
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	30	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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)	12.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.8
Average class size	24.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	198

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	606 610
Total expenditure	612 224
Expenditure per pupil	2 187
Balance brought forward from previous year	(3 817)
Balance carried forward to next year	(9 431)

Figures in parentheses indicate negative values

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	271
Number of questionnaires returned	47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	36	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	43	8	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	40	11	0	2
The teaching is good.	57	34	2	2	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	41	17	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	23	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	37	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	51	40	9	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	23	5	6	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	34	2	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	26	30	11	3