

INSPECTION REPORT

SPRINGHILL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116396

Headteacher: Mrs Jo Garraty

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 6th to 9th May 2003

Inspection number: 247649

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant Junior |
| School category: | Voluntary Aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 - 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Springhill Catholic Primary School Milton Road Southampton |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | David Wright |
| Date of previous inspection: | June 2001 |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Springhill Primary School is a large voluntary aided school which serves the Catholic community from much of the heart of Southampton. In addition, a significant number of parents of other faiths and traditions choose to send their children to the school, many because they wish them to have a faith based education. This amounts to about a quarter of the 560 pupils on roll with more than 60 speaking English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is a little below average. Whilst the overall number of pupils leaving the school other than as eleven year olds is similar to most schools, the school regularly takes in more extra pupils than usual in Key Stage 2 and especially Year 3. The number of pupils on the special needs register is similar to most schools but increasing in numbers and extent of need over time. Attainment on entry in the reception classes is a little below that found in most schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, very well led and managed, with many strengths which is very popular in its community. Achievement, pupils' personal standards and teaching are good. Current expenditure per pupil is similar to most schools and attainment on entry is a little below average. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching, with much even better, ensures that pupils achieve well in the basic skills
- Good arrangements are made for supporting pupils who find learning difficult and good work by support staff ensures that they make good progress towards their learning targets
- It provides a broad and varied range of learning opportunities enhanced by special weeks, visits, visitors and events and makes good provision for their cultural and spiritual development
- All staff know pupils very well, take very good care for their safety and welfare and make very good provision for their personal, moral and social development
- Boys and girls are encouraged to become confident, conscientious learners, willing to express themselves and happy to work alongside their classmates and play sociably
- Very good leadership by the headteacher has made it possible for all members of the school community to make a positive contribution to the growing success of the school.

What could be improved

- Improvements in accommodation will provide an opportunity for the school to expand and enrich the curriculum for the youngest children
- More could be done to explore, enjoy and include the heritage, geography and culture of the many countries represented by pupils welcomed so well by the whole school community
- More opportunities could be provided for pupils to use their initiative, make choices about what and how they learn and decisions about those aspects of the school which directly affect them.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Although for various reasons noted elsewhere, national test results for eleven-year-olds have gone down recently, improvements in provision and leadership and management noted by HMI in June 2001 have been built on and further developed. High standards in the younger years have been maintained and individual pupils are achieving well with good teaching. As suggested by HMI, the school has continued to improve teaching and leadership and management to good effect. Overall improvement in the past two years has been good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

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

The school sustained above and well above average results in national testing for seven-year-olds over the years. However, changes in intake policy have led to an influx of pupils, many lower achievers or not speaking English when they join, which has changed the profile of attainment in Years 2 to 6. This was particularly severe in Year 6 in 2002 and overall results in English and mathematics fell below average for the first time although pupils who attended the school throughout most of their primary education actually did well and late entrants made good progress. Good teaching and fewer newcomers in this year's top class will see standards back up to average in English, mathematics and science. However, with eight new entrants in Year 2 in the last four months all either with special needs or with very little English, overall standards in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 will fall to average this year with mathematics above average. The pattern of good progress by individuals but overall standards in the basic subjects being lowered by pupils with limited literacy skills joining the school late, is repeated to a greater or lesser extent throughout the school. Standards in other subjects are broadly as expected with an overall strength in art and music and pupils making particularly good progress in most aspects of information technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Boys and girls enjoy coming to school and joining in the many activities it has to offer during the school day. They work hard, do their best and take a pride in their school and their achievements. Almost all are very willing to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences in class and group discussions and follow up school work at home. Attitudes to school and learning are very good. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | With very few exceptions, behaviour is very good and this makes a strong contribution to learning. Pupils understand and abide by the school and class rules and teachers and helpers rarely have to take up time sorting things out. Playtimes and lunchtimes are calm, sociable occasions with little need for adults to intervene. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good: Everybody gets on very well with everybody else and visitors and newcomers are made to feel very welcome. All adults act as excellent role models in this respect and help to foster the family feel of this large school. Pupils are growing into very confident, sociable and sensible citizens who recognise their own worth, enjoy and celebrate differences and appreciate the contribution made by others. |
| Attendance | Boys and girls like school and their parents are very keen for them to enjoy learning and do well. Consequently, any absences are unavoidable and most unpunctuality is due to the local traffic situation. |

Pupils make a very good contribution to their own learning and achievements and to the happy and positive ethos of the school. The quality of relationships between all members of the school community is very good and the way the community welcomes, includes and values children from families with very diverse cultural and faith backgrounds is one of its most significant strengths.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Satisfactory | Good | Very 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.

Overall teaching is good with a significant percentage of very good lessons, one excellent and a small number unsatisfactory. Very good teaching was observed in almost all year groups and all subjects except physical education where all lessons were satisfactory. More than a half of lessons in both Years 5 and 6 are very good with all but one of the rest good. With the effective implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, over a third of lessons in the core subjects of English and mathematics are very good. In other subjects, very good teaching is often associated with teachers having particular expertise. This is especially the case in music where all lessons are very good. Teachers manage their pupils very well and boys and girls understand what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and work habits. Their very good attitudes to learning are a strong factor in ensuring that it is often at least good. Pupils who find learning difficult are well supported by classroom assistants and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | All pupils have access to a suitably varied curriculum enhanced by the contribution made by out-of-class activities and special events. Literacy and numeracy are strongly represented and other subjects provide stimulation and balance. Good planning arrangements ensure adequate coverage and that parallel classes receive a similar diet. Provision to enhance pupils' personal development is well planned but is not yet consistent across the school. The curriculum for children in the reception classes is largely appropriate and relevant to their needs but, as the school is aware, they have few opportunities to work and play outdoors. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Effective procedures for identifying boys and girls who find learning difficult and helping them to succeed are in place and working well. Teachers, support staff and parents are all involved in the process and with the help of the coordinator, targets set are reviewed regularly. Teaching assistants make a good contribution supporting pupils in class. The school makes every effort to ensure that all pupils are included in all the school has to offer. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Staff make very good provision for promoting personal development with very good arrangements for pupils to develop moral and social awareness. Good attention is given to helping pupils to reflect on the more spiritual aspects of their growth and study and appreciate the arts, their own cultural heritage and celebrate the cultural diversity of others |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school takes good care of its pupils. All areas of their health and welfare are taken seriously and procedures for ensuring pupils safety are well known by the whole school community. Good attendance has a high priority and very good behaviour is maintained with very effective procedures. Assessment procedures are much improved especially in the core subjects and are now good. Information provided by this and national tests is well used to track pupil's progress, identify gaps in learning and guide planning. |

The great majority of parents are pleased with the way the school is helping their children to learn and mature. They feel comfortable in their formal and informal dealings with school and make a good contribution to their children's learning at home. The school provides a good range of user-friendly general information.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The contribution that the head has made to rebuilding the confidence, morale and reputation of the school following the last inspection is very good. Well supported by other senior staff, she has shown admirable determination and wisdom in managing the very full agenda this entailed. Other staff have followed their lead and, with much encouragement and training, leaders and managers in all areas of the school have become effective and influential. Very efficient school administration staff help the whole school run smoothly. The school is very well led and managed |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governing body has developed greatly in recent years thanks to the commitment of longer standing governors and the enthusiasm of the many newer members. With much help from the local authority, governors are much more aware of their responsibilities and the strengths and weaknesses of the school, receiving feedback, observing, evaluating and discussing what is going on in their areas of interest. Their moral support through recent difficult times was extremely important and their contribution in bringing about ongoing improvements to the buildings and resources has been very impressive. Governors are making a good contribution to the continuing development of the school. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | A significant factor in recent improvements is the very good way the head leads the analysis of what the school is doing and the impact it has. Staff and governors are actively involved in the process which has led to a good deal more informed discussion about the way forward. Relevant data is being used to identify trends, set targets and evaluate the impact of changes and actions taken. The very useful longer term plan based on this process identifies specific areas for improvement many of which are directly related to standards, but also includes a thorough programme for maintaining what is already working. The schools commitment to improvement and the impact of actions already taken are very good. |
| The strategic use of resources | Available funds are being very wisely spent on uprating and improving the existing buildings in imaginative ways so that a difficult building is set to become a much better learning environment. Good use is being made of teaching and support staff though the number of classroom assistants is relatively less than currently seen in most schools. Good levels of well used resources have been accumulated in most subjects and the budget is thoughtfully allocated and efficiently managed. |

The head has made an outstanding contribution to the resurgence of the school. She is well aware of what still needs to be done and with the continued hard work of the staff and the support of the governing body, there is every reason to believe the school will continue to thrive.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children enjoy going to school • teaching is good and their children are making good progress • pupils are encouraged to work hard and do their best • teachers help pupils to grow up sensibly and behaviour is good • the head and staff are very approachable • the school is well led and managed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the information about how well their children are doing • the range of extra activities provided |

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. The school provides a good range of extra activities but, of necessity, most are in school time. Reports are very detailed but not easily interpreted.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. National test results for seven-year-olds over the past five years have been consistently above and usually well above average in reading, writing and mathematics with a particular strength in reading and mathematics. School records show that when pupils start school as four-year-olds their general attainment levels are below what other boys and girls in and around Southampton are achieving. This indicates consistently good progress in the foundation year and in Years 1 and 2 and puts the school in the top 25% of Southampton schools in each subject. A notable feature of these results has been the year on year increase in the number of pupils achieving higher grades.

2. There is a considerable discrepancy between these results and those obtained by eleven-year-olds over the past three years since the 15% limit on admissions of non-Catholic pupils was removed. Although there had been some problems with the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2, this had been very successfully dealt with by the school. When they visited the school in June 2001, HMI could say that 'Much of the most effective teaching was in Key Stage 2'. However, the impact of the increased access noted above on overall outcomes is very significant as shown by last years Year 6. A high proportion of the pupils who joined this year group in Years 3 to 6 were lower achieving children with many on the special needs register. In addition, nine Year 6 pupils had been in England for less than two years, five for less than a year, almost all of whom spoke no English when they joined. Much improved procedures for tracking the progress of individual pupils show that boys and girls who took both sets of tests at the school did well, achieving the progress expected over the four years and sometimes better.

3. The trend of increasing numbers of pupils joining the school in Key Stage 2 and especially in Year 3 continues to significantly change the attainment profile of pupils in the older classes. Seventeen pupils joined Year 3 from local Infant schools in September 2002, almost all with poor results as seven-year-olds, and more non-English speaking pupils joined the school in the past few months. More recently, a total of eight pupils with a range of language and learning needs have joined Year 2 which will mean that imminent national test results in reading, writing and mathematics will not be as good as in past years ie average instead of above or well above. However, the school's comprehensive tracking records show that pupils throughout the school are making at least sound and often good progress in English and mathematics. This includes pupils with a range of learning difficulties and those for whom English is a second language. As a result, pupils in Year 6 are expected to achieve average levels in both subjects and in science. The promotion of pupils' speaking and listening skills is a feature of the school and these remain overall above average with many pupils well above.

4. Boys and girls in their foundation year have made sound progress and most will achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning before they move into Year 1. Literacy and numeracy skills are well developed. However, with limited access to outdoor play and few opportunities for children to make choices and use their initiative, these aspects of their development are least well developed.

5. Standards in the foundation subjects are largely appropriate for the ages of the pupils concerned with higher standards where teachers have specific expertise in a subject. This is particularly the case in music where the coordinator teaches most classes and performance levels and knowledge and understanding are better than in most schools. Among the other subjects, art is a strength with high standards in many classes, while performance levels in physical education are inconsistent across the school and much lower. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in geography and history is good but this is not reflected in the ordinary quality of work in pupils' books. Very good progress has been made in many aspects of information technology but aspects of control and monitoring data are less well developed.

6. All pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Individual education plans with clear measurable targets are regularly reviewed and new targets set. Evidence from inspection indicates that work is well matched to the needs of all pupils and achievement is good for all groups of pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Boys and girls' attitudes to school and learning are very good. They arrive promptly at the beginning of the day and enjoy coming to school and joining in the many activities it has to offer during the school day. The vast majority of pupils are hard working, proud of their school, enjoy talking about their achievements and the activities they get involved in, and try their best in class. Almost all are very willing to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences in class and group discussions and follow up schoolwork at home. Pupils are articulate, friendly and courteous towards visitors and towards each other. They understand the routines they must follow and carry them out sensibly.

8. With very few exceptions, behaviour both in and out of the classroom is very good. In the classroom this good behaviour makes a strong contribution to learning. Pupils' movement round the school is calm and orderly, they listen intently in assemblies, and playtimes and lunchtimes are calm sociable occasions. Behaviour in class is usually very good and boys and girls understand and abide by class rules. They respond well during the well-organised lunch arrangements, many eating their sandwiches in their own classrooms while others eat in one of the school's two halls. Pupils respect both teaching and non-teaching staff and, where sanctions are needed, they comply properly with the school system.

9. Boys and girls respond very well to the various responsibilities they are given and undertake them sensibly and with pride. Year 6 pupils enjoy their buddy system with boys and girls from the reception classes and there are occasions throughout the school year when these relationships develop. The recently re-activated school council is currently largely run by adults but pupils are shadowing their counterparts in order to take over the responsibility in due course. So far several issues, including the working of the water fountains, have been brought to the attention of the school. However, given the organisation of the school, pupils have few opportunities to use their initiative in class. Boys and girls rarely make choices about what and how they learn or are able to respond to open ended activities which invite them to extend their own learning independently. When this does happen, as in the 'plan, do, record' sessions in the foundation stage, they show just how well they can cope with the responsibility and enjoy the opportunity to take charge of their own learning.

10. Pupils relate very well to each other and to adults working in and visiting the school. A very good feature of the school is the way that newcomers, including the significant number of new pupils in different year groups who arrive speaking very little English, are quickly made to feel very welcome. Boys and girls are quite naturally aware of the needs of their new classmates and soon find ways of making friends and communicating. Pupils obviously value and respect the different cultures and faiths represented in the school and are confident in their own identities. All adults act as excellent role models in this respect and the school's very inclusive ethos is one of its greatest strengths. Pupils fully understand their roles and responsibilities in and around the school and show a growing awareness and appreciation of the contribution made by others.

11. Attendance is good with low authorised absences and hardly any unauthorised. Pupils arrive promptly in the morning and settle down to a quiet activity without any undue delay. The youngest pupils drop name cards into designated boxes to indicate what their lunch arrangements are. Registration is carried out quickly and efficiently and a prompt start to the day is the norm.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. When the school was inspected in September 1999, the report said that 'The quality of teaching has declined and is now unsatisfactory overall' because of a lack of confidence in teaching some subjects, low expectations and unsatisfactory planning. Few lessons were very good and 28% were unsatisfactory or poor. It was a key issue at the time. After HMI's last visit in June 2001, their report noted no unsatisfactory lessons, a good percentage of better lessons with one very good and the positive impact that teaching had on pupil's learning and progress, especially in Key Stage 2. The improvement in teaching has continued so that now more than two-thirds of lessons are at least good with 29% very good and excellent.

13. Overall this represents a further good improvement especially in Key Stage 2 where teaching is now very good. Other strengths include the facts that:

- more than half the teaching staff achieved at least one very good lesson, a third achieved more than one
- very good or excellent teaching was observed in all subjects except physical education and in all year groups except the foundation year
- almost all teaching in Years 5 and 6 was at least good with two thirds of lessons in each very good
- more than a third of lessons were very good in English, mathematics and science,
- all four music lessons were very good as were the extra music activities observed

14. Several whole school factors have contributed to this higher quality picture, including:

- the effective implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies
- taking a lead from the two strategies, learning objectives are made very clear at the beginning of all lessons and most include summing-up sessions to review learning
- regular planning meetings ensure that learning objectives for pupils in parallel classes are the same and that good use is made of subject strengths in planning
- the impact of teachers with expertise in the subjects for which they are responsible
- good arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils who find aspects of learning difficult and an increase in the number and the effectiveness of teaching assistants (TAs)
- the upgraded computer suite and associated training which has had a profound effect on the confidence and competence of teachers and pupils in information technology.
- performance management procedures which have added structure and focus to the monitoring of teaching and continuing professional development procedures.
- Pupils very good behaviour, willingness to listen, do what they are asked to do and work together sensibly which greatly enhance their learning

15. Many good examples of the impact of these strengths and factors were observed during the inspection week. The benefits gained from the positive implementation of the literacy and the numeracy strategies can be seen throughout the school. In maths especially, this ensured consistently good and very good teaching with, for example:

- a good, well planned and organised Year 1 lesson by an inexperienced teacher reinforcing pupils' ability to count in 2s, 5s and 10s.
- Year 2 pupils confidently solving word based problems at three different levels thanks to the clear objectives and explanations, very good use of an overhead projector and the very good support provided by a newly qualified teacher.
- pupils in Year 3 working flat out using white boards to count on and back in 10s, inventing their own ways to 'do' maths, competing to do the most and the hardest sums thanks to the enthusiasm and pace of the teaching
- higher attaining Year 6 pupils being 'pushed' by the coordinator in terms of speed of working and the complexity of the task when revising aspects of multiplication based on equipping a flat.

16. In another very good Year 6 revision lesson, the literacy coordinator whisked the class through the various aspects of instructional texts which they had learned. They rapidly worked through features such as bullet points, technical vocabulary, sub-headings etc, to ensure they understood before the teacher set and prompted the challenge of working to a tight deadline to complete the design of a brochure. A Year 4 teacher's very good subject knowledge and very

good use of a digital presentation helped her pupils to understand and 'have a go' at producing their own version of kennings (a Norwegian form of poetry). Clear expectations, instructions and feedback using pupils' efforts led to very good learning and some very creditable attempts.

17. An excellent poetry session involving all three Year 5 classes demonstrated the value of teachers planning and working together. As the culmination of a unit of work, this showed the enthusiasm and knowledge all the year group have gained from the experience as well as the high quality of the poetry produced and the performance levels shown. Pupils own evaluations and constructive suggestions demonstrated just how confident they are in their own understanding of the topic. A further demonstration by the same year group when all the staff joined in a role play of a flight to St Lucia as an introduction to the topic was obviously enjoyed by pupils and adults alike.

18. Very good lessons by the art, design technology and information technology coordinators illustrate the point about subject expertise but the best example of this is in music where the coordinator is a specialist who has taught all the classes in Years 2 to 6 for several years. The impact this has had on the performance levels, enthusiasm for music and knowledge and understanding gained by all pupils is plain to see in lessons, instrumental sessions, performances and singing in assemblies. Her contribution to all this during the inspection is well documented in the music section to follow, but the longer term contribution to the cultural life of the school is outstanding.

19. Overall the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The individual education plans are working documents, used effectively by teachers and support staff to track progress and as a record of achievement. Support assistants also keep careful records of individual pupils' progress in their feedback books. Good support is given in class and also when pupils are occasionally withdrawn from lessons for additional support or for specific programmes such as speech therapy. Learning support assistants (LSAs) are provided with teachers' planning and copies of their individual education plans so that they have a good understanding of the needs of these pupils. Behaviour management, for pupils who find it difficult to conform to the school rules, is good and teachers use a range of strategies, including behaviour logs, diaries and charts, well to support these pupils. The combined attention of teachers and LSAs has a positive impact upon the good progress that these pupils make.

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

20. The quality and range of learning opportunities in years one to six is good. Overall the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and has a positive impact on learning, by pupils across the range of subject areas, and the standards achieved. The curriculum effectively meets the statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects, religious education and collective worship. Suitable emphasis is placed on the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and their use across the curriculum is being developed. Good use is made of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and both are having an effective impact on the standards in English and mathematics. The foundation stage curriculum is largely appropriate and relevant to their needs, but would benefit from more crisply focused shorter topics that integrated the areas of learning, the development of clearly defined opportunities to use the outdoor area, and planning that provides sufficient opportunities for children to learn independently.

21. In addition to the national literacy and national numeracy strategies, schemes are in place for all subjects based on nationally produced guidance, and that for religious education is based on the scheme, 'Here I am', recommended by the Diocesan Advisors. Good planning arrangements ensure adequate coverage and that parallel classes receive a similar diet. This continues the improvement noted in the last inspection. The use of information technology to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, an area identified by the school for improvement since the last inspection, is developing well. Specialist music teaching contributes to the good standards achieved and the very good range of opportunities for pupils to perform. Special weeks,

such as those for science and numeracy, and working with an artist at the Art Gallery enrich the curriculum, as do the range of visits.

22. Arrangements to ensure equality of access and opportunity are good. Although a Catholic community, the school's policies and practices are inclusive of the significant number of pupils and their parents from other faiths and traditions. All staff are aware of the issues involved and many good examples were seen of ways that teachers vary their methods of teaching to meet pupils' differing needs more effectively so that all pupils are fully included. Both staff and pupils are valued by all, and visitors are made to feel very welcome. The quality and care put into the environment reflects the pride in the school felt by all staff and pupils.

23. The provision for pupils' personal, social, and health education (PSHE) is well planned, but, although there are some strong features, it is not consistent across the school. The policy clearly addresses the issues of sex and relationship education, drug misuse and citizenship. 'Circle time', where pupils have the opportunity to discuss issues relevant to their own experiences, supports the very good relationships, behaviour and personal development seen throughout the school but is not used consistently across the school.

24. Provision for pupils who find learning and conforming difficult is good. The school is fully committed to inclusion and learning support assistants provide the pupils with good help in the classroom to clarify points and to support them with their tasks. However, most of this is provided during literacy and numeracy lessons and some pupils find it difficult to cope in other lessons. Pupils who find conforming difficult are carefully monitored and have detailed targets to help them improve and work appropriately with the rest of the class.

25. The school makes good provision for extracurricular activities. Although 21% of parents were not satisfied with the provision, it is hard to see what more the school can do, given the large numbers of pupils and the numbers who live some distance away and/or travel home by buses which leave immediately after school. A number of activities are run immediately before and after school as well as at lunchtimes which compensate for this. Recent clubs have included netball, chess, Irish dancing, French for younger children and Team Elite. Most provision is for pupils in the top four year groups, although younger pupils can attend the football club as well as music making activities. Numbers have to be limited to allow the activity to be manageable by the staff available. All pupils have a good number of offsite visits and visitors during school time, and Year 6 go on a residential trip to a nearby outdoor activity centre. A large-scale biannual musical production involves all members of Years 5 and 6, and the school choir and orchestra are very large and successful enterprises. Staff strongly encourage pupils to participate in after-school activities elsewhere, and provide information on these to parents. The school provides a homework club in the mornings and is applying for permission to set up after-school care and a holiday activities club.

26. Relationships with partner institutions are satisfactory. The school is in contact with twenty pre-school providers and invites prospective pupils and their parents to visit before they join the school. Well-established arrangements for transfer to two secondary schools are in place, and the school is hoping to develop curriculum liaison with at least one of these. It has well-developed links with the other Catholic primary schools in the city, and works closely together with them to develop new curriculum initiatives and plan joint events.

27. Links with the community make a sound contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. Local people visit to talk about their life experiences and parents from other cultures have shared aspects of their heritage. Elderly and disabled local residents are entertained at Christmas with singing, the nativity play and teas. The school is much involved with events in the three linked Catholic parishes, and encourages pupils to participate in these. The orchestra and choir take part in city musical events and competitions. Staff make good use of local facilities to enrich the curriculum, particularly through regular visits to workshops at the city art gallery and contact with an environmental studies centre. It participated in a music and science project involving a local orchestra and science study centre. Local businesses provide raffle prizes and general support for the school, and an optician and a vet came to talk to pupils during Science

Week. The school has an especially well-developed link with HSBC which sponsored water bottles for every child and provided the funding to train 'reading partners' to work with individuals and groups. It will be funding training for 'number partners'. At Christmas pupils decorated giant Christmas trees at the firm's offices.

28. The school's strong Catholic ethos ensures that provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Collective worship makes a significant contribution and opportunities are provided during the day for thoughtful quietness in which pupils may reflect their feelings, thoughts and concerns. A Prayer Corner with prayer board and book for pupils' prayers is a prominent feature in each classroom. Pupils are encouraged to recognise that we are all different with differing qualities and to show respect for other people. Collective worship is often referred to throughout the week in other areas of learning. Close links with the local churches with the priests visiting the school regularly adds to the spiritual dimension offered. Pupils acquire knowledge and insight into Christian values and beliefs, and those of some of the world's other great religions. Work in other subject areas such as the youngest children watching cress seed germinate and grow as well as observing the natural changes in the weather provide an opportunity for pupils to recognise wonder in the natural world. However, there are few examples of opportunities being provided across the curriculum which have enabled pupils to develop their spiritual awareness.

29. Provision for the development of pupils' moral and social skills and attitudes is very good and a strength of the school. A moral code is being positively and sensitively encouraged throughout the school. Pupils know how to achieve rewards, which promote fairness and consistency. They value the achieving of class credits as well as the Headteacher's Award for good behaviour, work and acts of kindness which is presented in assembly and helps to raise their self-esteem. The school is very successful in teaching the difference between right and wrong. Older pupils discuss and write persuasively against such issues as 'circus creatures'. Pupils are involved in contributing to nominated charities and good causes each year. The personal, social and health education programme makes a strong contribution to the provision of moral education through the use of circle time. It enables pupils to share problems, as well as provide support and respect for other peoples' opinions and customs. Pupils are provided with a safe and open learning environment in which they can express their views. Adults within the school provide very good role models through the provision of a caring ethos and respect and concern for one another.

30. Pupils are encouraged to recognise social skills and attitudes as a key value on which community life is based. They are encouraged to work cooperatively by working in pairs or small groups, sharing ideas and helping each other. Pupils are good at accepting responsibility in class and older pupils have opportunities to be prefects and librarians and take their role seriously. The newly re-formed school council provides an opportunity for the pupils to share opinions and to make democratic decisions displaying care for their surroundings. Pupils in year six regularly partner children in the younger classes to provide good support in their learning. Residential visits provide opportunities for further team building and the value of working together is emphasised through such activities as raft building, abseiling and kayaking. Positive links between a local branch of a national firm and the pupils have been established providing further opportunities for pupils to interact with adults. Boys and girls from other cultural backgrounds and those with special educational needs are well integrated into the school.

31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils' awareness of their own culture is acquired through the programme of many and varied visits made to places of educational interest related to the curriculum. For example, pupils have visited Southampton art gallery and worked with a local artist as well as visiting the museum and other places of historic interest. Their English cultural heritage is studied through such areas as literature with the study of Shakespeare and folk tales, also history and the study of the Romans. Local people share their experiences with the pupils of life during World War II. A local author, an illustrator and musicians visit the school providing specialist learning as well as fun. Pupils are provided with opportunities to nurture particular gifts and talents, especially in music and drama.

32. The culture of other countries is studied within the curriculum. For example, comparisons of other faiths in religious education, the study of St Lucia in geography, and European dances are learnt in physical education lessons. Links are made between literature and art, for example pupils studying the 'Ancient Mariner' interpreted the story in art in the style of Edvard Munch's 'The Scream'. A study of the work of Escher results in paintings in a similar style. The visit of African drummers and parents from other countries sharing their culture with groups of pupils enhanced the pupils' cultural education. Festivals of other cultures are also included within pupils' learning and celebrated throughout the year. The school reinforces their cultural awareness through the use of good quality displays and artefacts. However, more could be done to explore the cultures which are directly related to the many and diverse countries represented within the school community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The importance of attendance and punctuality is strongly promoted to parents, who are asked to phone the school on the first day of their child's absence. If nothing is heard, the office staff telephone. The playground gate is locked at the start of school, and thereafter all arrivals have to come via the office, which records their time of arrival. Punctuality is regularly monitored. A scanner and computerised recording system are used to monitor patterns of attendance of individuals or groups. The educational welfare officer visits regularly to check the registers and discuss any problems. Registration is carried out quickly, quietly and efficiently in all classes, being completed within the first five minutes of school time.

34. Child protection procedures, and those for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of everyone in the school community, are very good. Both the headteacher and deputy head are fully trained child protection liaison officers. One of them always attends case conferences. Staff are fully briefed on procedures when they join the school and all staff are regularly updated as necessary. A one-day first-aid course is run for all staff biannually. All staff are trained in the use of epipens, asthma control, diabetes, and epilepsy care. Medicines are kept in a locked store. Of the six fully-qualified first aiders, one is always on the premises during school hours. A board in the staffroom identifies all pupils with significant medical concerns, and a record is also provided for class teachers. There are first aid points all round the school site, and all first aid administered is recorded and reported to parents.

35. The school has a good system for reporting suspected health and safety hazards using a carbonated pre-printed pad. Pupils are encouraged to report any concerns. The health and safety coordinators, a governor and the caretaker carry out a termly health and safety walk of the site. All staff and full governor meetings include a health and safety reporting slot, when the most recent site walk is followed up. The school holds regular fire drills and fire equipment is checked annually by an outside contractor, as are physical education and electrical equipment. The two-day staff induction period every September includes a health and safety guidance session. The site is patrolled out of hours by a security guard, and there is very little graffiti or vandalism. Local residents keeping a friendly eye on the premises are quick to report any suspected problems.

36. The arrangements made for monitoring and improving behaviour are very good. The behaviour policy gives clear guidance to staff on the sanctions and rewards to be employed, and emphasises that discipline should be overwhelmingly positive rather than negative. All staff are trained in behaviour management, and it is emphasised that different strategies are necessary for dealing with different children. An anger management training scheme involving two staff and six pupils with their parents was introduced this year: this will be repeated involving different staff next year. School and class rules are prominently displayed around the building. All lunchtime supervisory staff have had behaviour management training and are linked to particular classes so that they can build individual relationships. Pupils who display unsatisfactory behaviour miss part of their playtime. Those who behave particularly well are rewarded with stickers, certificates, mentions in assembly and in the newsletter.

37. Procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are good. The coordinator has provided a planned scheme of work, monitors annotated planning, and is collecting a portfolio of annotated work to help with planning and to disseminate good practice. . She is managing a 'Civic Award' pilot scheme for younger pupils. The scheme of work includes drugs, sex and safety education, and is closely linked to the school's ethos as well as to planning for religious education and science. The delivery of lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education is inconsistent between classes. More use could be made of role-play, simple trust-building exercises and visual aids to support learning. The need for confidentiality when difficult subjects are discussed needs to be clearly stressed, and pupils in a Year 5 lesson about how to deal with name-calling were not reminded to tell an adult. However, some lessons were used very well to reinforce the school's values and help personal development, as in a Year 2 lesson where pupils from diverse backgrounds wrote positive things about themselves on cardboard hands cut out of different coloured card. 'We all have different skin colours, but we all have unique fingerprints'. Class teachers write a statement on each pupil's personal and social development before they transfer to their next class.

38. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and these have been maintained since the HMI visit in 2001. Thorough assessment carried out in English, mathematics and science is used effectively to set targets for individuals and year groups. Test results are carefully analysed to identify any differences in attainment of pupils from different groups such as ethnic minority groups, pupils with special educational needs and pupils who arrive at the school during Years 3 to 6. Evidence gained from test results is fed back to subject coordinators to support them with implementing strategies to raise standards in their subjects. Individual and group targets are shared with pupils, displayed clearly in books or at pupils' tables as a constant reminder of the areas in need of improvement. Parents are informed of the targets so they can support their children in their work.

39. Assessment procedures are in place for all other subjects except physical education. Teachers note which pupils achieve, exceed or do not achieve the expected National Curriculum levels for their age. This information is used well to plan work to meet the needs of all pupils. The school makes good use of information from exemplification folders in each subject to support them with their assessments. Teachers have worked hard to improve their understanding of what is expected for each National Curriculum level of attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science and this is having a positive impact on standards. This has mainly taken place within year groups or key stages but the school plans to have whole school discussions so that all teachers have a better understanding of all National Curriculum expected levels of attainment. The overall procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good. Teachers keep careful records of regular assessments and use them effectively to predict expected levels of attainment by the end of the year. The school has recently adopted a computer program to collate data and provide a system for tracking individual pupil's progress.

40. Procedures for identifying pupils who find learning or conforming difficult are good. They are identified as soon as possible so that the appropriate support can be provided for them. Their progress is carefully monitored through targets on their individual education plans, which are regularly reviewed. The special needs coordinator (SENCO) also regularly analyses test and assessment results to track individual pupil's attainment and progress. Very good links have been formed with other agencies, which provide support for pupils and advice to teachers and the SENCO, so that the needs of all pupils are met. Annual reviews are appropriately completed and all agencies involved in the pupil's education contribute. Provision for pupils with statements of special needs is good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has good, effective links with parents. It always encourages parents to get involved in its activities, and warmly encourages them to attend class assemblies, school productions, social and information events. Teachers are readily accessible at the end of school, and the headteacher can be seen at short notice. The school office staff provide a friendly and efficient 'public face' for the school. Pupils are drawn from a wide area, and many arrive by bus: the school therefor uses a version of the Ofsted questionnaire to canvass parent opinion. The

results are analysed and fed back to parents. The school runs a homework club from 8am which is of great benefit to working parents. A termly meeting is held for parents volunteering to help in school. Much information is given about Catholic activities in Southampton generally and in the three linked parishes in particular. Parents are invited to participate in the school's special activities in Advent and Lent, and a school prayer group is held just after the end of lessons which is open to staff, parents, children and governors. New parents attend a 'welcome' meeting, and during the Year 6 residential visit a daily report is put on the school's website for parents.

42. Information provided for parents is good overall with a very full weekly newsletter (numbered and dated), and noticeboards for parents around the site. Two parent consultation evenings are held annually, together with an information evening, most recently on numeracy teaching. Special events are held, for instance Science Week and a Family Numeracy Games evening, which are designed to be interesting for the whole family. The clear and helpful prospectus and governors' report fulfil statutory requirements and the school website is regularly updated with news and photographs. Parents are sent an annual information pack on the curriculum to be covered and homework arrangements. The guidance on homework is particularly clear and helpful. Homework books for the older pupils have detailed instructions for a whole term's homework stuck into the front. The work is varied in nature, the books are regularly marked and comments are given. Younger pupils do daily reading and spelling tasks, and occasionally have a special extra task to accomplish. Parents are given very clear help on how to support homework.

43. Pupils' annual reports are of satisfactory quality. They are many pages long, consisting of detailed target sheets (often for more than one National Curriculum level) for literacy and numeracy, and very full details on the curriculum covered for other subjects. This is in itself the first cause of confusion. Secondly, too much use is made of jargon. Phraseology such as 'letter orientation' and 'decoding language' will not be familiar to all parents. Thirdly, the comments on individuals sometimes deal more with their personal or social development than with their attainment in the subject concerned. For instance, 'he demonstrates clear leadership quality but needs to listen more' as a comment on a pupil's progress in physical education does not tell a parent whether his or her child is better at football or gymnastics. Fourthly, despite all the detail, it is impossible for a parent to know whether a child is working at, above or below the expected level of their year group. Reports include a list of offsite visits and visitors, attendance details, and comments by the child, their teacher and the headteacher on their progress during the year. Parents are encouraged to add their own remarks.

44. The school has worked very hard to improve the links with parents whose children require additional support. The SENCO has set up a timetable for parents to meet with her and their child's teacher to discuss targets on their child's individual education plan. Parents unable to attend are contacted and the individual education plans are sent to them. She has identified this as an area that still needs improvement and also plans to involve pupils in these meetings. This will enable both parents and pupils to be more involved in target setting and to enable parents to be more proactive in supporting their child at home.

45. The vast majority of parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. Virtually all come to parent consultation evenings, and a good proportion attend other school information events – nearly 80% came to the Family Numeracy Games evening. The overwhelming majority of parents help their children by providing them with appropriate facilities and support for their homework, and virtually all homework set gets done. Parents asked to supply special resources to support learning (such as 'old boots and shoes') do so willingly. They also provide expertise when requested, for instance during Science Week. The majority of parents, particularly in the lower age groups, hear their children read regularly. Attendance rate is good and very few families take holidays in term time.

46. Parents have a satisfactory impact on the work of the school, particularly through those parents who are governors, and those who organise fundraising activities through the Friends' Association, which raises in excess of £5,000 a year. Five parents have been trained to act as 'reading partners' and ten others help in various practical ways with resources and library work.

Several help to run the Saturday morning football clubs. Parents also help with special events like Book Week and support offsite visits. Support for social functions is high, although few can spare the time to help organise them. Many parents live some distance away from the school or are prevented from helping by work or family commitments. Parents from ethnic minorities are regularly invited to provide culinary specialities, talk about their festivals or bring in artefacts to their children's classes.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The last full inspection of Springhill School in September 1999 found that the head was 'not providing clear leadership and direction', that the 'management of the curriculum' was unsatisfactory and that the school did not 'plan its finances effectively'. This was a key issue. By June 2001, the school was said to be 'effectively led' with a 'comprehensive range of monitoring strategies'. Senior managers, subject leaders and governors were all 'taking increasing responsibility making good use of the size of the school to advantage in creating management structures. It was no longer an issue. Since then, under the positive and optimistic leadership of the head, governors, senior managers and coordinators have continued to develop their expertise, procedures and influence for the good of the school community and especially its pupils. Overall leadership and management are now very good and the school is in a very good position to move on and thrive.

48. To have achieved all this, rebuilt morale and confidence, implemented the many fundamental national initiatives which coincided with this, negotiated and managed the building programme and managed the sudden change in the mid-year intake to the school is a fitting testament to the resilience, sheer hard work and commitment of the head and all the staff. The contribution made by the head, very well supported by the deputy and assistant heads, has been outstanding. She has left no stone unturned in her determination to ensure that the school gets the recognition it deserves for the care and high quality provision it provides for its pupils.

49. An important factor in this has been the way the management structure and the leadership roles of other members of staff have been built up in order that they can make their own contribution to the development of the school. Curriculum and other leaders are now strong influences for good in their areas of responsibility, which has a noticeable effect on standards in many areas. However, to increase their impact, subject managers in the foundation subjects need sufficient planned time in other classrooms to monitor and support what is going on in their area of responsibility.

50. Management of special needs provision is very good. The special needs coordinator (SENCO) has worked very hard to set up very good systems following the long-term absence of the previous SENCO. She has sought support from various agencies for her own personal development to enable her to support her colleagues, which she does very well. Her monitoring is very thorough and she has a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils. She manages the learning support assistants (LSAs) very effectively and provides regular training for them. A feedback book for the LSAs to use has been successfully introduced as a record of individual pupil's progress towards achieving their targets. This ensures that LSAs are well briefed by the teachers with whom they are working. The SENCO is very well supported by the special needs governor and the governing body is kept well informed about SEN provision in the school.

51. Few of the governing body were in place at the time of the last full inspection when aspects of governance were criticised. It is to their great credit that, under the strong leadership of the chair, remaining governors and relative newcomers have been very active participants in the improvement agenda, developing their own roles and procedures while supporting the school through difficult times. Governors are very supportive and committed to the school. Many bring considerable expertise to the governing body and all are very keen for the school to succeed. In this aided school, their contribution to the on-going improvements to the accommodation has been considerable and much appreciated. They have a well-defined and understood structure of committees and individual responsibilities and a clear programme related to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Governors take their monitoring role seriously visiting when possible and receiving comments from staff on the effectiveness of various current policy

developments or items of expenditure. As individuals and as a body they know their responsibilities and their school. In all the above improvements, the head has played a crucial role well supported by the local education authority and, as a result, the governing body is making a good contribution towards the success of the school.

52. Monitoring and evaluation have high priorities in the school community with the lead taken by the head and management team who keep a very close watch on what is happening. Standards, classroom practice and the effectiveness of policies and procedures are kept under review by the staff and governors responsible. Extensive use is made of information gained from national and optional tests to identify priorities and trends. After successfully completing a pilot scheme to computerise these records, data from the rest of the school will be entered into dedicated software to help in tracking and analysis. The clearly structured, school improvement plan is focused on achieving realistic but challenging targets and involves everyone in the process of deciding what should be included and how effective actions have been. However, the school recognises that the current pattern of significant numbers of pupils from a variety of backgrounds joining the school late means that these targets have to be constantly reviewed to be a useful indicator of the school's success. Individual members of staff are encouraged to think about their own performance through professional interviews and professional development has a high priority.

53. The present leadership has been effective in maintaining staffing levels and other commitments while still improving the building and establishing a good range of resources in the school. Good use is made of grants and the school seeks opportunities to improve its facilities and resources. The school has actively sought grants to help develop many aspects of the school's provision, the latest being the matched funding which will significantly improve information technology resources in the school.

54. Office staff administer good systems of financial control very effectively, support teachers very well and the 'front desk' provides an efficient and welcoming introduction to the school for parents and visitors. The budget is monitored regularly and useful financial reports are made available for the Head and Governors. Good use of new technology is made in the running of the school, and the administration systems help ensure its smooth daily operation. Governors oversee the financial practice in the school, whereby the head and her administrative team seek best value for supplies and services with comparative tenders being sought for significant spending decisions. The headteacher and governors are prudent in making spending decisions and make best use of the budget to support educational priorities. During a period when they have been required to be prudent they have held fast to the principle of using money available to supply the best staffing and resources possible for the pupils.

55. Staffing is good with a good match of teachers' qualifications and the demands of the curriculum, and a good mix of new and more experienced teachers amongst the staff. A music specialist comes in for three days a week, and a computer technician and a librarian give additional support. Support staff have had very good training, both in-house and by specialist courses and they give a very good level of support to pupils with special needs. However, pupils' learning could be enhanced if there were more learning support staff to work with them in lessons other than literacy and numeracy.

56. The provision of resources is good overall with those for history and special education needs very good. Resources for the foundation stage are satisfactory overall but provision for outside play needs improvement. Currently unsatisfactory resources for information communication technology will be greatly improved with the imminent arrival of the dedicated facilities. Storage is well used and resources are clearly labelled and accessible. All resources have been recently audited and coordinators know what is available and where to find it. The school has its own properly maintained minibus provided with seatbelts.

57. Accommodation is now of a good standard and, to judge from the completed renovation of the Year 3 area, will be of a very good standard when the current building and demolition works are completed by the end of this year. The site is very spacious and attractive for a city centre school, and the school is particularly lucky to have retained its own playing field, shaded by

mature trees. Of the four hard play areas, two will be enlarged when the building works and demolition currently in progress have finished and two have adventure trails set up with safety flooring underfoot. An environmental area will be created. The staff car park is of a reasonable size for the numbers involved. Portions of the site where demolition and building were taking place were securely fenced off. The school has twenty-one classes: most of these are housed in rooms of appropriate size for the numbers on roll and all the permanent accommodation is in good condition and well maintained.

58. An attractive new reception and office area has been completed since the last inspection which make a very good impression for visitors. There are two good-sized halls, several rooms suitable for small group work and a larger room suitable for meetings. The present computer suite is very cramped when a whole class is using it and has insufficient ventilation: however, a purpose-built unit will be installed in the school grounds in the near future. The buildings are suitable for disabled use, being all on one level (except for the large meeting room) and having ramped access routes. The school is clean and attractively decorated, and good use is made of displays.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. To make the most of the opportunities created by the rich cultural and ethnic heritage of many of the families it serves, the improvements to its accommodation and the cheerful self-confidence of its pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff of Springhill School should:

- (1) Develop the curriculum provided for boys and girls in their foundation year to make it more distinct and relevant for the needs of young children in all areas of learning by:
 - ensuring that each activity has specific learning objectives based on the stepping stones for learning and that they are appropriate for and known by each child
 - engaging children in the process of learning by developing existing systems to encourage them to take more responsibility for planning how and when they will undertake the activities provided and make a record of what they have done
 - making the fullest use of all the indoor and outdoor accommodation available for purposeful play activities with clear learning objectives related to the stepping stones especially for physical and creative play

(Paragraphs 4, 20, 56, 61 - 68)
- (2) Build on the start made in making use of and celebrating the heritage, geography and culture of the many countries represented by pupils now in school by:
 - building up a database of information specifically about the backgrounds of all the boys and girls involved to help in identifying opportunities and possibilities
 - incorporating mechanisms for gathering information about the contribution families might be able to make in school as part of the induction process
 - adopting a cross-curricular approach to using this information to give richness and relevance to what pupils learn by modifying planning
 - enhancing the role of the coordinator to include the encouragement and monitoring of this process working with subjects coordinators

(Paragraphs 32, 95 & 114)
- (3) Make the fullest use of the capacity of their pupils to use their own resources to extend their own learning and contribute to the smooth running of the school and their schoolmates welfare by:
 - making it possible for children of all ages to take responsibility for as much of what happens in the classroom as possible so that adults can concentrate on working directly on children's learning
 - giving pupils more choices about the way they work, open ended tasks and the chance to follow self-generated investigations or research so that they can stretch their thinking, their skills and their initiative as far as they are able
 - empowering boys and girls on the school council to;
 - run their own meetings and manage their own business
 - introduce and carry through initiatives of their own choosing

- manage their own budget by deciding priorities, ensuring value for money and making transactions under supervision
- make a contribution to whole school development planning
(Paragraphs 9, 77, 81 & 82)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- the level of in-class support provided for teachers and pupils is lower than in many schools
(Paragraphs 24 & 55)
- the quality of pupils work in the humanities does not reflect pupils knowledge and understanding in the subjects
(Paragraphs 5 & 101)
- the profile of physical education and the quality of work produced is not as high as that seen in other subjects
(Paragraphs 115 - 118)
- coordinators of the foundation subjects have little time to evaluate what is happening in their subjects during lessons
(Paragraphs 49 & 104)
- the personal, social and health education programme is not applied consistently across the school
(Paragraph 23)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

100

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

26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 28 | 43 | 25 | 2 | | |
| Percentage | 1 | 28 | 43 | 25 | 2 | | |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|--|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | | 560 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | | 56 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 1 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | | 77 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 62 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 24 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 21 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.3 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

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 | 37 | 37 | 74 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 29 | 35 | 37 |
| | Girls | 33 | 33 | 34 |
| | Total | 62 | 69 | 71 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 84 (91) | 93 (96) | 96 (96) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 32 | 32 | 35 |
| | Girls | 34 | 34 | 35 |
| | Total | 66 | 66 | 70 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 89 (93) | 93 (95) | 95 (96) |
| | 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 | 39 | 38 | 77 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 23 | 25 | 31 |
| | Girls | 26 | 25 | 33 |
| | Total | 49 | 50 | 64 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 64 (79) | 65 (72) | 83 (85) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71) | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 31 | 33 | 30 |
| | Girls | 31 | 29 | 31 |
| | Total | 62 | 62 | 61 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 82 (n/a) | 81 (n/a) | 79 (n/a) |
| | 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 | 318 | | |
| White – Irish | 21 | | |
| White – any other White background | 37 | | |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 10 | | |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 6 | | |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 18 | | |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 20 | | |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian | 20 | | |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani | 7 | | |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 1 | | |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 19 | | |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 3 | | |
| Black or Black British – African | 5 | | |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | | | |
| Chinese | 4 | | |
| Any other ethnic group | 2 | | |
| No ethnic group recorded | 1 | | |

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

Financial information

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

| | |
|--|-------|
| Number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 23.25 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 24.1 |
| Average class size | 26.6 |

Education support staff: YR– Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 16 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 322 |

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year | 2002 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 1012462 |
| Total expenditure | 952535 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 17705 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 10904 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 59927 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 6.5 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 5.5 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 201 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 560 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 61 | 36 | 3 | 1 | |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 50 | 44 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 42 | 54 | 4 | | 1 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 34 | 47 | 13 | 5 | 3 |
| The teaching is good. | 56 | 40 | 2 | | 2 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 39 | 40 | 19 | 2 | 1 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 56 | 37 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 53 | 44 | 2 | 1 | |
| The school works closely with parents. | 43 | 44 | 10 | 3 | 1 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 48 | 43 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 56 | 37 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 33 | 41 | 17 | 4 | 5 |

Other issues raised by parents

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

60. Children start school in the September of the year in which they are five and most are attending full time by the end of November. Currently attainment on entry for most children is just below the levels expected for those of this age. All children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress and by the time they enter Year 1 of the National Curriculum most of the children are achieving the Early Learning Goals as expected for their age. This has been successfully maintained since the HMI report in 2001. Management of the Foundation Stage is good and the coordinator has a detailed action plan for improvement in both provision and for raising the children's attainment in each area of learning.

61. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Lessons are planned in detail, appropriately addressing the Early Learning goals. A good range of learning activities is provided for the children organized through a rotation system. However it is not always clear from the planning how these activities are adapted to meet the needs of children of different abilities. The rotation system does not sufficiently provide the children with stimulating integrated learning experiences, based on a wide range of themes, often seen in reception classes. Teachers manage the children very well and as a result behaviour is good and children concentrate well in lessons. Where teaching is good, praise is used effectively to motivate the children, engage them in learning and to promote self-esteem. Teachers are beginning to use parts of the literacy and numeracy strategies to prepare children for Year 1 but some who are ready for a longer session do not currently have this opportunity. A small group of children who are in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class during the afternoons do not have the same opportunities as the children in reception because the afternoon sessions are based more on the requirements of the National Curriculum than the Foundation curriculum.

62. Good induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly into the routines of school. Several meetings for parents explain expectations of the children's personal and social skills before they start school, followed by more detailed curriculum meetings once they have settled in. Children are invited to spend some time in school before they start and they are able to start part-time, building to full-time depending on the needs of the children. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers use baseline assessment procedures recommended by the authority to adapt planning and to set individual targets for the children. These are shared with parents during consultation meetings. Teachers also keep their own on-going assessments and observation notes that build up a profile of each child's progress in each area of learning which is used satisfactorily to track the attainment and progress of each child. Currently teachers and learning support assistants (LSA) use weekly plan-do-review sessions to make detailed observations but this is not a consistent feature of everyday practice.

Personal, Social And Emotional Development

63. All children make satisfactory progress in their personal development and by the beginning of Year 1 most are achieving the early learning goals. During weekly plan-do-review sessions, children show they can take responsibility for their own learning. They decide which activity they want to do and share this with the rest of the class. Knowing how many children are allowed in each area, they move to another activity if too many are using the equipment at the same time. However, children have too few opportunities to plan their own activities and the teacher directs most work. Boys and girls very willingly help each other to tidy equipment away at the end of lessons, share equipment and show a keen interest in activities. They self-register and settle promptly to the daily routines and the planned early morning activities. Good support from LSAs enables those children who find conforming or learning difficult to listen carefully and take part in discussions. Children respond well to the school's behaviour strategies, particularly having their

names put on the 'golden board' for good behaviour.

Communication, Language And Literacy

64. By the end of the foundation stage most children make satisfactory progress and are achieving the early learning goals. Most answer questions confidently in complete sentences and interact well with each other. For example, in the role-play area children take on the roles of the doctor, nurse and receptionist in the 'dolls' hospital' with aplomb. During a 'show and tell' session children were well able to share their news. They listen attentively to stories and respond appropriately to questions about them. Most write their own names. When writing their news and stories about 'A Magic Bean', higher attaining children write simple sentences usually spelling keywords correctly. Average children begin to form simple sentences, spelling some keywords accurately and using familiar letters to communicate meaning. Lower attaining children communicate through a series of familiar letters and can tell an adult what they have written. Many identify special features of non-fiction books and higher attaining children use the 'contents page'. Both higher and average attaining children talk confidently about their favourite stories and use a range of strategies to read simple text accurately. Lower attainers talk about the pictures using short phrases and are beginning to recognize repeated phrases in the story.

65. Children who find learning difficult make good progress because of the good support provided daily for them by learning support assistants in the classroom. A specialist teacher satisfactorily supports children with English as an additional language individually for one session each week during which time unfamiliar vocabulary is explained to them. As a result these children also make good progress.

Mathematical Development

66. By the time the children start Year 1, most achieve the expected early learning goals in this area of learning. Many count beyond ten and to relate addition to combining two groups of objects. Most can explain how they 'count on' to add two numbers. They also use this method when they double two single digit numbers. They recognize the numbers on a telephone dial and count the number of cubes used to make a repeated pattern. Most can name simple two-dimensional shapes and put objects in order of size from shortest to tallest. They begin to interpret simple block graphs. For example, they see from the graph, which is the tallest and shortest child in the class. Boys and girls recognize and use money and during 'maths week' were able to take a trip on a local bus and pay their own bus fares.

Knowledge And Understanding Of The World.

67. All children make satisfactory progress and most are already achieving the early learning goals. They can explain whether a toy has to be pushed or pulled to make it move and use this information to build a moving toy from the construction kits. Boys and girls compare things they can do now with things they could do when they were toddlers and recognize how they have changed since they were babies. They sequence pictures of the life cycles of tadpoles and chicks and recognize changes in the weather by keeping a weather diary for a week. Children also describe how cress seeds change as they grow and how chocolate changes when it melts. Computer skills are satisfactory. Most children can use the 'mouse' to choose their game and to play the game, taking turns. Boys and girls use different ways of joining, such as sellotape, staples, split pins and hole punches with tags to join the body of a caterpillar and design and make a slipper for Cinderella. They are beginning to gain an awareness of the cultures of others celebrating 'Chinese New Year' by tasting noodles, joining in a dragon dance and looking at some traditional costumes worn by Chinese ladies. Children have the opportunity to learn about and appreciate their local area during visits from a mobile farm, regular visits from the local police and from their trip on a local bus.

Physical Development

68. Children make satisfactory progress and by the time they start Year 1 have achieved the early learning goals. They handle tools such as pencils and paintbrushes safely and successfully roll and mold clay to make a pot. Most show an appropriate awareness of space and of each other when moving around the hall or playground following instructions. They make long, thin shapes and wide shapes and give each other ideas of how to improve their work. One child

suggested that another could stand on tiptoes to make her shape taller and thinner. Most bounce and catch a ball and throw a ball to a partner. However, few can catch a ball when thrown to them by a partner. They use a bat to control a ball rolling along the floor and change its direction. Outdoors, children ride bikes and use the climbing frame confidently but they have few opportunities to use the outdoor area as part of their daily activities.

Creative Development

69. Most children are achieving the early learning goals and are making satisfactory progress. In music children distinguish between high and low sounds. They sing simple songs and are beginning to explore the different sounds of instruments matching the sound patterns with the music. Boys and girls mix colours and paint pictures of themselves playing with their favourite toys. They use a range of materials to produce attractive pictures of the weather and make observational drawings and paintings of daffodils and teddy bears. At Christmas, children made their own attractive tree decorations using dough and decorating them with glitter. They use their imagination well in role-play activities, confidently take on the roles of doctors and nurses in the 'dolls' hospital', eagerly involving adults in their activities

ENGLISH

70. Inspection evidence indicates that overall pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain average standards, and that achievement is at least good throughout the school. Standards have been maintained since the findings of the previous report. Boys and girls with special needs make good progress in relation to their individual education plans. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and attain above average standards. They are eager and confident to answer questions in class and assemblies with expression and clear diction. Vocabulary used is wide and varied and specific words linked to subjects are used accurately. Pupils listen attentively, concentrating on what teachers and classmates say. They discuss events and develop their imagination within groups which they share with the class. Pupils ask questions of each other and develop their own ideas taking account of others' views. Most develop sustained concentration and older pupils use speaking and listening skilfully to perform to an audience with exciting effect and to a very high standard as shown in a Year 5 poetry session.

71. In reading, the attainment of seven-year-olds is average. They read accurately for a range of purposes and have a growing knowledge of fiction and non-fiction books which they enjoy talking about. Most understand the purpose of punctuation and use a variety of strategies to help with reading unfamiliar words. More able pupils establish meaning from the structure of the text. Pupils read books for information and understand the value and use of the contents, index and glossary pages. They know and understand how to find books in the school library, including the use of the catalogue system. They select books with confidence being aware of how to ensure the book is interesting to them by reading the synopsis on the cover. By the age of eleven pupils have maintained their reading and standards at average levels and display an enthusiasm for literature. They show understanding of a wide variety of texts, identifying features, language and themes within it and discuss authors and their writings with confidence. Pupils offer comparisons of characters and skim and scan text efficiently to remind themselves of the content. They successfully retrieve information from non-fiction books and the Internet.

72. Standards in writing are average throughout the school. Grammar, spelling and punctuation are taught systematically and pupils make good progress, extending the range of formal and informal writing. They develop their awareness of how writers use words and varied sentence structure to hold the reader's attention. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes using suitable formats including stories, poetry, plays, letters and descriptions including the recording of facts and the sequencing of instructions. Pupils in Year 1 make progress with their spelling through the use of sound blends and patterns which enables them to spell many simple words unaided. In Year 2 pupils recognise the importance of planning in story writing. Pupils write in sentences and are becoming familiar with the use of punctuation, including speech marks and exclamation marks. They have a greater awareness of the use of different tenses.

73. Following a visit by a local illustrator, Michael Bragg, Year 3 pupils understand how stories can be told in pictures. Handwriting is clearly formed and legible. In Year 4, a greater awareness of the power of words in writing is encouraged. Different forms of poetry studied and written include the use of alliteration, rhyme, simile and verbs to excite the reader. Handwriting is taught establishing a fluent, well formed and legible style. Pupils have an increasing knowledge of grammar and parts of speech, knowing why and when to use words, such as a wider variety of connectives. Following a visit to Southampton Art Gallery, pupils applied their learning and wrote good explanatory text of the felting work they achieved which included clear, concise and sequenced instructions. Year 5 work extends their sentence structure into more complex writing and pupils understand the effect changing the order of words has on the meaning. Longer pieces of writing use a wide range of vocabulary, which maintain the interest of the reader. Pupils are developing interesting plots in their story line and have an increasingly mature style. They write successfully in the style of authors such as Anne Fine. Punctuation is used correctly and more able pupils use paragraphs more consistently.

74. By the time pupils are eleven they write for a wider audience and use appropriate vocabulary and style. They justify a viewpoint in writing a well-balanced account for a newspaper article, for example when writing persuasively about the plight of 'Circus Creatures'. Vocabulary becomes even more interesting with such words as 'espied' and the use of description which paints a picture, for example 'observed a piece of natural light, which flickered at the end of a misty, dismal tunnel. Paragraphs are well structured and pupils have a good awareness of how moods can change within story writing. Time is spent on drafting and editing skills to improve the interest for the reader. They use word processing skills to help with editing text created as well as impressive skill in the presentation and format required to achieve the task. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress as a result of well-focused teaching and good support. Additional literacy support provided effectively with the help of learning support assistants through small group teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

75. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory with much that is very good, particularly in years five and six. Teachers have a very good understanding of the content and requirements of the curriculum and the Literacy Strategy. Well prepared lessons have clear objectives that are shared with pupils to help focus their learning. Clear explanations have a positive effect on pupils' confidence and interest. They settle promptly to their tasks working independently when required in a very calm atmosphere. Teachers use praise to reward pupils' efforts and to encourage pupils to achieve as well as they are able. They assess pupils understanding and amend planning accordingly. Where teaching is very good teachers are enthusiastic, displaying real interest in the pupils' work and the management of time is efficient. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and their skilful demonstrations of tasks promote high quality responses. Expectations are high and suitably challenging work for all pupils is provided, which maintains their interest and attention. Teachers know how pupils learn.

76. Since the last report resources for reading have been widened to include good quality fiction and non-fiction books for all abilities. Teachers' planning is evaluated by the literacy team and improved as necessary. Focused tracking of pupils with English as an additional language is being undertaken to improve their standards in spoken and written English. Guidance and training for all staff has been undertaken in specific areas of the English curriculum.

77. The literacy team leaders have a clear view of their role. They monitor teaching and learning effectively, ensuring focus areas for improvement are incorporated into planning. Standards of writing have improved but pupils in Years 2,3 and 4 have insufficient opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing. Standards of pupils' work are monitored through a variety of assessment tests used throughout the school and results along with moderated work samples are analysed to set class and individual targets. These enable pupil progress to be tracked systematically. Resources are well selected and used but there are occasions when text is too small to be seen by the class. The visit by a local writer and an illustrator encourages a greater interest and enthusiasm for writing. Pupils make good use of the school library for fiction and to research for information. They understand the cataloguing system and retrieve books quickly and

efficiently. The Librarian makes a valuable contribution to the running of the library in the mornings and at lunchtime by providing support in issuing books and assisting in reference skills. Additional tasks and support are ably provided by pupils in Year 6.

MATHEMATICS

78. The school has sustained above or well above average standards for seven-year-olds over the years while standards for eleven-year-olds have been broadly average. Results for eleven-year-olds in 2002 dipped below average due to the increasing number of pupils, many lower achievers or not speaking English when they join, although an average number of pupils attained the higher level. Pupils who attended the school throughout their primary school education achieved well and late entrants made good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language make good progress due to the support they receive, although the latter group would benefit from more intensive early support, as their mathematical understanding is often good. The national numeracy strategy is well implemented through precise planning in year groups and the sound emphasis on the four sections of the mathematical curriculum: using and applying mathematics, number and algebra, space shape and measure, and handling data. The use of numeracy in other areas of the curriculum, such as time lines in history and data bases in science, and the use of spreadsheets in information and communication technology, is developing well, but is an area that the school has already identified for improvement.

79. Pupils' knowledge, skills and methods of working in mathematics increase and refine as they work through the school and they begin to develop good work habits. Pupils in Year 1 consolidate their counting in 2's, 5's and 10's through a good range of practical activities. They focus well on doubling and halving and higher attaining pupils can translate this into real life problems. In Year 2, pupils use addition and subtraction to check inverse calculations, for example $16-5=11$ and $11+5=16$. More able pupils can solve word problems such as, how many cards are left if there are 9 packets, with 5 cards in each packet and 13 cards are given away? Pupils in Year 3 worked at various strategies for column addition and use methods to check their answers, while year four pupils use Venn and Carroll diagrams to solve problems.

80. With three classes in each year group pupils in Years 5 and 6 are set for mathematics, with one top ability set in each year, and two other equal ability groups. In Year 5, pupils in the top ability group and many in the other two groups are confident in understanding the sixteen points of the compass and know that N to NE is 45° or $1/8$ of a turn. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils practiced SAT questions, calculating from the floor plan of a flat and other information the cost of equipping the kitchen and bathroom. Due emphasis was placed on pupils showing their method and using a calculator.

81. The overall quality of teaching in mathematics is good. Apart from one unsatisfactory lesson, the majority of teaching was good or better with consistently very good teaching in year six. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Where teaching is good or better the pace of the lesson is brisk, with a good mix of direct teaching, explanation and questioning, and opportunities for pupils to use practical activities to reinforce their learning. Teachers use well thought out questions to challenge pupils to explain and demonstrate their thinking to the rest of the class. Lesson planning is very thorough, with lesson objectives shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson. Although daily lesson evaluation helps to inform future teaching, the extent to which the objectives have been achieved is not always discussed with the class at the end of the lesson. The metal oral starter is very well managed in the good and better lessons with pupils displaying their answers enthusiastically on number fans or whiteboards. In less well taught sessions, teachers lack of subject knowledge inhibits the pace.

82. Teachers manage their pupils very well and this contributes to the good progress they make and their very positive attitudes and behaviour in lessons. However, more opportunities could be made for pupils to set their own challenges and become more independent in their learning. Well briefed learning support assistants support individuals and groups effectively. Very good assessment procedures are in place for mathematics. Parents are kept clearly informed at

termly parents meetings of progress against national curriculum levels. Good resources are readily available and pupils are well organised in having equipment to hand. In the less than satisfactory lessons it was unnecessary weaknesses in organisation that slowed the pace of the lesson, leaving pupils in their group work too often off task.

83. The very good coordination of mathematics impacts on the quality of teaching and pupil achievement, through the monitoring of teaching and the data analysis that modifies and informs the curriculum targets. This represents a continued improvement since the last inspection. Individual pupil targets are in their exercise books and they all have an individual mathematics resource pack containing items such as number fans, 100 square and blank laminated number-square for quick number jottings. Parental involvement is encouraged through a numeracy week, a games night, a termly numeracy newsletter and workshops. The school has a realistic action plan for improvement that includes INSET, over time, for all teachers, the monitoring of teaching and improving the quality of medium term planning.

SCIENCE

84. The standard of attainment in science for seven and eleven year olds matches the standards expected nationally and in some cases exceeds them. This matches the findings noted by HMI in June 2001 and shows development from the situation found in the full inspection of 1999. There is improvement in many aspects of the teaching, planning and delivery of the science curriculum, and this is due in most cases to the hard work and enthusiasm of the two subject coordinators and the response of the staff. Pupils are provided with a comprehensive programme of science that enables them to acquire knowledge and understanding of the world around them, of materials, living things and physical processes. The school has focused its INSET on an investigative approach, regular assessment is used and plans include better pupil tracking through the development of the assessment system. Good quality marking is a strong feature of the work in science in the school.

85. Results for end of Key Stage tests show steady progress, last year attainment by teacher assessment was well above the national expectations. The results for the current Year 2 cohort are not expected to be as high due to the nature of this group, and it should be borne in mind that a significant number of pupils have arrived in the school recently whose current levels of attainment are low. In Key Stage 2, results have been below national expectations until last year when the results in the school matched these expectations, though they were below average when compared with similar schools.

86. Pupils in Key Stage I undertake practical investigations. In a good Year 1 lesson, pupils conducting practical investigations of a range of materials were well prompted by the class teacher in order to use their senses to describe the different materials (at first, unseen, in a feely bag). Having done that, the boys and girls moved on to classifying their own range of materials in an appropriate way, giving reason for their classifications. Pupils in Year 2 worked very well when constructing simple electrical circuits. Their teacher had used an effective wall display to remind them of sources of electricity and they were able to accurately recall relevant facts about the way electricity reaches their homes. Scientific vocabulary was reinforced with ready prepared cue cards. The pupils were shown a very useful demonstration program on the computer that demonstrated the process of wiring an electric circuit, before undertaking the construction of circuits themselves.

87. In a Year 3 class, pupils investigated how shadows are formed. After a good recap of previous learning, one pupil remembered that 'as the sun gets higher the shadows get shorter' while another reminded the class that 'you can only separate yourself from your shadow if you jump in the air'. After a short demonstration, pupils used torches and card to form shadows on their desks and then investigated the relationship between the size of the shadow and the distance the card was from the light source. They recorded their findings on work sheets matched to a range of abilities though there was insufficient time to do more than a couple of recordings. Pupils in Year 4 contributed effectively to a class discussion on electrical conductors, using the electrical wire and crocodile clips to show that some materials will conduct electricity

while others will not. Boys and girls then used planning boards to set up an investigation into electrical conductors and make predictions. A more able group were investigating the reason for using nichrome wire in a dimmer switch. All pupils worked well, ensured that they followed the principle of fair testing and produced good results.

88. A Year 5 class were involved in the dissection of a lily to identify the reproductive organs of a flowering plant. This very real investigation captured the pupils' attention completely and they worked with great care and attention. Having dissected the plant they mounted and labelled the parts of the flower accurately in their science books. This well planned and well delivered lesson was enhanced by the class teacher's effective support of pupils throughout. Year 6 pupils were occupied with revision for their forthcoming national tests. They were taken through work on friction and forces, concentrating on an investigation and the answering of questions by and about the investigation. Evidence from the scrutiny of work shows that they have covered a wide range of scientific topics including detailed investigations into separating materials in liquid by sieving, evaporating, condensing and filtering. A well planned and well written up investigation was made into which metals are magnetic and which are not. They have also conducted thorough investigations about air resistance, constructing simple parachutes and recording the outcomes of their experiment. Pupils' books benefit from a short science agreement that clearly establishes how to organise their work and gives expectations about the standards of work that are needed.

89. The majority of teaching is good with two very good lessons and none unsatisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory and often good. The thorough planning and documentation of the scheme of work ensure that the science curriculum is thoroughly covered. Pupils are enthusiastic in science lessons and they enjoy practical investigations and understand the need for fair testing. They make sensible predictions and discuss outcomes using good reasoning.

90. The subject is well led by two very enthusiastic coordinators who are working hard to raise the profile of science in the school. They have planned units of work that are very supportive to the needs of the teaching staff. Planning files include information on progression and more challenging activities for the more able. The system is kept under constant review and a good action plan is well used to enable the coordinators to keep the development of the subject firmly in focus. Assessment systems and informative pupil tracking systems are to be further developed over the coming months. As with other subjects, there is a specific learning support assistant attached to science who supports the work done by the coordinators. Good corridor displays designed to raise the profile of science in the school include a working lighthouse in Key Stage 1 and a display of famous scientists in Key Stage 2. Last year's very successful science week with a wide range of activities is to become an annual event. There has been a considerable gap between forecast levels of attainment and the outcome of teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 which indicates the need to support staff in Key Stage 1 in moderating pupils' work. While there is good provision for the more able, a closer focus is needed to ensure that the outcomes of the work match these expectations.

ART AND DESIGN

91. Standards of work in art and design, from lessons seen, school displays and work scrutinised are above national expectations. There is good evidence of improvement in art and design, both in the good planning of the subject and in the samples of work kept in the year group portfolios. No judgement of standards in art was made in the HMI inspection of 2001. Of the lessons observed, none were unsatisfactory, with the majority being good and one very good. Pupils' attitudes and responses were enthusiastic and good levels of concentration were a strong feature of the lessons.

92. In a good Year 1 lesson, pupils were given a wide variety of fruit and vegetables to draw and then to make models of from papier mache. They were encouraged to use their senses to describe the different examples and were shown a variety of artists' work to enhance their efforts. The group starting with papier mache made good progress with their models while the rest of the class produced good drawings of the fruit and vegetables. In Year 2, pupils were engaged in a

very well organised session on clay. Having experimented with clay the week before, they recapped the ways to manipulate the material before producing self-designed tiles that were decorated texturally with imprints and designs from classroom apparatus such as scissors and pieces of lego. The good teaching style and clear instructions led to the production of a good variety of decorative tiles.

93. All the Year 3 classes had spent the first day of the inspection week at Southampton Art Gallery working with an artist. The benefit of this visit was very clear in the high standard of work the pupils produced. Concentrating on flower forms and working in hues of one colour, the painting built up a layered effect and was finished with fine detail white stippling applied with a cotton bud. The visit included a tour of the gallery where they were able to look at sculpture. This helped in a good lesson that used a variety of pots, vases and containers that they described and drew, thinking about the form and the making processes involved in producing these pieces. The gallery visit was also used as the basis for a good speaking and listening session in literacy. Pupils in Year 4 were part way through the construction of their own weavings. Initially using a limited colour range, they were producing good pieces, some of which were very well made. They then analysed their work so far in order to prepare for their own designs in the future, thinking about colour and techniques.

94. Year 5 pupils worked very well in a prolonged session of drawing people. Very good teaching enabled the pupils to progress noticeably through a range of activities, studying body shapes and proportion. They had the opportunity to move outside to study each other and work in a larger scale. The overall results of this session were impressive. From a scrutiny of their work, it was clear that Year 6 pupils have experienced a wide range of activities: mixing colours and describing the process, sketches for imaginative paintings and designs for a 'Southampton in Bloom' poster. There was also a very good display of sculpted footwear decorated in the style of Kandinsky and Van Gogh. Boys and girls had also developed self-portraits using flexible mirror paper to produce contortions. These effective pieces were the basis for an information technology project where the faces were repeated in different colour combinations, using the work of Andy Warhol for inspiration.

95. The subject is well managed by the two coordinators whose enthusiasm for the subject is clear and whose personal subject knowledge is considerable. This combination underpins the very secure place that art has in the curriculum at Springhill School. Year groups 2 to 6 make visits to the City Gallery every year, where there is the opportunity to work with artists. This excellent scheme could be usefully considered for younger pupils. There are portfolios of work for each year group, showing a range of work, and in some cases this is linked to the levels of attainment; this could be further developed to form the basis of an assessment system. Art and design already makes a strong contribution to pupils cultural development but there is scope to enhance this by reflecting even more the rich diversity of cultures present in almost all classes. The school's wide range of resources are well maintained and managed by the coordinators and used by the staff.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards in design and technology (DT), from lessons seen, portfolio evidence and discussion with pupils are at the expected level in the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when it was noted that there was little planning in the subject and that the curriculum was not fully covered. The coordinator has established a plan that allows a good development of skills through the taught units. This has been shared with staff in in-service training, helping to build teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in DT.

97. Boys and girls in Year 1 make animals based on a multiple expanding scissor action. They also construct their own moving pictures to illustrate their own stories and use pipe cleaners, straw and paper to make model playgrounds. In Year 2, pupils make good analytical drawings of cars, vans and buses. They then create a wide range of designs and build their own vehicles, listing materials and the appropriate tools needed for this task. In Year 3, they design and make picture frames, learning techniques that will be used in subsequent years. Another unit

of work for Year 3 covers the use of vacuum technology, when pupils make moving monsters, the vacuum system controlling the opening and closing of the monster's jaws.

98. Pupils observed in a Year 4 lesson had to design a light to fulfil a particular need. They were well supported through the initial discussion, with the class teacher developing pupils' thinking skills with good questioning techniques. Pupils were well focused on the initial stages of the task but the final outcome was hampered by their uncertain knowledge of how to modify or use some of the materials, and the outcome of the lesson was judged as unsatisfactory. Other work from Year 4 is based round textiles, where pupils design and make a money container. Evidence was seen of good initial design, careful measuring and making with good quality final results. Two lessons observed in Year 5 were judged to be very good. The task was to make a moving cam device and construct the necessary frame to support it. Detailed plans had been drawn up and pupils were fully involved in accurate measuring, cutting and constructing of a wooden frame. High regard was paid to health and safety issues, with all pupils wearing safety goggles while cutting. In each of the observed lessons, clear instructions, good questioning and the use of subject specific vocabulary contributed to the very good teaching involved. Year 6 pupils designed and made footwear, having missed out on this work in the past, they will also be working on designing and making fairground rides in the second half of the summer term.

99. The subject is well led and has benefited from the good work and planning of the coordinator. A satisfactory number of units have been planned for this year with a necessary slight increase in coverage planned for the future. The good portfolio of work has been established which provides an opportunity for developing the assessment system and involving staff in matching pupils' work to nationally accepted standards. Resources are adequate and well managed, step by step plans are in place to support teachers and a very good feature of the resources is the use of computer presentations which teachers use well to demonstrate stages in the making processes.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

100. The school acknowledges that, for various reasons, over the years history has been better managed as a subject than geography. Consequently, while all the necessary support structures and procedures have been in place and developing in history for some time, geography has been something of a poor relation. Staff feel that levels of enthusiasm, interest and confidence are higher in history. With this in mind, a decision was taken to create a humanities team to coordinate both subjects and bring both Key Stage 2 and subject management experience to geography. Over the year, a whole school review has taken place in preparation for the subject's status as a major focus next school year. Topic blocks supported by schemes of work, progression grids and curriculum advice are now in place for geography as well as history. Year teams are progressively evaluating these so they can be modified and training needs ascertained. A review of resources has been undertaken ready for a major spend to match resources to the requirements of the planned curriculum.

101. As with many other schools, the humanities programme meant that pupils in each year group were either doing history or geography during the week of the inspection. However, the analysis of pupils' work in books and discussion with pupils as they worked and out of class shows that overall standards in both subjects are broadly similar to most schools and are as expected. Most pupils are very keen to talk about what they done recently in both subjects and show good understanding and knowledge about what they have learned both recently and earlier in their school careers. However, the amount and quality of work in the humanities in their books or in topic books does not reflect this as well as might be expected. While the school has commendably sought to minimise the use of worksheets, alternative ways of recording pupils' work do not yet give many pupils the opportunity to present their work in ways which give value to the subjects or which can make pupils proud of their achievements.

102. Teaching in humanities ranges from satisfactory to very good. Pupils in Year 1 take on the challenging story of the maiden voyage of the Titanic from Southampton. In one class the teachers thoughtful preparation and good class management meant that all pupils were on task and no time was lost. In the other, pupils sat too long and resources were not as well sorted out

so learning was not as good. This is a good example of the very good links to local topics established, especially in history, which in several cases enables on-site visits such as to the Heritage museum and Eling Tide Mill. In three Year 2 history lessons comparing the seaside in 1900 with 2000, each introductory session was well delivered and pupils gained a lot from relating and comparing for instance, the beach clothes and toys in the two periods. However, the original planned activities were not very challenging for average and below average attainers and learning was much better in one class where the teacher changed them.

103. Year 3 pupils in one class gained a great deal from looking carefully at Egyptian artefacts thanks to the very good introductory discussion about previous work, explanation of the learning objectives and class management of the teacher. With sheets requiring and getting different levels of response and many pupils having done research at home the outcomes were very good. In another class, though pupils enjoyed the activity and were happy to talk about what they remembered and had worked out, the pace and quality of work was not as good. In Year 6, pupils review a video about mountains and show good recall about what it shows but some find it hard to explain cause and effect for such natural phenomena as snow on the top of the mountain. They then concentrate hard and do their best to complete tasks set at two levels of challenge with an extension task that several get onto very quickly.

104. The subjects are well monitored through planning and outcomes but coordinators do not yet have the opportunity to observe lessons or actively support colleagues by working alongside. Resources for history are good with the 'Museum' a unique resource for teachers and pupils. Geography resources are not as well developed but, as noted above, this is in hand. All in all, the very good extra focus and attention brought to bear on geography this year has meant that subject leadership and management in the humanities is very good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

105. The report following the last full inspection in 1999 concluded that the teaching of ICT was unsatisfactory and that standards were 'below the expected levels'. In 2001, HMI said ICT was 'underdeveloped' though identified by the school as a 'key area for development'. Since then the school has devoted a great deal of time, effort and money to substantially improving both teaching and standards in this area to good effect. Building on increased expectations implicit in the national scheme of work and making very good use of opportunities to upgrade equipment and teachers expertise, the school has already achieved a great deal in bringing standards up to national expectations in most aspects of the subject. Thanks to matched funding, the imminent acquisition of a fully equipped dedicated classroom suite for up to 30 pupils will make it possible for the school to do even better.

106. During the inspection, pupils were still using the small, cramped 15 computer suite set up as an interim measure. Despite its limitations and thanks to the good sense of both teachers and pupils, good work was observed in all aspects of the ICT curriculum except monitoring and control which has already been identified as a priority for extra hardware and software and for staff training. Two other factors have contributed to the ever improving position. The support of a teaching assistant with particular expertise in ICT whenever teachers are using the suite and the fact that younger teachers who have joined the school recently bring a fair amount of expertise with them. Although planning shows that other computers around the school have been used for cross curricular work and for practicing skills learned in the suite, very little of this was seen during the inspection and this is an area for development.

107. The difference the new suite will make was evident in a Year 1 lesson taken by a coordinator where each pupil worked at his or her own computer. Here, young children were very focussed and confident logging on and entering text and data into a programme which drew a block graph. All completed the task in good time and several experimented with changing the presentation to other forms of graph such as a pie graph. Year 2 pupils working in pairs took turns, very sensibly, reading out and entering data about their homes collected previously to set up a database. It soon becomes obvious that pupils come with a range of familiarity with computers with some not very adept with the mouse and keyboard while others spontaneously

help their classmates. All are very impressed with the teachers demonstration of how the database they create can be used to find information in preparation for the next lesson.

108. The same range of keyboard and mouse skills were seen in a Year 3 lesson where pupils learned how to indent writing using text about Egypt from their current history topic. In this case, though an extension activity was provided, it did not extend the ICT learning of higher attainers. It should be noted that in all lessons observed, the content of the lesson was based on work in other areas of the curriculum such as geography and mathematics. Year 4 pupils took the data handling theme a stage further by setting up a questionnaire about activities for sports day. Here, as in several lessons, the teacher made very good use of the digital projector to model how to set up the questions using a range of expected responses from number to multiple choice. Most pupils achieved the learning objectives but having to share computers meant several were waiting while less fluent partners took time too complete the task.

109. Both Year 5, for the first time, and Year 6 were using Microsoft Publisher to create documents involving text and graphics. In Year 5, good use was made of the digital projector to introduce pupils to the new programme and give a step by step presentation of how to set up a postcard from St Lucia - the subject of their current geography focus - and add and modify a text box and an image of the island. Year 6 use all these skills learned in Year 5 to set up and enter text and pictures into a brochure or pamphlet about the mountain of their choice, resizing, using word art to modify text and cropping images to create a 'professional' looking presentation.

110. Leadership and management of the subject is good with coordinators ensuring that the scheme of work is implemented, monitoring planning and supporting colleagues in their work. The school's commitment to improvement in this area is very good as shown by the priority ICT has had in the way resources have been deployed. In addition to the need to build up the areas of monitoring and control, two other areas for improvement are the need to recognise the growing gap between the most and least proficient with computers in each class and the need to develop a mechanism, possibly through pupils self-assessment, to keep a record of what each pupils knows, understands and can do in ICT.

MUSIC

111. Inspection evidence from a small sample of lessons, music associated with worship, extra curricular activities and individual instrumental tuition indicates that standards in music are high and pupils enjoy their music making activities. Pupils make good progress in music lessons and achieve well throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last report. In Year 2 pupils are well able to identify long and short sounds showing good control playing percussion instruments and responding to the conductor well. They know the names of the instruments they play and hold instruments confidently and correctly. Most know which instruments make long sounds, such as bells, and which, like the tambour, make short, sharp sounds. They sing with accuracy in pitch and rhythm, sustaining long notes well and adding actions appropriately.

112. Year 3 pupils know how music is written and understand musical terms. All pupils play the recorder successfully and are aware of the importance of maintaining the pulse when playing a round. They confidently listen to their playing and know how to improve their performance. In Year 4, pupils proficiently match sounds and rhythm to that of the teacher and perform complex combinations of rhythms. Pupils display very good concentration and listening skills. Year 6 pupils confidently recognizing and responding to the pulse improvise vocally in time to recorded music. When extending their experience from western music to that of the cyclic pattern of African drumming, they listen attentively, recognize when the beat changes and maintain their rhythm. Throughout the school they continue to develop their singing with a good sense of pitch and tone. Singing for collective worship is of a high quality and pupils sing enthusiastically and expressively. The specialist teaching which all pupils receive provides consistency across the school and enables pupils to build on their individual strengths.

113. In lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning was very good. Challenging lessons maintain interest and more able pupils are encouraged to use their musical knowledge

and ability in group activities. Excellent subject knowledge enables a wide variety of activities to be available and pupils to make very good progress. The teacher provides a very good role model for pupils to copy and demonstrates skills competently. Lessons move at a very good pace ensuring all pupils are totally absorbed throughout. Well-established routines enable pupils to demonstrate independence and respect for resources. Instructions are clear and skills are practiced and repeated to aid progress. Good questioning enables the teacher to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and plans are regularly evaluated and amended according to pupils' needs. The end of the lesson is used effectively for pupils to identify what they have learnt and to extend their learning. Mixed ability groups enable the lower attainers to work alongside those with more developed skills.

114. A good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments including instruments from other cultures have been accumulated. Recorded music offers pupils opportunities to listen attentively to music but more use could be made of music from the diverse cultures to be found within the school. Listening centres, a wide variety of music and music reference books are available for use in lessons. Twenty per cent of pupils take advantage of tuition provided by visiting instrumental teachers which provides them with a very good grounding in more technical and performance elements. Instrumentalists combine to form the school orchestra which performs on occasions. All pupils benefit from the experience of performance opportunities within school and the wider community. Year 2 take part in a music workshop and experience singing with others in a concert hall. Pupils in Year 3 join with other schools in a beginner's recorder festival. Seventy-five per cent of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in a musical production during the year. The school choir and orchestra perform regularly and take part in school festivals with other schools in the area.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Lessons in athletics, gymnastics, dance, and an introduction to orienteering were observed during the inspection and evidence from the school's scheme of work indicates that pupils have opportunities to take part in a range of games and that pupils in year four swim for one term. In the lessons observed achievements of boys and girls are appropriate for their age and standards are broadly in line with national averages. While the time allocation is broadly satisfactory, the actual time spent on physical education is restricted when outdoor sessions are cancelled during inclement weather, as the hall is often not available as an alternative. The school could, to advantage, consider the use of the new hall for dance sessions and to review the length of physical education sessions with a view to not only securing more actual overall time for the subject but more frequent sessions particularly for the younger children.

116. The teaching of physical education is variable. In the Years 5 and 6 athletics lessons, pupils responded enthusiastically to good teaching of running, relay racing and jumping. Teaching points were well made and this was balanced by sufficient time for activity and practise, although few opportunities for pupils to demonstrate to the class. In lessons pupils made good progress, particularly in exchanging the baton in relays. In a good Year 2 lesson, as part of a series of European dances, pupils moved in the style of Hungarian dancers, pausing and changing direction after every fourth step and adding arm movements as they became more confident. Through good teaching that allowed pupils to practice while pausing at intervals to make teaching points, they made good progress and were moving 'proudly' by the end of the lesson.

117. However, gymnastic lessons in years one, three and four were only satisfactory. There was insufficient emphasis on a thorough warm up including stretching muscle groups. Pupils lacked practice in moving apparatus quickly and efficiently, and in one lesson the noise level was too high, contributing to pupils' lack of concentration on their movement. While teachers in all lessons used pupils to demonstrate movements, it was often laboured by too much time being wasted gaining pupils' attention, sometime unnecessarily using a whistle, and there was no evaluation by pupils or suggestions for improvement.

118. While the older pupils have an opportunity on their residential visit to experience some outdoor adventurous activities and there are some extra curricular sports activities, the school

does not have a history of viewing physical education as a strength, or of participating in local schools' competitions. The current policy is due to be reviewed and INSET to improve the quality of teaching is planned. The school has the advantage of a good sized hall, a small hall, good hard standing and a level playing field. Equipment is sufficient and of good quality. The challenge is to raise standards through initiatives and advantages, to monitor teaching and develop pupil assessment so that they will benefit from a high quality physical education programme to match provision in other areas of the school's work.