

INSPECTION REPORT

MILL RYTHE INFANT SCHOOL

Hayling Island

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116490

Headteacher: Mrs Patricia Ashford

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie
23482

Dates of inspection: 17 to 20 February 2003

Inspection number: 247654

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant school
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Havant Road Hayling Island
Postcode:	PO11 0PA
Telephone number:	023 92465531
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr Paul Chapman
Date of previous inspection:	24 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23482	Diana Mackie	Registered inspector	Art and design English English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9405	Josephine Philbey	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22390	Claire Fagan	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education Foundation stage	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
25778	Andrew Hicks	Team inspector	Geography Mathematics Music Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	History Religious education Science Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mill Rythe Infant School is a popular school located centrally on Hayling Island, which is near Portsmouth. Most pupils live nearby, but a number come from further away on the island. There are 232 pupils on roll. Of these 75, are in the reception year. Children start school with a wide range of attainment but, overall, attainment is in line with that seen nationally. Eight per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is below the national average. Two per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, but none speaks English as an additional language. These percentages are below the national averages. Twenty-two per cent of pupils have special educational needs for learning, behavioural or physical difficulties. This broadly matches the national average. Just over one per cent of pupils has a formal statement of special educational need, and this is broadly in line with the national average. The school was Grant Maintained until September 2000 and is now a Foundation School that manages its own budget with access to the support services of the local education authority.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a caring school that provides a sound education for its pupils, who achieve standards in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Most pupils behave well and enjoy school. The quality of teaching is sound overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching. The headteacher provides good educational direction and the governors fulfil their managerial responsibilities well. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above national expectations in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education by the end of Year 2.
- Most pupils behave well and have good attitudes to school. This is because of the school's good provision for their personal development.
- The parents have a significant, positive impact on the work of the school.
- The headteacher provides good educational direction for the school.
- Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are very good.

What could be improved

- Assessment procedures in the foundation subjects and target setting in English and mathematics.
- More consistently demanding teaching so that pupils are more productive in lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained at a satisfactory level in reading but have risen sharply in writing, with higher-attaining pupils achieving well above average. The school's strong teaching of letter sounds and patterns has improved pupils' spelling. Standards in science have improved and are now satisfactory, with some good features. Pupils' attainment in design and technology has risen from below to above average. The governors have dealt with staffing issues as well as possible. Having overcome difficulties evident at the time of the last inspection, new problems arose. These have now been addressed and the school is fully staffed with permanent teachers who are working well together as a team. Medium and shorter-term planning is now satisfactory, and assessment procedures have enabled staff to identify and support higher-attaining pupils so that they achieve well in national tests. Teaching assistants are now included in the school's performance management process. They have undergone some professional training and make a valuable contribution in many lessons, but could be deployed more effectively during whole-class teaching.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

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

Results in 2002 were not as high as in 2001, but pupils performed satisfactorily based on predictions from regular assessments during their time in school. Comparison with similar schools is particularly disappointing because the school slipped temporarily into a band of schools with fewer free school meals; it has now returned to the original band, that would have given the school better grades. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are now broadly in line with national expectations. Handwriting is good. Regular teaching of the basic skills and early emphasis on speaking and listening help pupils to achieve satisfactorily during their time at the school. Higher-attaining pupils do well in most lessons, but pupils of average ability need to achieve better in English and mathematics. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are used and practised effectively in most other subjects. Pupils use ICT increasingly as a tool for learning, but it is not planned with enough detail in the teaching of other subjects

Pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology, ICT and physical education is above national expectations. It is in line with national expectations in history and music. No judgement is given for pupils' attainment in geography, as so little work was seen during the inspection.

Children in the reception classes achieve soundly in the six recommended areas of learning and most achieve standards appropriate for their age by the time they join Year 1. Higher-attaining children exceed the expected goals.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils enjoy school and are interested in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The good behaviour of most pupils enables teachers to get on with lessons with the minimum of interruption.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils quickly learn to care for each other and become independent.
Attendance	Satisfactory, and broadly in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory. In over half the lessons teaching was good or very good during the inspection, and there were examples of excellent teaching. Teaching in the reception classes was often good. Most of the best teaching was in Year 2, where teachers usually taught at a brisk pace and chose activities that inspired pupils and encouraged them to answer promptly, work hard and achieve well. The less effective teaching, although usually satisfactory, did not motivate pupils to produce enough work. There was a very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. From scrutiny of pupils' past work, the quality of teaching has been variable during the year. Overall, teaching in English and mathematics is sound. In Year 2, some good work has been done in English. However, across the range of subjects pupils, particularly in Year 1, have not produced enough work, marking has not been consistently helpful, and targets have not been used effectively to drive up standards, especially for pupils of average attainment.

During the inspection, teaching was good in science, art and design, music, physical education and religious education. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and they have a secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Teachers manage the pupils well and, as a result, pupils usually behave well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory in the reception year and good in Years 1 and 2. Throughout the school, pupils experience a wide range of interesting activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. It is good when pupils are taught by the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. It is satisfactory for their spiritual development, good for their moral and cultural development and very good for their social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good for child protection and pupils' welfare. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are satisfactory overall but there are no clear procedures for assessment in the foundation subjects. Target-setting is not used enough to drive up standards in English and mathematics.

Parents participate in many ways the life of the school and contribute well to their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good educational direction for the school, and she is well supported by the deputy headteacher. Together, they are promoting teamwork amongst the staff, with the common purpose of driving up standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors give their time and expertise generously in the service of the school. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school development plan is clearly based on an audit of the school's needs. Appropriate priorities are set and followed through to enhance provision and improve pupils' attainment and welfare. Arrangements to evaluate action taken are being improved.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are managed prudently and governors look for best value in their transactions. Specific resources for special educational needs and staff training are organised efficiently.

Staffing levels are satisfactory. After a period of change, the school now has a workforce of appropriately qualified permanent teachers who teach the National Curriculum effectively. Professional training for staff is well organised and of good quality. The quality of accommodation is good and it is well cared for. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. (97%) • They feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems or suggestions. (94%) • The school encourages the children to become mature and responsible. (92%) • Teaching is good. (90%) • The school expects the children to work hard and do their best. (90%) • The school is well led and managed. (88%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel that they do not get enough information about their children's progress. (23%) • They are not satisfied with the amount of homework. (17%) • The school does not work closely enough with them. (15%) • There are not enough activities outside lessons. (13%) • They do not think that behaviour is good. (12%)

In the survey of parents and carers before the inspection, there were 95 completed questionnaires. The inspectors agree with the parents' positive views of the school. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good or better. However, teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall, because pupils are not always expected to do enough work in lessons. The school provides a good amount of information for parents, and end of year reports set out clearly what pupils have done and learnt. Homework is set well in Year 2 but is set inconsistently in other years. The school has an 'open door' policy, and most parents feel that the school is approachable. The school works hard to build good relationships with parents, many of whom work voluntarily to support events at the school and help in lessons. Although the provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, there are few sporting opportunities. During the inspection, most pupils behaved well in lessons and around the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall standards are broadly the same as at the last inspection. Standards have risen in science and design and technology but are not as good as they were in history, music and religious education. Changes in staff and the school's necessary emphasis on English and mathematics have affected standards in some subjects. In national tests, the school's results have risen slightly in mathematics, risen dramatically in writing and science, and remained satisfactory in reading. These changes reflect the school's careful introduction of the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy. In addition, staff have analysed the school's results in national tests and used the information gathered to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses in teaching, learning and curricular provision. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve in line with the rest. Boys are now performing at least as well as girls because the school has addressed the issue of their under-performance.
2. Children enter the reception classes with levels of attainment that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make sound progress and achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Higher-attaining pupils exceed the goals and achieve well. Sound teaching and support gives children a secure start to their education.
3. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have gained skills, knowledge and understanding of English at a sound rate and they achieve satisfactorily. Pupils develop their speaking and listening appropriately and widen their vocabulary consistently in all subjects. The school emphasises the step-by-step teaching and learning of letter sounds and patterns so that pupils make satisfactory gains in reading, writing and spelling. Pupils enjoy reading and experience a wide range of texts so that they practise their skills in all areas of the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils acquire a range of strategies to answer brisk questions in mental arithmetic sessions. Pupils develop an increasing awareness of the use of mathematics in everyday life. In science, practical investigations help pupils to gain skills of scientific enquiry and a deeper understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
4. In ICT, pupils' levels of attainment are above those expected by the end of Year 2. While pupils acquire skills at a good rate, there are too few opportunities for them to use their skills in a number of subjects. In art and design, design and technology and physical education, pupils attainment is above national expectations. In religious education, pupils achieve standards in line with expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Christianity is the principal religion studied, but pupils gain appropriate knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths. Pupils achieve soundly in history and music and attain in line with national expectations.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Realistic targets are set for these pupils to achieve regular success so that their confidence and self-esteem are raised and they build step-by-step on what they already know and can do.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils have good attitudes to school, and these have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils come to school promptly and ready to learn. They are interested and keen learners, are stimulated by interesting lessons and are prepared to work independently. Pupils' awareness of a good range of beliefs, values and traditions is promoted in religious education and assemblies, and this raises the self-esteem of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

7. Good behaviour is a significant feature of lessons. Pupils are particularly polite and courteous to each other and to adults. They behave well around the school and most behave well in the playground. They eat lunch with the minimum of supervision and enjoy the opportunity to socialise with friends. Since the last inspection no pupils have been excluded.
8. Personal development is very good and is a strength of the school. Pupils quickly acquire mature social skills that are important in securing good behaviour. They enjoy taking on minor responsibilities that assist in the smooth running of the school and to help to build their own self-esteem. They co-operate very well in lessons, are sensible when working on group tasks and can organise themselves maturely for successful and shared completion of work. They listen well and have the confidence to speak and to offer opinions during lessons.
9. Pupils maintain a cheerful and friendly rapport with adults and are confident about sorting out problems with them. They are supportive of each other and will offer each other help when unwell or unhappy. This openness helps to establish an atmosphere that is free of oppressive behaviour such as bullying. Pupils know that bullying is wrong and know what to do when pupils' behave unacceptably. They have good opportunities to take part in charity fund-raising events. This helps to develop their initiative and makes them aware of the needs of other people.
10. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Attendance rates have fallen slightly over the past two years due to the number of parents taking their children for holidays in term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The overall judgement of teaching is that it is satisfactory, taking into account the quality of teaching in lessons and the quality of pupils' work during this school year. The teaching seen was good or better in more than half of the lessons seen. It was very good or better in a quarter of lessons, with three excellent lessons seen. A very small amount of teaching was unsatisfactory. Scrutiny of pupils' books indicates that teachers have not always ensured that pupils do enough work. Teaching of lessons was also judged to be good at the time of the last inspection.
12. Teaching is good in science, art and design, music and physical education. It is sound in English, mathematics, history and ICT. No judgement is given for teaching in design and technology and geography because none was seen during the inspection. Good classroom management was a significant feature in most lessons. The best teaching occurred when lessons moved at a brisk pace and pupils were expected to work hard and complete tasks. There are very good relationships between teachers and this provides an encouraging environment. In the drive to raise standards, teachers ensure that boys participate in discussions and are involved and engaged in activities as regularly as girls. This is having a significant impact on the performance of boys, who have not done as well as girls in previous years.
13. In the reception classes, teaching and learning are enhanced by the effective deployment of non-teaching support. Teachers place great emphasis on the establishment of clear routines and firm, well-understood classroom rules. Children are encouraged to be independent and to respond appropriately to instructions and these have a positive effect on their personal and social development. In all areas of learning, the staff organise interesting activities to motivate pupils to learn. As a result, children achieve soundly.
14. In the first part of lessons in Years 1 and 2, teachers ask probing questions to elicit pupils' understanding and extend their learning. In the literacy hour and the daily numeracy lessons, teachers employ effective direct teaching to inform pupils and give them clear explanations. In the central part of lessons, when pupils are involved in activities to consolidate new learning, the amount of work done by most pupils is not enough in a significant proportion of lessons, especially in Year 1. Lessons end with a period of reflection and review and this part is often good, but a few pupils have difficulties in keeping still and concentrating.

15. Teachers usually plan to meet the needs of all pupils. The teachers' secure subject knowledge is linked to some good questioning. This was noticeable in the review sessions at the end of literacy lessons, and was particularly good in the teacher's development of pupils' skills in a dance lesson in Year 2. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged by suitably demanding tasks in most lessons. Appropriate links between subjects help to make learning more relevant for the pupils; for example, knowledge of materials in science is linked to using materials in design and technology. Teachers use specific subject vocabulary to enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum, and understanding of literacy and numeracy is developed well throughout the school day. Skills are developed systematically, for example in art and design, when teachers encourage pupils to explore materials and choose the ones that help them to achieve the effect they want. Teachers value pupils' ideas and contributions and make lessons interesting in lots of ways.
16. Throughout the school, teachers keep regular records of pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science, but the school's systems for assessing pupils' progress do not help teachers collect information in the other subjects. Available information is used effectively to inform the planning of most lessons. Teachers set targets for pupils to improve their work in English and mathematics, but the targets are sometimes not specific enough to help pupils make small but significant improvements. Targets are not well known by many pupils, and therefore their impact is limited. The teachers' marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall, but it does not always help pupils see how they can improve. In the work seen, teachers had not ensured that all pupils complete work, and a significant proportion of pupils had not done as much as they could. The standards in pupils' books reflect the school's performance in national tests, in which standards have been broadly average over the past three years.
17. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Plans to help pupils include well-identified academic and personal targets. When teaching small groups of pupils who are withdrawn from the classroom for specialist support, the co-ordinator for special educational needs is skilful in using a wide variety of strategies to support pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy. Strategies include both direct teaching of points of language, and more informal activities, such as games, to interest the pupils in the use of language. Pupils with statements of special educational need receive good direct one-to-one support. Within the classroom, there is some inconsistency in the way these pupils are included in learning. The most successful lessons are those that are practical, where pupils both learn new ideas and develop self-esteem through making their own valued contribution. The quality of support given by teaching assistants also varies, from close attention based on good liaison with teachers to less well-focused support. One example of excellent support took place when a classroom assistant elicited a great deal of language and reasoning from pupils as they investigated slopes and surfaces in science. In contrast, there were instances when teaching assistants could have been deployed better to support pupils who needed help during the initial part of lessons as teachers were introducing new material. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported well, and teaching assistants assigned to them encourage them to listen in whole-class sessions, concentrate during activities and contribute in the last part of lessons when pupils share what they have done.
18. Most teachers use resources, including ICT, appropriately to enhance pupils' learning. Some teachers also use resources very imaginatively; for example, when a red cloak was used to inspire pupils to write, and an electric fan was used to demonstrate the movement of air. Teachers set homework well in Year 2, but it is not set consistently throughout the school.

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

19. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities that are relevant to pupils' needs and contribute well to their academic and personal development. Since the last inspection the school has developed its teaching programme to take account of initiatives such as the National Literacy

Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy, and to redress an imbalance in the time allocated for science. English and mathematics are given appropriate emphasis but all subjects now have enough time. Special focus weeks add variety to normal routines and are used well to teach subjects such as design and technology. Pupils make good progress in designing and making puppets and other products because of the intensive nature of the work they do over a relatively short time.

20. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and standards are rising in mathematics. The National Literacy Strategy is well established and the curriculum for English is well balanced between speaking and listening, and reading and writing.
21. Planning for pupils in the Foundation Stage of education (reception class) is satisfactory. The staff provide many interesting activities for children to develop their competence in the required six areas of learning. The day is organised effectively so that pupils have opportunities for exercise, quiet work and involvement in activities with other children. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage could be better planned to lead more smoothly into work from the National Curriculum.
22. For pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, long, medium and short-term plans give good details of what pupils are to learn and how they are to be taught. Improved planning since the last inspection now ensures that pupils of all abilities are set sufficiently demanding work. Themes such as 'Technicolour Christmas' help teachers link planning in different subjects effectively. Work on materials in science, making Joseph's coat of many colours in design and technology, and learning about Guy Fawkes in history, are just parts of this wide-ranging topic that adds variety and interest to the work pupils do.
23. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school identifies gifted and talented pupils, and new arrangements are being introduced to ensure that they are constantly challenged. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school identifies needs as soon as possible and organises an appropriate programme of work within each subject, as well as extra support activities in small groups, where necessary. However, liaison between the co-ordinator and class teachers is not close enough for the quality of teaching to be as high as possible.
24. Provision of extra-curricular activities has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory, although parents have to pay for after school clubs such as drama and dance, and there are few sporting activities. Lunchtime chess sessions and board games are popular, and the school plans to reinstate the school choir once a new music co-ordinator has been appointed.
25. Links with other schools and the wider local community are good. Artists, representatives of religious denominations, poets and others all visit the school from time to time to work with pupils. Trips to local farms, churches and newspaper offices, and to Portsmouth, all enhance learning well. Regular meetings with local pre-school groups and junior schools for the transfer of information ensure that pupils move smoothly from one stage of education to the next. Teachers visit other schools, including the local secondary school, to share and develop their expertise; for instance, in supporting pupils with special educational needs and to use specialist facilities such as those for ICT.
26. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development, including a programme of personal, social and health education. Pupils have regular 'circle time' lessons in which they discuss matters such as the importance of friends and 'keeping safe'. Sex and health education and drug awareness issues are treated appropriately in 'circle time' and other lessons, such as science and physical education. School productions, such as the recent 'Joseph' musical contribute well to pupils' personal development because they provide opportunities to develop self-confidence and to work constructively with others.
27. The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. It is satisfactory for spiritual development. Assemblies provide opportunities for reflection, focused on a lighted candle, and for consideration of other religions and social and moral topics. There is

well-planned coverage of a wide variety of themes that promote high self-esteem, and of Christianity and other religions. The daily acts of worship fulfil statutory requirements. Opportunities for pupils to enjoy spiritual experiences in lessons were seen in physical education and religious education but are generally undeveloped.

28. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils abide by a clear code of conduct and adults are good role models. 'Golden rules' used throughout the school are adhered to and well understood. Honesty, fairness and respect for others are well emphasised in lessons. 'Circle time' is well used to discuss moral and social issues. A clear system of sanctions and rewards is in place. The personal and social curriculum contributes to pupils' moral and social education focusing on themes such as friendship and happiness.
29. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Boys and girls work together in pairs, and in small groups, in their classes. All pupils have the opportunity to be class monitors, with appropriate responsibilities, at some stage. There is a lot of emphasis in lessons on pupils working together through taking turns, playing a full part within a team and supporting each other to get tasks completed. Pupils listen well to adults, and to each other, and treat each other with kindness and respect. They can show initiative when carrying out their work and when moving around the school.
30. There is good provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils have good experience of the traditional cultures of the United Kingdom through working with artists in residence, visiting museums and art galleries, and through their knowledge of prominent artists. Visiting speakers discuss their faiths and beliefs with pupils in assemblies. Provision includes the study of a variety of world faiths within religious education; for example, pupils in Year 2 study Hindu gods. Pupils attend multi-cultural events and gain a good understanding of a range of religions and cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school makes good provision for the personal support and guidance of its pupils. This reflects the findings of the previous report. The school also provides a secure and calm environment that has a warm and friendly atmosphere. Parents report that pupils are happy to come to school. When difficulties arise pupils can, and generally do, turn to a member of staff of their choice for help and guidance.
32. The school's arrangements for promoting welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and is fully trained. Effective routines and procedures have been developed to ensure that all members of staff are aware of child protection issues. The school liaises well with the health visitor, social services and the local police. There are appropriate policies to support health and safety and there are a number of trained first-aiders. All accidents are formally recorded and parents advised if necessary. Parents are particularly pleased with the care, comfort and support given by the staff to children who have a specific medical problem, or to those who feel ill or distressed during the school day. Lunchtime supervisors have had training and keep a watchful eye on behaviour in the lunch hall and playground. They have very good relationships with the pupils and listen sensitively if pupils are anxious.
33. Problems arise from the large number of vehicles that arrive at this school, and the adjacent junior school, to drop off and collect pupils. The situation is hazardous. The school is constantly reminding parents that driving on to the school staff car park is not allowed. It also urges parents not to park on outside pavements or grass verges where children are sometimes crossing. The school's caretaker monitors the situation on a daily basis. During the inspection week there was evidence that some parents choose to ignore the school's requests. The two schools, in conjunction with the local authority, continue to seek a solution to the problem. School governors have recently produced a travel plan outlining ways in which the congestion could be reduced.
34. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting appropriate standards of behaviour are good. Parents are reminded of the school's policy on behaviour through the prospectus. Pupils

enjoy receiving stickers and stars for good behaviour and achievement. Pupils interviewed during the inspection week were obviously delighted that 'golden time' had been introduced in school. Most pupils understand that good behaviour is expected in school. As a result, teachers do not have to spend an undue amount of time maintaining discipline. On the occasions when a pupil's behaviour is unacceptable, systems are in place to deal with the problem. If necessary, parents are contacted. Parents and pupils agree that bullying will not be tolerated in school and incidents are dealt with quickly. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection.

35. Procedures are satisfactorily in place for monitoring attendance, absence and punctuality. Registration takes place before both daily school sessions, and attendance recorded. Inconsistencies in the way in which class teachers record absence in class registers have been dealt with. The administrative staff and headteacher monitor unauthorised absences and unpunctuality, and letters are sent to parents when necessary.
36. The monitoring and support of pupils' personal development are very good. Teachers intervene at appropriate points in lessons and assemblies, and contribute to raising the pupils' self-esteem by making them suitably aware and proud of their achievements. Annual reports to parents show that teachers have a sound knowledge of pupils' personal strengths and areas for improvement. All class teachers keep comprehensive records of pupils' personal development. Personal, social, moral and health education and 'circle time' are timetabled. The school offers opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. These increase as pupils get older. For instance, younger pupils act as monitors, return registers and help tidy classrooms. Older pupils are encouraged to be good role models, by behaving well in assemblies and in the playground. The school organises outside visits that invite pupils to act responsibly and show initiative. Pupils performing in school concerts and plays such as 'Joseph's Technicoloured Dreamcoat' further enhance pupils' personal development.
37. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall, with good features in English, mathematics and science. The system, referred to as 'First of the Month', is a well-organised way of obtaining regular samples of work for each pupil in literacy, numeracy and science. These samples are appropriately assessed against the levels of the National Curriculum so that teachers can track the progress of each pupil and take any necessary action to remedy gaps in learning. Assessment procedures in other subjects, and the use of the information gained from them, are still at an early stage of development.
38. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are used effectively to construct clear plans for pupils' work. They include well-focused targets for literacy and numeracy, as well as for pupils' personal development, and are kept readily available by both teachers and assistants. As pupils meet their targets new ones are set.
39. The use of assessments to guide curricular planning is satisfactory. The recent move towards developing portfolios of pupils' work in each subject is a useful way of setting out consistent expectations throughout the school. Teachers' marking of work is satisfactory. Pupils' targets are based on assessment of their work, but pupils are not always aware of them. Nevertheless, they are involved in evaluating their own progress. They would be further helped if day-to-day assessments were more consistently applied, with teachers referring pupils to their targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents hold the school in high regard and their views are mostly positive. The school recognises that home/school liaison is important and has maintained and improved the good links with parents found during the previous inspection. Parents confirm that their children enjoy coming to school and they are pleased with the progress they make. They feel that behaviour is good and have nothing but praise for the school's standards of pastoral care. Parents who responded to the questionnaire, those who attended the parents' meeting and parents interviewed during the week of inspection, appreciated the commitment of the headteacher and her staff and their aims and expectations for their children. These positive views are confirmed by the inspection.

41. A few parents who responded to the questionnaire are concerned that the school does not work closely with parents. The inspection finds however, that clear, helpful and regular lines of communication have been established with parents. The building of good relationships with parents starts well before children enter the school. The headteacher meets all new parents and this is followed up with a home visit. Parents interviewed during the inspection week all agreed that they were welcomed into the school at any time and that all members of staff are friendly and approachable. Some parents are unhappy that they can no longer accompany their children into the school building in the morning. The school reports that this procedure can delay the start of the morning session and does little to enhance pupils' independence. The school is anxious that any parental concerns are addressed immediately. The headteacher is in the playground at the beginning and end of the school day should a parent wish to speak to her informally. Parents' views on aspects of the school, such as the car-parking problem, have been sought through questionnaires and a suggestion box.
42. The quality of information for parents is good. The school prospectus and annual governors' report are both welcoming and professional documents, clearly written for parents to understand. Parents receive weekly newsletters advising them of school activities, news and events. The school ensures that all parents are aware of what their children are learning. Topic webs are sent home at the beginning of each term. The headteacher is aware that some parents would like more information on the school's reading strategy, and how they can help their children at home. A literacy meeting for parents has therefore been arranged for early March.
43. A minority of parents do not agree that they are kept well informed on how their children are getting on. The inspection looked closely at this issue. Information on pupil's progress is good overall and similar to that of many infant schools. Class teachers hold weekly surgeries when parents can talk about any problems or discuss progress. These, however, are poorly attended. Parents have the opportunity each term to make appointments to see their child's class teacher, discuss progress and share targets. The summer consultation is planned so that parents can discuss any concerns regarding their child's annual school report. Whilst these reports meet with statutory requirements, the simple tick format evaluating pupils' performance could be confusing for some parents. Pupils' personal development is highlighted, but there is limited written information on how pupils are progressing, especially in the core subjects.
44. The school regularly involves parents in reviews of the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Communication between the school and parents is friendly, and parents feel they can approach teachers or co-ordinators at any time. However, the school needs to be more active in inviting these parents for discussions, rather than waiting until they ask for meetings.
45. All parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the life of the school and they sign a home/school agreement. Parents are asked to help their children at home, especially with reading and spellings, but there are not enough range graded reading books for pupils to take home. Some parents would like to see more homework. Currently the setting of regular homework throughout the school is inconsistent, particularly for pupils in Year 1. The school is grateful to the many parent helpers and other volunteers who work effectively to broaden pupils' experience in school, assisting in classrooms and helping with outside visits. Parents are invited into school for special assemblies, religious festivals, sports day and school productions. The school's open day is always well attended. Committee members of the parent teacher association are enthusiastic and hardworking. Much effort is put into fund-raising events, such as the popular summer fair. These are well supported by parents and substantial funds are raised. The association funded the adventure playground, runs discos for the pupils, provides the Reception classes with book bags and recently organised a crèche to help parents who wished to attend the school production.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The good leadership of the school ensures that there is clear educational direction and a drive to raise standards. The good management ensures that the school has the capacity to handle change, innovate and manage improvements in a systematic way. Leadership and management are increasingly tied into all aspects of the school. The deputy headteacher works closely with the headteacher on aspects of management, so that agreed policies are followed through and there is a whole-school approach to issues. Good leadership and management have been maintained since the last inspection.
47. Subject co-ordinators manage their areas of responsibility conscientiously, and through their leadership, guide colleagues on appropriate knowledge and techniques to enhance pupils learning and raise standards of attainment. Classroom monitoring has been thorough in English and mathematics ensuring that agreed practices are properly implemented. Monitoring of other subjects has focused on teachers' planning and pupils' work; a rolling programme of classroom monitoring is planned for all subjects. Co-ordinators new to their posts benefit from advice and support given by established colleagues who are good role models.
48. The headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor the professional development of staff to promote the best possible teaching in all areas of the curriculum. Links between the school development plan and the training undertaken by staff are clear, so priorities are well supported and there is a direct impact on what happens in the classrooms. The effect of clear leadership is evident in the way staff are working well together as a team to improve aspects of teaching. Staff are tackling aspects, such as the setting of lesson objectives (the points to be taught and learnt in lessons), using direct teaching to ensure that all pupils are taught letter sound and shapes, and collecting pupils together at the end of lessons to ensure that new ideas are consolidated. The benefits of good management are seen in the way priorities for improvement are monitored, and appropriate action is taken to overcome weaknesses.
49. There are sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. The difficulties in maintaining a permanent workforce at the time of the last inspection were overcome, but further problems arose. Five teachers have left the school during the past two years because of changing personal circumstances, but the school has now established a team that is working well together with the new headteacher. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning when they teach small groups of pupils but they could be deployed more effectively during whole-class teaching. The school ensures that all staff are properly supported during the introduction of new initiatives to improve standards. Training of staff did not keep pace with changes in national requirements during a period when the school was Grant Maintained and did not have access to courses run by the local education authority. Relationships with the authority are good, and staff now benefit from regular support and guidance. Newly qualified teachers are very well supported by colleagues who act as mentors. The appraisal of teachers' performance is fully in place and all members of staff are encouraged to extend their professional expertise.
50. The governing body regularly reviews provision for pupils with special educational needs and supports the school very strongly. One of its members liaises closely with the co-ordinator for special educational needs. The accommodation and resources for these pupils are good.
51. The school's financial planning is satisfactory. The agreed budget reflects priorities in the school improvement plan, and progress through the plan is carefully monitored by the headteacher, the bursar and the finance committee. Specific grants for provision for pupils who have special educational needs and for staff training are used appropriately. The organisation and administration of day-to-day financial matters are very efficient, and the administration of the budget is carefully managed by the headteacher and the bursar, who keeps meticulous records. The school makes good use of advice and support from the local education authority. Governors ensure value for money in purchases and contracts. The headteacher, key staff and governors know about what is going on in the school, so that they are able to evaluate the impact of actions identified in the school development plan. They question whether the planned improvements have benefited pupils. Evaluation of 'best value' in terms of benefit to the pupils' attainment or welfare, though discussed informally, are not recorded well enough. Recommendations in the last

auditor's report have been dealt with appropriately. Good systems ensure that the school secretary deals efficiently with day-to-day administration so that teachers are not disturbed unnecessarily in the classrooms.

52. The accommodation is good. Recent building work has improved the front entrance to include a spacious front office, larger staff room and a toilet for the disabled. A new central heating system is being installed. The school provides a safe, stimulating and well-maintained learning environment. The premises are in good condition and well maintained by the school caretaker and his staff. Open plan classrooms are bright, airy and well organised. Although the school hall and library are used to get to other parts of the school there is little disruption when lessons are in progress. The library area is well organised and attractively laid out, and the hall is suitably equipped for physical education. The playground areas are adequate for the number of pupils and are well marked for playground games. The adventure playground is a great favourite of the pupils and provides them with lots of fun. There is an attractive garden that is used well to support learning in science. The school does not have a sports field but is able to use the neighbouring junior school's field on sports day.
53. Overall, the school has a satisfactory range of resources for teaching all subjects of the curriculum, but there are not enough graded reading books for pupils to take home to read to their parents. Staff make very good use of the local area, and of visitors and educational visits to enhance provision for pupils and bring relevance to pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) Improve assessment arrangements by
 - Establishing and using clear and straightforward assessment procedures for the foundation subjects, to ensure that teaching is based on pupils' earlier learning
 - Setting targets more frequently to match each pupil's needs and move learning along at a faster pace in English and mathematics
(Paragraphs 16, 37, 74, 80, 96, 99, 107, 113, 123)
 - (2) Increase the amount of work done by pupils in lessons by
 - Ensuring that all lessons are taught at a good pace
 - Monitoring activities rigorously to ensure that pupils do as much as possible within a given time
(Paragraphs 14, 98, 71, 79, 105)

Other areas that governors should consider for inclusion in the action plan

- Planned use of ICT across the curriculum
(Paragraphs 4, 96, 87, 106)
- Better deployment of teaching assistants during whole-class teaching
(Paragraphs 17, 80)
- Improvement of graded reading books for pupils to extend their reading at home
(Paragraphs 45, 53, 68)
- More consistent use of homework across the school
(Paragraphs 18, 45)
- Continuing negotiations with the appropriate authorities to improve car parking facilities at the school
(Paragraph 33)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	9	16	19	1	0	0
Percentage	6	19	33	40	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	232
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	52

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	50	38	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	40	45
	Girls	34	36	38
	Total	67	76	83
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (95)	86 (93)	94 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	41	46
	Girls	34	35	38
	Total	70	76	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (93)	86 (84)	95 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
227	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0

No ethnic group recorded

0

0

0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	275

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	£642,533
Total expenditure	£668,512
Expenditure per pupil	£2,740
Balance brought forward from previous year	£62,506
Balance carried forward to next year	£36,527

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	232
Number of questionnaires returned	95

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	39	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	37	7	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	39	11	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	41	14	3	3
The teaching is good.	58	32	2	1	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	40	21	2	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	33	3	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	36	6	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	44	37	13	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	56	32	2	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	38	5	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	39	11	2	6

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

55. The provision for the Foundation Stage (reception classes) is satisfactory and this concurs with the judgement of the last inspection. The children enter the reception classes in the September of the year in which they are five years old. The early assessment of their attainment when they enter the school shows some variation in attainment from year to year. The majority of pupils have had some pre-school experience in local playgroups. The current arrangements for a slow induction into full time education have been reviewed and changed to mean that in future all children will attend school full time by the end of September.
56. The children are organised into three classes. These are well equipped and resourced and provide bright, interesting learning environments. The quality of teaching throughout the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, and the support staff provide good help to teachers, working with and assessing children. Teachers also make effective use of parent volunteers who help in class. Children benefit from listening to visitors to the school, such as local clergy and authors. The curriculum is based on the nationally agreed areas for learning for children in the reception year. Teachers make effective links between the areas of learning and often use stories as the basis for children's learning. Planning does not take enough account of the assessment of pupils' progress and so not enough demands are made of higher-attaining children. The bridge between the 'stepping stones' of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the early stages of the National Curriculum has not been clearly identified. The majority of children are on course to achieve the expected early learning goals by the time they start Year 1, and higher-attaining children will exceed them. Standards are broadly similar to those at the time of the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. The majority of pupils are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. Teaching is good for this area of learning. Most children have good speaking skills and teachers use discussion and 'circle time' to develop this further; for example, by preparing very effective and mature questions to ask the local vicar about his favourite Bible stories. Children enjoy coming to school and settle into the routines of school life quickly. The present reception children are eager to learn new skills and put concentration and effort into their tasks when they are clearly structured, stimulating and exciting. They work well together and are good at sharing, taking turns and being co-operative; for example, when they take part in team games in physical education. Children clear up well at the ends of sessions putting things back in their proper places. There are some opportunities for pupils to be independent; for example, in the role-play area, but there not enough planned times for pupils to take more responsibility for their learning.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The teaching is satisfactory for this area of learning. Children are encouraged to be good listeners, and to enjoy listening to and joining in stories through a range of strategies such as listening to adults and using tape recorders. Very good questioning skills are encouraged and many children are confident, articulate speakers. There are very good links between all curriculum areas, such as the use of speech and language in role-play linking with the weather story. Early writing skills support the learning of letter sounds and the development of cursive handwriting. Scrutiny of work shows that over time not enough demands are made of pupils to record and develop their writing skills. Progress in lessons is often too slow, especially for higher-attaining children who often produce too little work in the time allowed.

59. Children enjoy books, handle them with care, can turn the pages over correctly and can talk about the pictures and characters in the stories. These features result from the good guided reading sessions. The higher-attaining children can read accurately and with confidence and show a love of non-fiction as well as fiction books. Other children are able to recognise a few key words and initial letter sounds. Children can retell their favourite stories orally and are developing a love of books.

Mathematical development

60. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals. Teachers' expectations are too low for high-attaining children to make good progress and this is reflected in the limited work produced by them. Children's knowledge and understanding of shape is good. Less able children are able to trace numbers and can reliably count to ten. Children can sequence a series of instructions, such as how to lay a table or sort shapes for a model. They can use the correct vocabulary for number sentences, and grow more confident in the use of the appropriate signs such as 'equals', 'add' and 'subtract'. Children can use the language of position such as 'above', 'under' and 'behind'. Children's learning is best when activities are structured and have clear mathematical learning objectives that they understand. In lessons observed, when given too much independence, children found it easy to drift into colouring-in or making birthday cards, and the learning goals were lost. Where mathematical teaching was less satisfactory, the teaching lacked attention to the planned learning objectives and not enough structure was provided to sustain concentration and mathematical learning. Teaching also lacked enough encouragement to talk, play and think mathematically, relying on instructions and independence too much to move learning forward.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. The teaching is good and children are on course to achieve the early learning goals. Children use the grounds to explore a good wooded area and this resulted during the inspection in some good learning about spring. A lot of the present work is based on learning in the literacy lessons and the use of big books. Children investigate buds and make good observational drawings. They use construction kits to develop fixing skills. All the children have taken part in the imaginative use of construction kits to produce a bed for a teddy bear. Making hand puppets developed a good understanding of a range of materials and how to fix them together. Many of the children are already adept at using the computer and their mouse control is good. They are able to click and drag; for example, as observed in an activity to dress a teddy bear in the correct sequence.

Physical development

62. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The teaching is good. Children are given opportunities to help develop their manipulative skills through modelling activities, tracing handwriting patterns, building with small construction equipment and by completing colouring tasks. Most children can use scissors well, their pencil control is often good and their letters are becoming more legible. During a physical education lesson in the hall, children showed very good spatial awareness as they moved around in a variety of ways. Very good discussion about the effects of warming up and cooling down help children understand the need for exercise. Mature teamwork showed that children can follow a complex series of instructions. Outdoor play takes place in a covered area, and all the children enjoy riding bikes showing good control when pedalling. This learning is best when aided effectively by support staff.

Creative development

63. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with the majority of children being on course to achieve the expected early learning goals. They enjoy a range of experiences in music, art, story and imaginative play. The role-play areas reflect the literacy topics of Goldilocks and the Three Bears.

Children printed with sponges and used a construction kit to create 'Mig the Pig' in well taught sessions led by teaching assistants. Children use paint and collage to make a range of creative works and have good opportunities to make musical instruments. Background music during some activities helps maintain a quiet working atmosphere and develops children's

listening and appreciation skills. Action songs and rhymes are often heard and children join in with good knowledge and enthusiasm. Role-play offers children opportunities to act out events imaginatively and dress up appropriately. Very good links are made with literacy.

ENGLISH

64. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were 'just adequate', and are now in line with national expectations for most pupils by the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievement during Years 1 and 2 is sound. The improvement of standards in reading, writing and spelling was a key issue raised in the last inspection report, and higher-attaining pupils were not achieving well enough. They are now doing much better, and their performance was above the national average in reading last year. Boys are achieving at a better rate, and are out-performing the girls in some classes because of the school's closer attention to their progress. The few pupils from ethnic minority heritages achieve in line with their peers. Changes in staff have adversely affected the smooth progress of pupils, but there is now a brighter picture, as the current teachers work as a team to establish consistent ways of working, and explore ideas to stimulate pupils' interest and involvement in lessons.
65. The co-ordinator has taken a major role in the sound implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Together with the headteacher and colleagues, she has analysed the school's performance in national tests rigorously and identified areas for improvement. The school's focus is now on nudging up standards through attention to issues raised from the analysis, and from the effectively planned monitoring of teaching and learning.
66. Pupils' speaking skills are average overall, and higher-attaining pupils explain their ideas well and formulate questions effectively. Pupils usually listen well to their teachers and others in lessons, and carry out instructions effectively. By the end of Year 2, most pupils speak clearly and reply confidently to teachers' questions. For example, in a very good dance lesson in Year 2, pupils listened carefully before combining a series of movements to form a dance sequence. The school has introduced 'circle time', when pupils sit in a circle to discuss social issues, contribute ideas and gain skills in expressing their thoughts candidly. Higher-attaining pupils are articulate and express themselves well. When teaching is particularly effective, pupils listen attentively and take turns to contribute to discussions; for example in an excellent lesson in Year 2, pupils 'hot seated' a member of the class who pretended to be 'Rumpelstiltskin'. Most pupils listen well, but a few take time to settle and concentrate during the first part of lessons when teachers are explaining new ideas and questioning pupils' understanding.
67. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are satisfactory overall, but there is a wide range of attainment, with very good, fluent and expressive reading from higher-attaining pupils, to more hesitant reading from pupils who have difficulty in deciphering words. Regular teaching of letter sounds and patterns gives most pupils confidence and appropriate skills to decipher new words and gain meaning from texts. Higher-attaining pupils use a variety of clues, such as the context, understanding the characters and the story titles. These pupils read simple storybooks confidently, get absorbed in the stories and discuss the characters perceptively. All pupils benefit from reading together in the literacy hour, looking for rhyming words, noting the effect of punctuation and discussing the story or the information. For example, work on patterns of letters in Year 1, enabled pupils to group words with the 'ay' sound as in 'make' and 'rain'. In Year 2, pupils recognise more sophisticated punctuation such as speech marks and question marks, and begin to use them in their own writing.

68. By the end of Year 2, most pupils use simple dictionaries effectively and are confident in using the contents and index pages in books. Good teaching is evident in the promotion of pupils' interest in the work of significant children's authors; each term pupils explore a number of stories by a particular author, such as Jill Murphy. Most pupils, even the youngest in Year 1, are aware of the contribution of authors and illustrators to books. Pupils enjoy reading and there is literature of good quality in classrooms and the library. However, parental support for reading is hampered. This is because there are not enough graded reading books so that parents can help their children build on the work done in school.
69. The school's rigorous approach to the teaching of letter sounds ensures that, by the end of Year 2, most pupils are able to blend them into simple words in their writing. Teachers enrich the pupils' vocabulary by labelling displays and providing lists of useful words in the classroom. Pupils improve their spelling in sessions on the computers, when they test their knowledge of frequently used words and rhyming words. The careful introduction of the literacy hour has had a positive effect on the quality of pupils' writing, but many pupils do not write enough in lessons. They have skills that are not exercised enough to take them on at a faster rate. In the less successful lessons, teachers do not always drive the learning forward fast enough by monitoring pupils' progress tightly and ensuring that they maintain concentration. In whole-class sessions, pupils benefit from the clear focus on work on words and sentences; for example, when older pupils explored the component parts of compound words such as 'lighthouse', 'saucepan' and 'teapot'.
70. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops appropriately in their writing. They begin to plan their stories and there is a clear sense of narrative as higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 use more interesting words such as 'then', 'because' and 'next', to connect sentences. In non-fiction writing, pupils sequence events with increasing skill; for example, when lower-attaining pupils in Year 1 explored how to write instructions. Teachers extend pupils' writing skills in other subjects; for example, pupils in Year 2 wrote accounts of the Great Fire of London which they were learning about in history. Handwriting is good. It is correctly formed and evenly sized, and pupils join their writing effectively. Pupils usually present their work well, and there is an increasing use of ICT as pupils word-process their work attractively for display.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, it varied from satisfactory to excellent, and examples of very good teaching were seen in both year groups. The work of teaching assistants is significant in ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs, make progress in lessons in line with their classmates. From the work seen in pupils' books, teaching over time has been satisfactory, but not enough work has been done by some pupils. Teaching in Year 2 has been more thorough than in Year 1. The marking of pupils' work is variable. At its best, the marking takes pupils' learning on quickly, helping them to understand what they have to do next to improve their work. Very good and excellent lessons were characterised by well-chosen and effectively planned activities for each group and a brisk pace that stimulated pupils and encouraged them to learn at a good rate. In the less effective lessons, the pupils sat for too long on the carpet and became restless because they wanted to get on with activities.
72. In the literacy hour, all teachers choose texts thoughtfully so that pupils can relate to them. Pupils concentrated best when lessons were varied and included some fun; for example, in a very good lesson in Year 2, the teacher had a cloak for 'Red Riding Hood', and pupils talked about old Western movies, before they made 'Wanted' posters to find the wolf. In a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher kept pupils interested in learning about 'ay', 'ai' and 'a-e' sounds by displaying silly questions such as, 'Can you bake a train?' and getting the pupils to hold up 'Yes' or 'No' cards. Because they enjoyed the activity, the pupils made good progress in learning the spelling.
73. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress overall and achieve satisfactorily. Individual learning plans are constructed carefully, with short, achievable steps. The school's co-ordinator for special educational needs withdraws groups of pupils. She works with them on specific areas of difficulty; for example, when pupils in Year 1 practised spelling words and constructing sentences. The teacher got the pupils to use a variety of senses to achieve the

main points of the lesson; the pupils closed their eyes to memorise spellings and drew the shapes of letters 'in the air'. Careful observation of the pupils enabled the teacher to help them concentrate - she reminded them regularly about how to sit properly. Better use could be made of the co-ordinator's skills to raise the quality of teaching in the classroom, so that other teachers could learn from her considerable expertise and accelerate pupils' achievement in more lessons.

74. The school has developed helpful assessment procedures that track groups and individual pupils effectively. This information enables the senior management team to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment and to set realistic targets for improvement. The school's success in achieving better results for higher-achieving pupils (in line with the national average last year) was the result of analyses that showed that these pupils could do better. In order to develop all pupils' sense of responsibility for their own progress, teachers set targets with them so that they know what they need to do next to improve their writing. Although this is a good move in promoting higher standards, the system is not yet embedded enough and targets are not always set in small enough steps for individual pupils to aim at them quickly and gain success frequently. These smaller steps could help average-attaining pupils to make faster progress.
75. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work, and her involvement in observing lessons and helping teachers to increase their effectiveness has raised expectations in writing. However, there is inconsistency between classes in the amount of work pupils do during lessons. The setting of homework is inconsistent, especially in Year 1. In Year 2, pupils do some lovely work at home. In a weekend diary, a pupil wrote, 'We put on a show for the parents. I was the fairy queen and I wanted red flowers instead of white'. Improvements in the standard and range of materials to support the literacy hour have had a positive impact on pupils' learning, but the range and quality of graded books is not good enough to support and extend the reading of pupils at home.

MATHEMATICS

76. Standards have risen since the last inspection, keeping pace with national improvements. Higher-attaining pupils achieved well in last year's national tests, when their performance was better than the national average. Boys and girls achieve similarly and work together effectively. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds enjoy the subject and achieve in line with other pupils.
77. By the end of Year 2, pupils have secure calculating skills. Higher-attaining pupils work confidently with numbers to 100 or more; for example, using a number square to find the difference between 72 and 54, and rephrasing what they find as the corresponding addition sum, $54 + 18 = 72$. Other pupils work out addition and subtraction sums correctly, but have not yet fully grasped the connection between them. Pupils are developing sound problem-solving skills, because there has been an increased focus on this aspect of work. They explore patterns and record work systematically, for example, using 'ladybird spot' diagrams to explain patterns of doubles. Pupils make sound use of their numeracy skills in other subjects; for example, measuring how far a car rolls in a science experiment about friction. They have satisfactory knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes and use appropriate language to describe objects such as a cube or pyramid. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve the standards expected of them. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs often need adult help in order to complete work successfully.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers manage classes well and have very good relationships with pupils, who in turn, have positive attitudes to their work. Pupils work well together, and lessons proceed calmly. Most pupils behave well, although occasional interruptions by a small number of pupils spoil the lesson for others and slow lessons down. Where teaching is good, lessons proceed at a brisk pace and work is well matched to the needs of different pupils in the class. Lively question and answer sessions at the start of the lesson challenge pupils' to explain; for example, how to work out how many cards remain in the teacher's hand once she has dropped some of them on the floor. In addition, pupils respond well to demanding work, such as changing addition sums into equivalent subtraction sums and vice versa.

79. Lessons follow the recommended three-part lesson structure set out in the National Numeracy Strategy. Planning is generally good, and sets out clearly what pupils of different abilities are to learn. However, in a few lessons there is not enough difference in the work set for higher-ability pupils and those with special educational needs. For example, in a lesson on measuring, higher-ability pupils were not stretched adequately on work involving standard units of measurement, while the least able were unable to do the work. Some lessons are only satisfactory overall because, despite some good features, they are too slow and pupils are not productive enough. They become restless, lose concentration and their rate of progress slows. In all lessons, the teachers' promotion of correct subject vocabulary helps pupils to talk confidently about mathematics.
80. In some lessons, teaching assistants monitor pupils' behaviour and contributions to class discussions, for later feedback to the teacher. This uses their time productively. In other lessons they are not deployed as well as they could be, particularly during whole-class teaching. However, they support pupils of all abilities effectively in group work, keeping pupils well focused on what they should be doing, questioning pupils effectively and checking work so that errors are quickly corrected. Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress, including 'First of the month books' that contain a selection of annotated pupils' work. Assessments are accurate and give a clear picture of how well pupils are getting on. All pupils are set targets for improvement. These are satisfactory, but they are not reviewed frequently enough to move learning on at a fast enough pace. Examination of pupils' books shows that long-term progress is satisfactory, but the pace of learning is too slow.
81. The use of ICT to enhance and extend pupils' mathematical understanding is satisfactory and is developing. Pupils explore number patterns and shapes in simple games, and they create rudimentary graphs from information collected in practical lessons; for example, when they explored the favourite foods of members of the class. ICT was used very well in a Year 2 lesson about doubling when pupils explored patterns and could see them unfolding on the screen. Literacy is promoted satisfactorily as pupils learn new mathematical vocabulary and record their investigations
82. The co-ordinator for mathematics is knowledgeable and leads developments in the subject well. Priorities for improvement, aimed at raising standards, are clearly set out in the school development plan. Assessment information is used well in long-term planning. For example, an increased focus on problem-solving and the use of mathematical language has developed from an analysis of test data that revealed weaknesses in these areas. Following a period of adjustment, the school is now well placed to build on past achievements and to raise pupils' standards in mathematics further.

SCIENCE

83. Improvements in science since the last inspection have been good. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment have risen to be in line with the national average. This is to a large extent due to improvements in subject leadership, the quality of teaching, the amount of investigation, the use made of assessment of work, and the degree of independence given to pupils.
84. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are in line with the national average. Pupils make sensible suggestions to solve practical problems. For example, in one class, when teddy 'was frightened to go too fast down the slide', they understood the effect of friction on movement and produced a variety of ideas that showed their ability to predict. One of the more able pupils volunteered that teddy should be harnessed to a parachute. In a very good lesson in Year 1, most pupils understood the need for a fair test when comparing the effects of different sails on a boat's speed. This entailed above average reasoning, and was inspired by the high quality of the teaching. Overall, pupils achieve well. The main scientific strengths in Year 2 are the pupils' knowledge and understanding of life and living things. Pupils compare different creatures and the more able understand how the bodies of animals relate to their habitat. Most pupils know what living creatures need to live and what constitutes a healthy diet. Pupils are least confident about

physical processes. Higher-attaining pupils achieve satisfactorily when considering ideas, such as conduction of electricity. Pupils with special educational needs achieve in line with the rest, both in mental and practical work. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

85. The quality of teaching is good and is improving. In the lessons seen, there were equal proportions of good and very good teaching. Scrutiny of pupils' work showed that there have been variations in expectations of pupils' depth of thinking, of detail in their writing and of presentation. Long-term planning ensures that pupils have access to the National Curriculum. Teachers frequently encourage pupils to learn by asking the question, 'why?', and provide good opportunities for them to solve problems. Teachers value contributions from all pupils, and ensure that those from ethnic minorities achieve at least in line with their peers. Pupils develop in literacy when carefully preparing written explanations. Mathematical skills are developed, and ICT is used effectively; for example, pupils used computers to show a relationship between children's height and the length of their feet. A careful balance of listening to the teacher and practical activity during lessons engages pupils' interest. This leads to good attitudes and behaviour and sometimes a considerable degree of initiative.
86. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are good. Teachers regularly use what they learn from testing to track an individual pupil's progress, and to plan future lessons. Assessment procedures also enable teachers to be more accurate in their predictions of pupils' attainment. Communication between teachers and assistants about pupils' work is good. Resources are good and, with the exception of the computers, are used well. The environmental area and pond are particularly well used. Pupils carry out interesting activities, such as investigating a log-pile and pond-dipping. These contribute to their awareness of the wonders of living things.
87. The subject co-ordinator monitors developments in the subject well and ensures the school's priorities are focused on raising standards and are relevant to pupils' needs. She looks at teachers' planning and monitors pupils' work, but has not yet monitored teaching and learning in lessons. Monitoring in classrooms is planned as part of the school's rolling programme for raising standards in all subjects.

ART AND DESIGN

88. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment in art and design was above national expectations by the end of Year 2. Teachers continue to have high expectations of what pupils can do and have worked hard to plan and prepare challenging work that enables pupils to acquire a good range of artistic skills. The co-ordinator has led the subject well.
89. Pupils acquire good levels of skill in drawing, painting and picture composition. The promotion of specific artistic vocabulary, such as 'collage', 'shading' and 'ephemeral', enhances pupils' use of language. Pupils express their ideas well as they illustrate their work in a range of subjects with lively drawings and imaginative paintings. For example, in work on 'forces' in science, pupils drew well-observed pictures of people riding scooters and pushing buggies. In music, pupils interpreted the music of Saint Saens' 'Carnival of the Animals' by painting wavy lines at different angles to show the ambulation of the animals. Pupils become increasingly observant and gain confidence in using a variety of materials to communicate ideas and effects. They show maturity in the way they develop patterns, from a small piece of material at the centre of a piece of paper to the paper's edges. Ephemeral art is promoted, as pupils create 'pictures' from natural materials laid out in the school's garden.
90. Teachers emphasise the development of artistic skills such as mixing colours to achieve a desired effect, and smudging charcoal drawings to show depth and shape. Pupils in Year 1 did some good charcoal drawings of teddy bears, with smudges to show the fluffiness of the fur. Three-dimensional work is developed well as pupils make clay pots and design collages. Work with clay is linked well to scientific investigations on changes in materials. In a project in design

and technology in Year 2, pupils used ICT very effectively to draw beautiful designs for Joseph's coat of many colours. There are other good links with religious education; for example, when pupils created a beautiful collage of Vishnu, the Hindu god. The work included sparkly materials and shows the god's four arms holding significant Hindu objects. The self-esteem of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is raised when work, such as this, gives value to art from other cultures.

91. Pupils are enthusiastic about art and design. They acquire a love of the subject because of the school's interesting provision and good teaching. Pupils take pride in their own work and respect each other's efforts. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from expressing their ideas in a subject where words are not needed.
92. Little teaching was seen, but from the good quality of pupils' work, teaching over time has been good. Planning is good, resources are varied and easily accessible and classes are organised to ensure that all pupils have equal access to every activity. Very good links with other subjects

bring relevance to the teaching and learning. Assessments are made informally within lessons and appropriate records and portfolios of pupils' work are kept to show progress and attainment over time.

93. The action plan for the development of art and design is a very good. This includes improving teaching further to develop pupils' artistic skills in a systematic way, and identifies the organisation of an 'Art and Environment' week in the summer. Collaboration with a local college of adult education is fruitful. This has resulted in some stunning work, based on the designs of pupils' from Mill Rythe. Beautiful stained glass windows and a large mural enhance the school's entrance. Such work inspires and encourages pupils to produce work of high quality.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Standards in design and technology are above expectations by the end of Year 2. Standards have improved since the last inspection and curricular provision is now better. Planning is now good, showing continuity in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding throughout Years 1 and 2. The subject is usually taught weekly, enhanced from time to time by 'focus weeks' of intense teaching that serves to enhance pupils' interest and motivation. Such a week had just been held, so there were no lessons during the week of the inspection. Pupils' attainment during these focus weeks is very good. The work of both boys and girls is interesting and well executed. Evidence for judgements about standards is based on scrutiny of pupils' work, especially that from the previous week. All pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well and higher-attaining pupils are adequately challenged.
95. Pupils in Year 1 make a variety of puppets incorporating levers, pivots and sliders, and using a variety of materials. They use appropriate methods for cutting and fixing, and mathematical skills are used well for measuring. They develop literacy skills in describing their work and through the effective links made with stories; for example, in work based on the story of 'Old Bear'. During scientific investigations on 'forces', pupils became more aware of the structure of vehicles and the importance of wheels that have to grip different surfaces. In history, pupils have looked at a variety of old and new toys and considered the mechanisms that help them move. There were good links with religious education as pupils in Year 2 developed skills for sewing and gluing when they designed and made 'Joseph's coat'. Pupils' achieved well as they embellished 'Joseph's coat' with artistic designs that were carefully applied. Pupils took photographs of their work, using a digital camera. Pupils made effective designs, produced the coats and evaluated their work, suggesting ways in which the garments could be improved.
96. No judgement is given for teaching, as none was seen. Leadership of the subject is good and the co-ordinator is keen to involve staff in professional development to further enhance pupils' learning. Since the last inspection, the school has addressed the weaknesses that were identified, such as

the use of time and planning for covering the requirements of the National Curriculum. The latest national guidelines for the subject have been adopted and planning follows these to continue to raise standards. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work. Resources are good and are well organised for each unit of study. The use of assessment to improve skills is currently undeveloped, as is the use of ICT to support the subject. Design and technology contributes helpfully to the pupils' social and personal development.

GEOGRAPHY

97. Standards at the time of the last inspection were good. At this inspection there was not enough evidence to assess current standards in geography. Pupils are taught history and geography alternately, and recent teaching has been in history. The small amount of geographical work available shows that pupils have satisfactory mapping skills by the end of Year 2. Good use is made of the locality to enhance and reinforce pupils' learning so that teaching is relevant to

pupils' own lives. Pupils draw simple sketch maps to show how they get to school, and use a key to identify significant buildings, such as the shop and the church. In preparation for later work on reading maps, pupils create symbols and draw a key to mark features along the route.

98. Curricular provision is good. Planning is good, and includes visits to the beach and Portsmouth for work on the locality and how it compares with other places nearby. Parents are involved well in helping with visits. Pupils study the human and physical features of settlements and learn to look for similarities and differences in the way people live and use the land. Teachers use interesting methods, such as getting pupils to take a teddy bear for a weekend away or on holiday, to help extend pupils' knowledge of a variety of places and enhance their skills of recording. The teddy reports back on what he has seen and done. As they look further afield to other parts of the world, pupils consider the effects of the weather on people's lives. The use of ICT is not planned as effectively as it could be to enhance pupils' learning.
99. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not embedded, so that each pupil's progress cannot be clearly tracked as they complete topics. Geography is led and managed by a temporary co-ordinator since the previous co-ordinator left last year. Satisfactory arrangements are in hand to appoint a successor. In the meantime, the school recognises the need to improve assessment arrangements.

HISTORY

100. Standards are not as high as at the time of the last inspection, when they were good. They are now satisfactory. The school has focused on work in literacy and numeracy. Judgements are based on the observation of teaching in Year 1, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with the co-ordinator and talking with a group of pupils from Year 2.
101. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils successfully compare life in earlier times, such as the Victorian era, with their own lives. They know that history goes back well before they were born, and understand dates and the sequence of events on a time line. They write accounts and letters using their literacy and computer skills; higher-attaining pupils give considerable detail. Progress from Year 1 to 2 is good. In Year 1, pupils record their learning with captioned illustrations. In Year 2, writing is much more developed. Pupils with special educational needs talk and write at a level that matches their abilities and therefore make satisfactory progress. Pupils recognise why people behaved in the way they did during events in the past. They know about significant historical figures such as Guy Fawkes and Samuel Pepys. They understand that 'Poppy Day' commemorates the death of soldiers in wars.

102. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to handle old toys and to compare their features with those of more modern versions. This caused a great deal of excitement amongst both boys and girls. There was discussion about how to use artefacts to learn about the past, so that the lesson made an exciting contribution to the development of both oral and historical skills. Pupils from minority ethnic groups benefit from this practical way of teaching because they are able to relate more easily to real and often unfamiliar objects than to reading about them. Where teaching was weaker, not enough time was given to handling artefacts and discussing them, and pupils did not benefit from the opportunity of developing skills of historical enquiry.
103. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily and gives adequate support to teachers. Priorities for the future are appropriate. They include maintaining a portfolio of pupils' work that has been assessed against national expectations. This will give a clear picture of standards and will provide helpful information for all staff, especially those new to the school. Observations of teaching and learning are also planned so that specific aspects of provision can be identified and improved. The curriculum is well enhanced through visits. Pupils visit a museum and take on historical roles to find out more about what it was like to live in a Victorian home at Christmas time. Pupils also learn more about British history and local heritage as they make exciting visits to 'The Warrior' vessel in Portsmouth.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection; they are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to use computers confidently, use a word-processor correctly, control a mouse efficiently and use the tools knowledgeably and understand the range of effects they can achieve. Pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their peers and enjoy using computers. Pupils use ICT to enhance their literacy skills, utilising well-chosen programs. They can print, use a scanner and digital camera, as well as save their work confidently. Pupils use graphic packages effectively in art and design to produce pictures and alter images. Most pupils have access to computers at home, which contributes well to their confidence and to the progress they make. At school, pupils have good access to a range of control technology, including the use of a programmable robot, digital photography, use of scanners and tape recorders. In Year 2, effective teaching during a project on communication enabled pupils to explore the use of word-processing, e-mail and the Internet, and compare these with the use of mobile phones, radio, and speech.
105. Pupils' attitudes to ICT are good, and they enjoy the subject. They co-operate well as they work in pairs; boys and girls work well together and achieve similarly. Because of their secure skills in ICT, higher-attaining pupils have the confidence to work independently; for example, they created 'storyboards' to outline the plot of stories in literacy and religious education. Only a limited amount of teaching in ICT was observed during the week of the inspection, when support staff worked with small groups. Teaching is satisfactory overall with good questioning that encourages pupils to use their skills and sort out problems. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' skills, but do not always get pupils to complete enough work. Pupils sometimes rely on too much help before they concentrate hard enough.
106. Curricular planning for ICT is good. The current arrangement of clusters, each of three or four computers per year group, restricts pupils' access to machines. The school could do more to identify how ICT skills could be used and developed. ICT is used well in literacy, history and art and design, but is not developed enough in design and technology, geography and music. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from practising spellings and exploring number games on computers.
107. The headteacher has managed the subject effectively. A permanent co-ordinator has been appointed to take on the role later in the school year. Good provision has been made to develop teachers' skills in ICT and assessment procedures are in hand. All teachers have completed the nationally recommended training and now use laptops for planning work. Further training has been identified to develop the skills of all teaching assistants to improve their impact on teaching

and learning. A two-year development plan has been devised which details basic actions for improvement. The school has good links with the local secondary school, and is part of the community bid for specialist status that will give Mill Rythe access to a qualified technician, and pupils and parents access to enhanced facilities.

MUSIC

108. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in music is in line with national expectations. Standards are lower than at the last inspection because the school has concentrated on major initiatives in other subjects and there is currently no music specialist. Plans to appoint a qualified co-ordinator to lead the subject are in hand.
109. Pupils sing enthusiastically in assemblies. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing songs such as 'He's Got the Whole World in His Hands' rhythmically, in tune and with a satisfactory range of expression to match the words. Literacy is promoted effectively as pupils learn the words of songs, and numeracy is used when pupils repeat rhythms and compose simple pieces.
110. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well organised, and the music room is well equipped for practical music making, although a wider range of recorded music is needed to support pupils' understanding of other cultures. Pupils reach above average standards in recorder playing because they are taught very well. In one lesson the teacher's expertise in playing the flute ensured that pupils learned the correct technique for playing the recorder. The lesson was very well structured and work was increasingly demanding. A good recording of 'blues' and 'calypso' music supported learning well because the music was also very well arranged for beginners to play. The whole lesson captured pupils' interest and attention very well; pupils worked extremely hard and made very good progress. Pupils from ethnic minorities enjoy the range of music in lessons. In another very good lesson, pupils listened to recordings attentively and correctly identified the instruments they heard in extracts from 'The Carnival of the Animals', which they know was written by Saint-Saëns. They use language such as 'bumpy' and 'fast' and draw their own posters to illustrate the music. One poster was clearly related to the part about the elephant.
111. Other teaching was satisfactory. Pupils explored the sounds that instruments make; for example, they devised their own representations of the wolf or other characters in the story of 'Peter and the Wolf'. However, teaching expertise was not strong enough to develop pupils' playing skills enough, or to show them clearly how music can be used to paint a musical picture.
112. Pupils' behaviour is good because they enjoy lessons and want to do well. Activities such as learning to play the recorder and taking part in school performances, including the recent production of 'Joseph', contribute well to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils with special educational needs are enthusiastic in music lessons; they enjoy expressing their feelings through singing and playing.
113. A satisfactory outline policy for music is in place and the development plan shows clear priorities for improvement once a new co-ordinator has been appointed. The curriculum is satisfactory, and there are plans for a formal scheme of work, including the use of ICT for simple composition, with accompanying procedures for the regular assessment of pupils' progress.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

114. The attainment of most pupils by the end of Year 2 is above that expected. These good standards have been maintained since the last inspection, although the subject has not been a major focus for development in that time.

115. In an excellent lesson for pupils in Year 2, pupils used their imagination very well to create a dance sequence. The teacher's thoughtful and effective provision of scarves helped pupils to extend their movements as they swirled, twisted and flowed around the hall, reflecting the mood of pieces linked to their music lessons. Pupils demonstrated excellent control as they sustained a long sequence of movements with a wide variety of levels, shapes, directions and speeds. In Year 1, pupils have a good understanding of the space in which they are working. They develop an awareness of how to work alongside other people and allow for their movements. They use a variety of movements, speeds and directions with increasing confidence. In team games, they work together well, are very co-operative and have a good understanding of rules and scoring.
116. Pupils' attitudes towards the subject are good. They change quickly and quietly, and walk sensibly to the hall so as not to disturb other classes. They get resources sensibly and know the rules and importance of health and safety. They clearly enjoy lessons and respond promptly to the teachers' instructions. Boys and girls work well together and achieve similarly. Overall, the teaching is good, although the range of teaching seen varied from excellent to unsatisfactory. Warm-up sessions are often productive and used for discussion about the effects of exercise on the body. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and this gives the pupils confidence. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds integrate well and achieve in line with their peers.
117. Throughout the school, a strength that significantly contributes to pupils' good attainment is the opportunity for pupils to appraise and evaluate their own performance and that of others. This is used very effectively to improve learning within each lesson and pupils show good understanding of their own abilities. Where the teaching observed had weaknesses, it was due to pupils not being able to consolidate ball skills practised in previous lessons. Sometimes too little was expected of pupils, which meant they resorted to some silliness. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs was evident, especially for pupils with behavioural difficulties. For example, support staff worked alongside pupils to ensure that they participated safely in activities. Rewards and sanctions are administered fairly so that pupils are motivated to participate in and benefit from lessons.
118. The subject is well led as a result of the co-ordinator's good subject knowledge and understanding, especially in the dance aspects of the curriculum. Planning is based on a nationally accepted scheme of work and ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum. It is well monitored, and the co-ordinator has good knowledge of provision within and between year groups. There is a comprehensive record keeping system that is being developed to store pupils' targets and inform planning.
119. The school has a good-sized hall and access to good outdoor facilities. Resources for games, gymnastics and dance are good. They are well organised, easily accessible and have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. During the summer months, pupils learn to swim in the outdoor pool of the adjoining junior school. There are few opportunities for pupils with specific interests or talents to extend their skills through extra-curricular activities, although a very popular games club is provided as a paid activity.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. Standards of attainment have not kept pace with the increasing demands of the locally agreed syllabus, which has been introduced since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was good. Nevertheless, overall standards meet requirements.
121. Pupils' short-term recall of facts is above average; for example, they recall facts about the story of Vishnu in the Hindu religion, give details about the characters in the story and understand what it is about. Pupils empathise well with religious figures; for example, when they write about Christmas from the Wise Men's point of view. They show maturity when they explain the religious significance of symbols such as poppies that commemorate self-sacrifice in war. Literacy is promoted well as pupils write harvest prayers that show a genuine sense of thanksgiving. Pupils

word-process some of their written work. However, their knowledge is not consolidated enough. Although in the past they have heard stories from the Bible, they often cannot recall them.

122. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection. Pupils' work was scrutinised and a discussion was held with several pupils. Evidence indicated that, overall, the quality of teaching has been satisfactory. The observed lesson was an example of good teaching that established good learning because it motivated pupils and encouraged them to achieve. Skilful questioning included all pupils and reinforced factual knowledge about the Hindu religion. The teacher encouraged pupils with special educational needs to participate in all aspects of the lesson, and nurtured research skills to promote independent learning.
123. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory support for colleagues. There has been an emphasis on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, but more effort is now needed to bring standards in religious education up their former strength. Plans for the subject are appropriately prioritised and the co-ordinator recognises the need to develop a portfolio of pupils' work as soon as possible. This will provide helpful guidance for all teachers, especially those new to the profession, in assessing the standards of pupils' written work. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development through the curricular experiences it provides. These have included a successful week where pupils had the opportunity to learn an Indian dance, make Rangoli mats, and play Indian music. Such cross-curricular links enrich pupils' learning and give them a greater understanding of the range of cultures in modern Britain. The self-esteem of pupils from ethnic minority heritages is nurtured in the school's programme of teaching about a good range of faiths and cultures.