

INSPECTION REPORT

Belle Vue Infant School

Aldershot

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116234

Headteacher: Mrs Anna Bassford

Lead inspector: Mrs Christine Huard

Dates of inspection: 12th -15th January 2004

Inspection number: 255480

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	237
School address:	Belle Vue Road Aldershot Hampshire
Postcode:	GU12 4RZ
Telephone number:	01252 323494
Fax number:	01252 315212
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Steve Curtis
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Belle Vue Infant School is situated in a residential area close to Aldershot town centre. It caters for pupils between the ages of four and seven and nearly all attend from the local area. Children are from a wide range of social backgrounds but the majority live in local authority or housing association flats and houses surrounding the school. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. There are 237 pupils on roll and slightly more boys than girls, with the imbalance spread amongst the classes. Children join the Reception class at the start of the Year in which they are five, with the eldest starting in September and the rest of the intake entering on a staggered basis, with all children attending full time by the middle of November. Most children have had some sort of pre-school experience. When they join the school attainment is across a wide range but overall well below average. The population is fairly mobile. During the last year 16 pupils left, and 11 joined the school. About 5 per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups, but only 5 pupils receive any support with learning English. The main minority ethnic groups represented in the school are mixed white and black Caribbean, and Asian. A high proportion of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. Two pupils – have statements of special educational need. These statements relate to pupils with autistic tendencies and speech and communication difficulties. The school has just been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and also has achieved the Investors In People award, and Healthy Schools status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27290	Mrs Christine Huard	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage, science, art and music. English as an additional language.
13849	Mrs Elizabeth Bewes	Lay Inspector	
32649	Mrs Diane Hockey	Team Inspector	Mathematics, ICT (Information and information technology), Design and technology, physical education.
27960	Ms Jane Reed	Team Inspector	English, History, Geography, religious education. Special educational needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Belle Vue Infant School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and gives sound value for money. Although standards are below average pupils achieve satisfactorily in comparison with their starting points in the reception class. The quality of teaching and learning are sound overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very strong and overall the leadership and management of the school are reasonably effective. There is a good emphasis on identifying and taking positive action about areas needing improvement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The very strong leadership of the headteacher.
- Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science although pupils are achieving satisfactorily.
- The pupils are eager to learn and behave very well in and around the school.
- There is very good provision for the pupils with special educational needs.
- Some teachers' expectations of what their higher attaining pupils can achieve are too low.
- There is a good, broad curriculum which is enriched by a wide range of activities.
- There is too little recorded work in some subjects.
- The pupils' personal development is very good and very well monitored by the school.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- The school cares for its pupils highly effectively.

After the last inspection in March 1998, standards rose significantly. However, the school has recently been through a period when it has encountered great difficulties in trying to recruit suitably qualified staff. As a result, the quality of teaching declined and pupils did not learn as well as they had done previously. Consequently, there has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection when the school was judged to provide very well for its pupils. The school took appropriate measures to deal with the issue relating to science, but the staff who had been trained, left, and the school had to start again. However, sound progress is now being made in this area. There has been a good improvement in the provision for pupils' cultural development. There is now greater stability in the staff team and the school is moving forward again.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	C	E	D	C
writing	B	D	E	C
mathematics	B	D	D	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children start in reception with skills knowledge and understanding that are well below average overall. They receive a sound start to their education and achieve appropriately although most are unlikely to achieve the goals expected nationally¹ in language literacy and communication, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they move into Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, although pupils achieve satisfactorily, standards are generally below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

¹ The Early Learning Goals refer to the six areas of learning covered in the Foundation Stage (Reception class). These are: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

Although most pupils are likely to reach the expected level 2 by the end of Year 2, very few pupils are likely to reach the higher level 3 because of their poor recording skills. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive.

Pupils' personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils' are very keen to learn and their behaviour in and around the school is very good.

There has been a marked improvement in the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development since the last inspection. Although most pupils arrive at school on time, attendance is unsatisfactory because too many families take holidays during term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Children in the Reception class make suitable progress in their learning. They achieve appropriately. Their needs have been assessed and teaching usually ensures they are met. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is sound. Lessons are generally well planned and most pupils learn and often achieve well orally in lessons because they eagerly respond to the skilled questioning of their teachers. However, they are not given sufficient opportunities to record what they have learned and as a result their writing and recording skills are poor. Pupils learn satisfactorily and pupils are learning to collaborate well so that their independent learning skills are developing well. Some teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive very good support as do those for whom English is not their mother tongue.

The overall quality of the curriculum is good. There is a very wide range of exciting extra-curricular activities, and a variety of visits and visitors which further stimulate and enrich pupils' learning. The care, guidance and support for pupils are very good. Relationships with parents and the local community are good and have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, with particular strengths in the leadership provided by the headteacher. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has provided stability for the school in what has been a very difficult two years. She has managed the difficulties with staffing highly professionally and ensured that the positive and caring ethos of the school has not been eroded or compromised. She has a very clear direction for the further development of the school and has an astute knowledge of what requires further improvement and how this can be brought about. She is ably supported by her deputy, and by the senior leadership team, who, although inexperienced, are committed and enthusiastic. Governors take their responsibilities to challenge the school seriously and fulfil their statutory requirements. They have been supportive over issues concerning financial management and ensure that spending is suitably focused on actions taken to raise standards. Most subject co-ordinators are new to the role. They manage their subjects competently and have drawn up sound action plans for further improvement. They are beginning to monitor teaching and learning appropriately.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are supportive of the school and are pleased with the information they receive. The pupils greatly enjoy school. Their views are valued and taken into account.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to write across all subjects in order to develop their recording skills.
- Ensure that expectations and challenge are high in all classes, so that all pupils, including the most able, achieve as well as they can.
- Improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are generally **below average** by the time the pupils leave school having entered the Reception year with skills that were well below average overall. Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall because it is better in some classes than others and there is an inconsistency in the quality of work produced.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising although they are still below national averages.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is well below average and affects standards in all subjects and leads to fewer pupils achieving the higher level 3.

Commentary

1. The results of national tests in 2003 showed an improvement on the previous year except in writing. When compared with all schools, results in reading, mathematics and science were below average and results in writing were well below average. In comparison with schools that receive a similar proportion of free school meals, results in reading, writing, mathematics and science were average and results in mathematics were above average. The school carefully analyses its performance and has identified appropriate areas for further development. The last inspection in 1998 reported that standards were well below that expected for their age when children entered the reception class but that by the end of Key Stage 1 attainment was in line with national expectations, except in science. One major factor that has adversely affected results in recent years has been the high staff turnover, this was caused by external factors and staffing levels now appear to have stabilised.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.2 (14.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.6 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.9 (15.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 73 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Standards of speaking and listening are good by the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve well. Teachers ask questions that require detailed responses and pupils are given opportunities to speak at length. For example, in the celebration assembly pupils spoke about their work and why they thought it was particularly good. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and to each other and take care when constructing their responses.

3. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good. A significant proportion of the pupils have special needs and great emphasis is put on helping them to achieve their potential. The number of pupils who are removed from the register as they progress through the school can demonstrate the success of the schools support. Pupils with English as an additional language are provided with good support which enables them to achieve well.

4. Standards of written work seen in pupils' books are poor. This is because although there is much discussion and practical work carried out in all subjects there is insufficient focus on written recording although other forms of recording such as pictures and diagrams have been used. Whilst many pupils can talk with enthusiasm about their work they are less keen to commit their ideas to

paper. The lack of focus on writing is evident throughout the school, although more evident in some classes than in others. For example, in the Foundation Stage some children were given clocks with pre-printed numbers instead of being given the opportunity to try to form the numbers themselves. In science, Year 2 pupils do not record information clearly or in enough detail. Although there are diagrams to show what pupils have done, in some classes there is insufficient writing or annotation about their findings. Pupils' low achievement in writing affects standards in other subjects, such as history and geography, and as a result some average and higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they might. The Headteacher and senior management team have identified this weakness and strategies have already been put in place to raise standards.

5. Children start in the reception class at various times in the autumn term depending on their age. When they start school children's skills are lower than that expected for them. Children's achievements are satisfactory through reception and at the time of the inspection progress towards the early learning goal of personal, social and emotional development is as would be expected for the age. However, by the time they reach Year 1, many will not have reached the levels expected for them in the other early learning goals of language skills, knowledge of number, creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

6. The school ensures that all pupils from different backgrounds are included in all aspects of school life. During the inspection there were no significant variations in the attainment of boys or girls or from pupils of different backgrounds or ethnicity. Pupils who join the school during the school year are provided with good support, which enables them to integrate quickly and achieve as well as other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils enjoy coming to school, behave very well and have **very good** attitudes to learning. Relationships throughout the school are very good and this has a positive impact on achievement and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils have very good attitudes to their work.
- The school sets high expectations for behaviour and works hard to achieve them.
- The strategies for promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

7. Nearly all the pupils have very good attitudes to school, as at the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and willingly become involved in everything that the school provides for them. The way in which the pupils approach their work in lessons and elsewhere makes a positive contribution to the standards they achieve. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel that their views are taken into account, particularly through the school council.

8. Behaviour is very good. Pupils get on well with each other, in lessons and at lunch and break times. In general the pupils are courteous and polite, being friendly with adults and they willingly engage in conversation and discussion. The pupils respond well to the high standards of behaviour expected. School rules are clear. Teachers and support staff provide good role models promoting the principles of right from wrong and dealing with the occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour consistently well. Provision for children in the reception classes to acquire social and personal skills is good, and these children make good progress in this important area of learning. Pupils with special educational needs have very positive attitudes to learning and they are confident when contributing to whole class discussions. A small number of pupils have associated behaviour difficulties which are very well managed with excellent support from the headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator who understand the pupils' needs well.

9. The strategies for ensuring pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good overall and have improved significantly since the last inspection. Spiritual development is now very good and assemblies, in particular, are thoughtful and inspiring occasions in which a sense of peace and calm abound and pupils have the opportunity to reflect on issues pertinent to them and the world about them. The use of prayers from different cultures and religions reflect the thought and that goes into the planning of these whole school times. The promotion of moral and social development is very good and a significant strength. Pupils are taught to reflect on their own and others actions show consideration for others and learn to respect their views. The reward system plays a particular part in ensuring that pupils develop a clear sense of right and wrong. Cultural awareness has been developed well since the last inspection and the school now ensures that pupils are aware of the culturally diverse society in which they are growing up and provides appropriate teaching and resources to re-inforce this.

10. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory because of the high level of unauthorised absence. Too many pupils are taken away on holiday during term time for longer than the legally permitted period and against the advice of the school. In addition, some parents have a relaxed attitude to attendance and fail to provide adequate reasons why their children are absent. Absence is a concern to the school because of the adverse effect it has on the progress made by the pupils as they miss areas of learning and consequently have gaps in their knowledge. Recent initiatives are beginning to have a positive impact and an analysis of attendance over recent weeks has shown some improvement.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	1.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

There have been no exclusions in the past year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching is satisfactory overall although there are considerable strengths in the teaching in some classes. The school offers a good curriculum which is supported by a very good range of visits and extra-curricular activities. The good ethos ensures that good care support and guidance are provided for all pupils. The school has established effective links with parents, partner schools and the local community and these have a positive impact on the learning and achievement of the pupils.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Assessment is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching was observed in a quarter of all lessons during the inspection.
- Teachers' good questioning help to develop the pupils speaking and listening skills well.
- Some teachers do not always match learning activities carefully enough to the needs of higher attaining pupils, particularly those in Year 2.
- Some teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to record their work.
- Although teachers plan together, they do not review methods of practice and results with the result there are many inconsistencies in the quality of work produced.
- Teaching assistants have good levels of expertise and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

11. At the last inspection, the quality of teaching was judged to be a significant strength of the school. Since then there has been an almost complete change of staffing and although teaching observed was all of at least a satisfactory quality it was not as good as previously.

12. In some classes the quality of teaching is very good, lessons are very well balanced and pupils benefit from a good, pacy, whole class introduction followed by individual or group work in which tasks are well matched to their age and abilities. Teachers adopt strategies to catch and maintain pupils' attention. For example, in one science lesson the teacher dressed herself as Mrs Sweet Tooth and held a discussion with the pupils as to why her sugary and carbohydrate laden diet was not good for her. The pupils entered into the discussion wholeheartedly responding enthusiastically to her well-framed questions and demonstrating how well they were learning the importance of a healthy and balanced diet. The sorting of foods into appropriate groups and devising a good healthy meal followed on from this activity, reinforcing previous discussion well. In addition, pupils' independent learning skills are being developed through opportunities to collaborate with their peers in these group tasks. However, this is not the picture in all classes. Although the quality of whole class input is invariably good, the tasks that follow on are not always well matched to pupils' capabilities. Some teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. This is particularly true in subjects other than English and mathematics when, in some lessons, all children are expected to complete a similar task. This means that higher ability pupils, particularly those in Year 2, are not always sufficiently challenged.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	9 (25%)	11(31%)	16 (44%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. In all classes, pupils' speaking and listening skills are being developed well, and pupils can articulate what they have learned. Teachers are careful to ask questions which are carefully matched to pupils' capabilities and challenge them in whole class sessions. For example, in a design and technology lesson one question was 'when can we usually find strawberries growing in England,' whilst the next, designed to challenge the higher attaining pupils, was 'why do you think that strawberries are being grown in Israel at this time of year?'. To demonstrate the good learning, a Year 2 pupil was able to identify Israel on the globe and say that it was warm there at this time of year because it was much closer to the equator than England, and strawberries needed a warm climate in which to ripen. The school has emphasised the importance of pupils understanding what they are learning. This comes through very clearly as they talk knowledgeably and enthusiastically about what they have been taught in the full range of subjects. Very good behaviour management ensures that all pupils are given an opportunity to contribute and pupils are expected to listen carefully to each other. However, some teachers have taken this emphasis on practical learning and oral communication too far and not put enough emphasis on pupils' written recording. This means that pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills and the quality of pupils' writing, particularly amongst higher attaining pupils in Year 2, is too low. Although they are likely to achieve the nationally expected standard few pupils are likely to attain above that level because their writing skills are not good enough.

14. Teachers plan well together in teams across the school. The quality of the written plans is often good with a range of activities identified for each lesson. However, it is clear from the disparity in the quality and quantity of work between classes that teachers are not discussing sufficiently at what level the lessons should be pitched, and the amount of written recording to be carried out. They are not jointly reviewing the pupils' work after lessons with the result that although the majority of the work is to a satisfactory standard and some of it is good, some is unsatisfactory. This is because although teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory, they do not have enough knowledge of the National Curriculum criteria to enable their pupils to attain the higher levels.

15. Target-setting is very well-developed for pupils with special educational needs, for whom there is very good provision. This involves very good co-ordination, the pupils are included in all aspects of school life and very good attention to each pupil's specific needs by teachers and teaching assistants. As a consequence, the pupils maintain good progress because teaching assistants in particular know the pupils' needs very well, motivate them successfully and help them to achieve targets that may be behaviour or learning-related. Pupils with English as an additional language receive carefully targeted support which ensures that they can fully participate in lessons. When pupils transfer into the school during the school year, their needs are quickly assessed and teachers monitor them carefully to ensure they receive tasks that are appropriate to their needs.

The curriculum

Overall the school provides a **good** range of worthwhile curricular opportunities that cater for the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of the pupils. There is a **very good** range of opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular provision and the quality and quantity of accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Personal, social and health education are very well supported.
- Teachers do not always meet the needs of all pupils in mixed age classes.
- Links between subjects are being well developed to help make learning more meaningful for pupils.
- The accommodation is very good and used well to maximise pupils' learning opportunities.

Commentary

16. There is a wide variety of extra-curricular activities such as skipping, outdoor games, library, craft and gardening clubs. These are open to all pupils in Key Stage one and are very well attended. They make a very good contribution to developing and extending pupils' skills and broadening their interests. There is also a programme of visits to places such as Portsmouth where the pupils benefit from learning about the seaside and contrasting it with the inland area in which they live. There are frequent visitors to the school including regular theatre groups, who involve pupils in drama as well as supporting their learning in different areas of the curriculum. A clock expert visited during the inspection and gave the children in the reception classes a unique opportunity to look closely at antique clocks and to watch and listen to the chimes. This linked well with their current topic based around 'Hickory dickory dock'.

17. Pupils with special educational needs follow the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers plan carefully and meet their needs well in English, maths and science, but are less effective in their planning for other subjects such as history and religious education. Teaching assistants are well trained and experienced, they support pupils with special educational needs and those requiring extra help in lessons very well so that they make good progress. They have also undertaken training to help them to support pupils who are in the early stages of speaking English.

18. The programme of personal, social and health education is very effective. It is well supported in other lessons by a special focus on personal and social skills. Most pupils respond to this very well and it has had a significant impact on their attitudes and behaviour. In addition, a counselling and daily 'Friendly Club' provide good support for pupils who find aspects of their behaviour or relationships with others difficult.

19. In some lessons, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers' planning does not always take sufficient account of different year groups or abilities within their classes. This means that occasionally younger or less able pupils do not understand some aspects of lessons and, more frequently, that older and more able children are insufficiently challenged. This limits their progress in some subjects and adversely affects the standard of work they produce.

20. The school is actively promoting links between subjects and many teachers are making good use of these during lessons. This means that pupils see their learning in a wider context and see how links and connections between subjects make different lessons relevant.

21. The accommodation is very good and is used highly effectively to provide additional learning opportunities. For example, the central area of the Foundation Stage classes was being developed as a 'Winter Wonderland', and pupils were busy developing creative skills making icebergs and icicles, discovering the properties of ice and icy water, and role playing in a 'snow house'. The school is kept immaculate by the maintenance and cleaning staff.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very well for the health, safety, care and welfare of pupils. Support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of achievements and personal development are **good**. The school involves the pupils very well, through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths

- A rigorous system to maintain Health and Safety procedures.
- Good provision to ensure the welfare of all pupils.
- An effective school council which includes the whole school community.
- The induction of pupils new to the school is good.

Commentary

22. At the previous inspection the support, care and guidance was judged to be a strength of the school and this continues to be the case. The staff have a good understanding of pupils' needs and they sensitively encourage them to succeed. The administrative staff play a full part in supporting the pupils and deal effectively with medical and behavioural issues, giving full feedback to the teachers or parents. Child Protection procedures are fully in place under the leadership of the Headteacher. They are understood well by all staff who have regular training to ensure that they are kept up to date. The school makes good use of outside agencies, such as Social Services and the educational psychologist.

23. Pupils with special educational needs are cared for very well and receive a good range of support and guidance, For example, pupils who have difficulty in managing their behaviour are supported by a specialist who works closely with the school and within the home contributing fully to the target setting process for the child. The school has rigorous and well-planned arrangements to ensure the health and safety of pupils, staff and all visitors to the school. There are regular routine checks to ensure that the environment is safe and any potential problems are reported to the Governing Body. The Headteacher and the caretaker deal with any immediate problems. The school has recently received the *Healthy Schools Award* and they work hard to ensure that the pupils are aware of healthy eating options. There is a breakfast club, which provides pupils with an opportunity to have a nutritious start to the day. This enhances their personal and social skills because they are responsible for making their breakfast and clearing away under the supervision of a member of the support staff. Regular risk assessments are carried out, both on site and for any visits outside the school. All necessary inspections of equipment and fire safety precautions are regularly and rigorously carried out.

24. The school involves the pupils in the development and work of the school very well. There is a well-established and valued school council, which has two pupil representatives from each class. Depending on the agenda items, other members of the school community are invited to attend meetings, for example the caretaker, parents, and gardening club volunteers when discussing proposals to change the design of the school patio. The children are well prepared for the meeting because of the good organisation of the deputy headteacher who communicates fully with pupils and staff. Pupils represent the views of their class confidently; they describe design plans and explain the reasons for their choice and how their learning environment would be improved. One strength of the council's work is the way in which it contributes to the pupils' learning across some curriculum areas. For example, design and technology skills were developed by drawing plans of the patio.

25. The teachers have a very good understanding of pupils' personal development which is carefully monitored and recorded. Pupils' academic progress as they move through the school is carefully tracked and the results of any assessment tests carefully analysed to identify future priorities for development.

26. Pupils joining the school during the school year receive a useful welcome pack and are carefully inducted into the school. Care is taken to ensure that they have 'friends' to look after them in the playground and support them in a practical way in the classroom. Class teachers are sensitive to the new arrivals and carefully monitor the settling –in process.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and the local community. The school has good relationships with local schools and pre-school providers.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works closely with parents who are supportive.
- The family learning programme contributes to the good links.
- The information provided by the school is very good and parents feel well informed about how their child is doing.
- There are effective links with both pre-schools and junior schools.
- The school has good relationships with the local community.

Commentary

27. Parents and carers have positive views of the school, they are pleased with the values it promotes. When the school re organised recently into mixed age group classes, parents were very pleased with the information they received about the change. The head teacher and other staff are very approachable and this is much appreciated by parents, they also appreciate the speedy and effective response that they receive to any concerns or complaints they might have. The school is quick at responding to parental requests for information.

28. Good communication keeps parents well informed about their child's progress from the time their children start school. Parents of new children are welcomed into the school and good relationships are quickly established through the induction programme. Reports are regular and provide a clear indication of attainment. Parents appreciate the opportunity both they and their children have for commenting on the reports. There are regular newsletters and further information is provided as necessary. The school is keen to build on its good relationships with parents and is in the process of developing a drop in centre. Many parents appreciate the office and reception staff who provide a helpful and supportive service. The celebration assemblies are effective at encouraging all to come into school. The deputy head has been instrumental in promoting a family learning programme in which parents learn to help their children more with their education at home. There is an active friends association which raises money for specific projects – such as the development of the school patio area.

29. The school's links with other schools and early years providers are good. There is regular contact with the on site playgroup. Good liaison exists with the numerous junior schools and pupils who have left the school in the previous year are invited back to Belle Vue. These links contribute well to pupils' learning as pupils are familiar with the other learning institutions and this aids the settling in and induction processes.

30. The school has good links with the local community. It works with local churches and members of the clergy come and take part in school assemblies and pupils visit the church. The school also has links with the wider community and takes part in a range of interesting activities; this year it won the, 'Rushmoor in Bloom' competition. There are also a range of visits that support the curriculum, for example in geography pupils compare their own area to that of Old Portsmouth.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. A significant number of staff are new to the school and those who have been assigned areas of responsibility are still developing their roles. The experienced head teacher has shown very good leadership skills in steering the school through this period of unstable staffing. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership provided by the headteacher.
- There is good strategic planning which reflects the schools aims.
- There is a supportive governing body that challenges appropriately and has a good understanding of the strengths and weakness of the school.
- The induction of the numerous new staff and the arrangements for subsequent professional development are good.
- The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school's finances are now well managed after a period of instability.
- Many subject leaders are unaware of the inconsistencies displayed in pupils work across classes, because they have not monitored pupils' work sufficiently.

Commentary

31. The very good leadership demonstrated by the headteacher at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. During the recent difficulties caused by a high staff turnover she has played a pivotal role in maintaining the smooth functioning of the school and managing the recruitment, training and deployment of staff. The head teacher leads by example, her clear vision and high expectations permeate all aspects of school life. She has a full understanding of what now needs to be dealt with and has very high aspirations for the school. Staff, governors and parents have all highlighted her strong input, which they view as the driving force of the school. In recent years there has been a high staff turnover and this has created a significant barrier to maintaining and raising achievement. The school has done all it can to recruit and retain staff and now both teachers and non-teaching staff form a committed, supportive team dedicated to raising standards. The school is now moving forward after this period of disruption. The head teacher is very effective in developing the leadership capabilities in other teachers and the school has achieved Investors in People status. The senior leadership team, which has some new members of staff, is inexperienced but receiving the right training to develop their expertise and understanding of their role.

32. The leadership and management of special educational needs provision is good and pupils make good progress, many being removed from the register. Policies, procedures and practices related to all aspects of special needs provision are in place and systems run smoothly and the governor is kept fully up to date with any issues. The school's procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs, work well.

33. Most foundation subject leaders are new to a management responsibility and their roles are still being developed. As yet, they provide limited support to their colleagues but are receiving appropriate training to enable them to monitor the quality of teaching and learning more effectively. Because pupils' work has not been monitored closely enough, subject leaders have been unaware of the poor quality of some of the recording.

34. The induction of new staff into the school is good. There are appropriate policies in place and a very informative staff handbook. New staff feel welcomed and supported and a staff newsletter is an innovative way to help new staff settle in quickly. There is good provision for staff to further their professional development by attending a range of courses. Due to the high staff turnover, some well-trained members of staff have left and the school has had to begin training programmes afresh. Performance management procedures are good and the headteacher has maintained a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, identifying where support is necessary, but also effectively utilising the expertise of more experienced new staff.

35. Overall governance is satisfactory and improving as governors become more familiar with their particular roles. The governing body is supportive and governors have a sound awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors play an appropriately critical role when considering the course of action and future direction of the school. They are actively involved in all school issues and work effectively through an appropriate committee structure. They are committed to raising standards and work closely with the headteacher on creating a school improvement plan which works towards fulfilling this aim. The plan is constructed in consultation with staff and governors and priorities for development are jointly agreed. Governors regularly monitor progress towards the targets set in the plan. Governors have also been heavily involved in tracking the reasons for the high staff turnover. They have asked leaving staff to complete questionnaires which have confirmed that external factors, such as promotion of a partner requiring re-location, have been the main cause for moving.

36. The school has recently experienced a period of considerable financial uncertainty. However, the headteacher and governors have worked hard and the situation has now been clarified and resolved. There is now a clear understanding of the school's financial position. Because of the swift and prudent action taken, the budget now shows a small surplus. The school is adequately resourced in all areas of the curriculum. Specific grants, such as that for special educational needs are appropriately allocated and used. The head teacher is active in seeking out possible sources of funding and the Friends of Belle Vue works closely with the school to raise funds for identified projects. The school is prudent with its financial management and ensures that the principles of best value are adhered to.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	602773	Balance from previous year	25933
Total expenditure	621773	Balance carried forward to the next	1000
Expenditure per pupil	2623		

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Children enter the Reception class with attainment well below average in all areas of learning, although there is a minority of pupils who are close to average in language, literacy and communication, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. This reflects the position at the time of the last inspection. However, provision in all areas is not as good now as it was then. This is because there is a new team of staff, some of whom are relatively inexperienced and are still getting established in the school. Assessments show that by the time they leave to join Year One, children have achieved satisfactorily, although most will not reach the standards expected, except in personal, social and emotional development. The children make satisfactory progress and the curriculum is planned to ensure that all areas of learning are adequately covered. The teaching is satisfactory overall and there is sound support from the learning assistants in the Reception classes. Sound leadership from the co-ordinator ensures that teaching time is appropriately organised. A good range of resources has been built up over time to stimulate children's learning, and effective use is made of these. There is good liaison with the special needs co-ordinator who ensures that children with special needs are identified at an early stage and monitored carefully to ensure the correct provision is made. Appropriate systems are in place to record children's achievements so that overall progress can be monitored and individual learning tracked.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths

- Children achieve well and become more self-confident because of the good organisation and daily routines which are quickly established as soon as they enter the class.
- Adults provide good role models.

Commentary

37. Most children enter the class having had some form of pre-school experience. Standards on entry are below those which are expected, although a significant minority are achieving at the level expected for their age. Children are learning to relate well to one another and daily routines have been quickly established. There is a good variety of activities which ensure children are purposefully employed and enable them to move confidently from task to task. Teaching is good and activities are appropriately planned to encourage the children to work both independently and co-operatively. During the inspection adults worked constructively with the children, helping them to take turns and encouraging sharing. The teachers and learning assistants form an effective team. They are consistent in their expectations for behaviour, present good role models through their positive attitudes and give the children every encouragement to succeed. The way in which adults talk with, and show respect for the children sets a good example. Children make good progress and by the time they move into Year 1 most pupils will have achieved the standards expected for their age. They are well-behaved, show appropriate levels of concentration and happily share toys and equipment.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff work hard to improve the speaking and listening skills of children.
- Children appreciate books, and enjoy stories.
- Teachers do not share strategies for teaching the same idea so not all children learn as effectively as others.

Commentary

38. Children make good progress with their speaking and listening skills and are likely to meet the goals in this particular part of the curriculum. Teachers take every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary and develop their confidence so that all children are willing to talk and share ideas. The provision of a range of role play areas encourage the children to engage in conversation – and in the 'Clock Repair Shops', conversations can be heard relating to broken watches and extending into costs for repairs. Outside in the central area the 'Winter Wonderland' provides more opportunities for the extension of language and children talk about being freezing cold, and the need to wrap up warm in the cold. Teachers and learning assistants engage the children in conversations at every opportunity and ask questions trying to ensure that children respond at some length. Children listen carefully during whole class introductions and respond positively to the ideas of others, listening politely to what they have to say. Most children take turns and remember to put up their hands when they want to contribute.

39. Children show a keen interest in books, and handle them with care. Many can identify where the title is and some know that the author is the person who writes the book. Children are given a secure foundation in the early skills associated with reading and writing and they receive good reinforcement in whole class sessions. Many of the class know and understand some letter sounds, and higher attaining children distinguish and identify the start and end letters of short words. Teaching is generally sound overall and children achieve satisfactorily. In most lessons appropriate activities are planned, but there is a lack of liaison between the classes so each teacher adopts different strategies for teaching the same idea – some with more success than others. For example, in one lesson observed the teacher expected too much of the children – asking them to identify the rhyming words in 'hickory dickory dock' and expecting them to point them out on the sheet. In addition all the rhyming words were identified with the same colour so that the children went away with the impression that hickory, dickory, dock and clock all rhyme, whilst in another class the teacher used one colour to highlight dock and clock and another for hickory and dickory. A few children write their names with good control, and many write competently over the teacher's own writing.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is sound.

Main strengths

- Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing children's mathematical language and is included as an integral part of many other activities.
- Good resources brings the work on time to life for the children.

Commentary

40. Adults working with the children reinforce counting skills whenever possible, and number rhymes are frequently used, making mathematical development fun. Children are encouraged to use a variety of equipment, including number lines to reinforce learning. Appropriately planned whole-class and group activities ensure that the breadth of mathematical development is covered. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily and move into Year 1 having not quite reached the expected standard for their age. Adults reinforce learning well by questioning the children whilst engaged in a variety of tasks, constantly encouraging mathematical language and understanding.

41. The teaching in this area is satisfactory and the children make satisfactory progress. Children are gaining a good idea of time and learning how long a minute is by seeing how many balls of play dough they can make in this amount of time. The visit of a clock expert brought the topic to life for the children and increased children's mathematical knowledge. For example, they discovered that clocks come in a variety of mathematical shapes and the numbers are in a set order around the edge of the face. The teachers plan many activities which are related to their time topic, but some teachers miss opportunities to improve pupils' number writing skills by giving them clock faces with pre-printed numbers. In one class, where they had to write their own numbers, children gained a good knowledge of where the numbers should be placed, as well as getting valuable number formation practice.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths

- The teachers' planning and organisation ensures that this area of learning is appropriately covered.
- Learning assistants provide good support for the children.

Commentary

42. Appropriate planning by the teacher, based on half-termly topics, ensures that children enjoy a sound range of experiences, which help them discover and understand simple science, technology, ICT and history. On starting in Reception, some children have had limited experiences, and overall their knowledge and understanding is below expectations. The soundly planned curriculum means that by the time children move into Year 1 they have made satisfactory progress, but overall are still not achieving the expected learning goals. Provision for information technology is sound and children are taught 'mouse' skills and how to use simple menus. Good use is made of resources to enhance children's learning. For example a visit from a farm was planned for immediately after the inspection which gave the children the opportunity to see and learn about some of the animals and creatures for themselves.

43. Children have regular access to sand and water play. They discover that if you want to pour sand it needs to be dry and not wet. Learning support assistants question children effectively asking 'Do you think there is any difference between the funnels?' In the Winter Wonderland pupils learn the properties of ice and discover that when ice warms up it melts and becomes water. Learning assistants provide good support for pupils and quickly observe where they may be needed. They have a good understanding of the children's needs and know when it is appropriate to intervene in an activity. For example, when a child is using the computer and having difficulties.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is sound.

Main strength

- The children have sufficient opportunities to make satisfactory progress in this area.

Commentary

44. When children start in the Reception class their physical skills are broadly in line with those expected for their age. During their time in the Reception class they make satisfactory progress because of the range of resources available both in and out of doors and good opportunities to use them. Every day, children have the opportunity to practice using small apparatus, such as paintbrushes, scissors, jig-saws and construction toys. These help them develop fine control and hand/eye co-ordination. Sound opportunities are provided to enable them to develop control of their limbs. Daily supervised outdoor sessions for all the children provide them with the chance to run, climb and operate a range of wheeled toys such as tricycles, cars and scooters. They also have a

weekly session in the hall, for which they undress and dress themselves competently. By the end of the year it is likely that most of the children will have reached the expected goals in this area of learning.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strength

- Teachers plan a good range of activities, which enable the children to learn effectively.

Commentary

45. Children have access to a good range of activities, many of which provide good opportunities for them to use their imagination. Play equipment, such as roadways and construction toys are available and the role play areas are very popular with the children. Teaching is good. Specifically planned activities are often imaginative and appealing to the children. For example, the children made stand up penguins out of coloured card for the Winter Wonderland, and during the inspection were busily creating icebergs and icicles using paint, glue and glitter enthusiastically. Children co-operate amicably with their class mates when engaged in role play in the igloo and learning support staff often enrich the experience by asking questions which develop the children's learning. Singing sessions are planned as a regular feature in Reception. Children really enjoy these sessions and join in enthusiastically. By the end of the year it is likely that the children will have reached the expected standards.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Overall provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support.
- The quality of reading is satisfactory and pupils achieve well.
- Standards in writing are unsatisfactory.
- A good management action plan identifies the correct areas for development.

Commentary

46. At the time of the last inspection, standards in English were judged to have been broadly in line with the national average in speaking, listening reading and writing. Since then standards in speaking and listening have improved although in writing they appear to have fallen. Standards in English are below average overall, although pupils achieve satisfactorily. When compared to national data, standards in reading have shown some improvement over time, and are broadly in line with the national average. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in reading and assessment evidence shows that improvements have been made. The school keeps detailed reading records and these assist in identifying where more help is required for individual pupils. Standards in speaking and listening are good, the school has identified this as a key feature for development and through very good questioning skills the teachers have encouraged to pupils to speak confidently and listen well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when speaking and listening was considered to be satisfactory. In writing the standards are unsatisfactory and below average in comparison with similar schools. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to use writing in other subjects such as science, history and religious education.

47. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good overall, with some very good features. However, because there are significant weaknesses in writing across other subjects it would indicate that what is being taught in English lessons is not being re-inforced in other subjects. In the lessons where teaching was better than satisfactory there were high expectations of pupils, teachers had a good subject knowledge and used very good use of questions to extend the pupils understanding. In one very good lesson, drama was used in a role-play situation. Pupils adopted the characters in the Funny Bones story. They were able to re-tell the story confidently, taking turns well and listening to each other. The teacher managed the class well and provided a very good range of resources, thus ensuring that the pupils were fully engaged in the task. The activity also enabled the teacher to assess the children's recall of the story as they were working from memory rather than reading the text. This linked well to their work in science where they are studying skeletons. Teachers follow the structure of the National Literacy Strategy well. They use the time effectively so that there is a good balance of whole class sessions, individual and group work. Because the pace is usually good the pupils' levels of concentration are good and they learn effectively.

48. The pupils with special educational needs are fully supported and take part in all aspects of the lesson. Pupils also receive extra individual support to focus on their targets. In one very good session a pupil was blending sounds together to form words. The teacher made the work fun and this gained the confidence of the pupil who was able to concentrate and learn new skills.

49. Pupils in Year 2 read confidently, trying hard to sound out unfamiliar words. They have a good knowledge of letter sounds and blends. They use books appropriately and most pupils identify the title and know that the person who wrote the book is called an author. They describe what they have just read competently and some can predict what will happen next. Pupils use reference books in the library to research facts, such as the characteristics of fruits as part of a Design and Technology project.

50. The pupils gain a good grounding in learning basic letter sounds to build simple words. They are beginning to communicate their thoughts in writing often using their own spellings which are recognisable rather than correct. Standards of handwriting, presentation and spelling are well below average because pupils have too few opportunities to write – particularly in other subjects.

51. The school places a high priority on speaking and listening and this has been the main focus of the English Action Plan. Good speaking and listening skills are evident in all subjects, for example in a Design and Technology session the pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to describe the texture and tastes of fruit. During this lesson the pupils worked well together, listening and helping each other to succeed. The adults were very good when asking questions and they gave the pupils time to answer and supported them well by re-phrasing the question if they are having difficulties. In assemblies the children are keen to make suggestions and can describe the meanings of words such as friendship and love.

52. The leadership and management of English is satisfactory overall. The newly appointed subject leader is enthusiastic and has worked hard with the headteacher to identify the priorities for development, particularly in the area of writing. She has worked hard with the other teachers to produce an action plan and they meet together to plan work. This was evident during the inspection as all Year 1 and 2 classes were working on the same cluster sounds. The school is also trying to involve parents more and has started a family learning project to encourage more reading at home. There is a good range of resources, the library is well used and there are a wide range of fiction, non fiction and reference books.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. The promotion of pupils' language skills across all subjects is good, however there are too few opportunities to develop their literacy and writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils are taught the technical terms they need to understand their work in English and there is good emphasis on the technical terms required in other subjects such as science. Very good opportunities are given for discussion across nearly all subjects. However, pupils do not write in sufficient quantity, or for a wide enough range of specific purposes, in other subjects mainly because teachers tend to concentrate on oral rather than written communication.

MATHEMATICS

Overall provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning, preparation and organisation of lessons is good.
- Results in the national tests are above the national average for similar schools.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are inconsistent across the school.
- Pupils' recording skills are underdeveloped.
- Less able pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

Commentary

54. Effective planning and preparation ensures that pupils are interested and involved in their learning. They know what is expected of them and can explain what they are doing. Pupils behave well in lessons and are able to work either independently or co-operatively with others. Lessons are organised well and include a good variety of activities to help pupils learn number facts and practise skills and strategies that help them to solve simple number problems. For many pupils this work is practical and purposeful, enabling them to recognise, count and compare numbers, for example using blocks to find and make doubles. For some higher ability pupils though, the activities are repetitive, lack challenge and do not enable them to pursue problems that will inspire them or enable them to extend their learning.

55. Results in the national tests show that although attainment at the end of Year 2 is below the national average, it is above average for schools in similar circumstances. This represents good achievement for many pupils who start school with mathematical skills well below the national average for their age. However, because the standard of pupils' work seen during the inspection was variable and sometimes poorly recorded achievement overall is satisfactory. Many Year 1 pupils find it difficult to write numbers correctly and this impedes their ability to record their work. Pupils of higher ability, especially those in Year 2, are not producing work of a sufficiently high standard. Some, who understand and can write numbers in the hundreds, find it difficult to record how they have worked out number problems.

56. Pupils with special needs and those requiring additional help in lessons are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants, they make good progress especially when working in groups, but sometimes the younger, less able pupils find the whole class sections at the beginning and end of lessons difficult to follow which limits their ability to participate.

57. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. The mathematics co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and an enthusiastic determination to raise the quality of provision and teaching throughout the school. She has written a detailed action plan identifying strategies for bringing about improvements and has given teachers good support in planning and setting targets for all groups of pupils. These have not yet raised all teachers' expectations for higher ability pupils sufficiently. In line with the school's improvement plan, there is a focus within the action plan on raising the quality of problem solving experiences especially for more able pupils, but as yet, not all staff fully understand the nature of problem solving and open ended mathematical investigations.

58. Following the last inspection standards in mathematics improved, but they have fallen back in the last two years following considerable staff turbulence. Many of the strengths in the previous report remain, for example there is still very thorough assessment and pupils attitudes remain good. Some improvements have been made, for example there is now a range of software to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils, however, the quality of recording is not as good as reported at the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Mathematical skills are used and developed satisfactorily through other subjects. For example, in design and technology pupils use their measuring skills when making houses and vehicles and in physical education they work out how many groups there will be and develop language and understanding of weight, speed and time.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Test results are below average but standards are improving.
- There is a good focus on investigative and experimental skills.
- The use of ICT is not yet fully integrated into the science curriculum.

Commentary

60. The teachers' assessments taken at the end of Year 2 show that many pupils attain at a below average level when compared with results from similar schools. This judgement reflects that made at the previous inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Whilst pupils' written recording throughout the school confirms this, their knowledge of what they have learned is closer to the expected level. The school's emphasis on developing pupils' oral skills means that many pupils can confidently articulate what they have learned, and they show a good understanding of scientific terminology. They refer to tooth decay and balanced or healthy diets with assurance. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from learning support assistants and achieve well as a result. However, the provision for higher attaining pupils is not so good because they are not challenged sufficiently in the tasks provided for them.

61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Throughout the school, pupils are taught the principles of fair testing. In Year 2, pupils investigated a range of foods, decided which food groups they belonged to and whether they were a healthy addition to a meal or not. In groups, they went on to analyse the contents of shopping-bags and decide whether they made up a healthy meal or not. Although pupils could often say that a meal containing foods from one group was not as healthy as it could be, they could not identify why this was so and what else they required. It is the lack of this additional knowledge and understanding that is preventing pupils from attaining the higher level 3 in science assessments. However, the school has identified this as an area for development which is why the pupils are now having the chance to take their investigations this one step further. Tasks set tend to be practical and this is valuable in ensuring that pupils' develop and clarify their understanding. However, it also means that there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their writing skills. Work in pupils' books shows little difference between the highest and lowest attaining pupils in some classes and means that higher attaining and older pupils in Year 2 are not always sufficiently challenged. As yet there is insufficient use of ICT in science.

62. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has worked closely with the adviser for the subject to review the scheme of work in order to ensure that higher attaining pupils are provided with challenge in their work. She has identified what the school needs to do to improve its performance, which includes ensuring that other teachers understand what pupils have to do in order to achieve the higher National Curriculum levels. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has examined pupils work. However it is clear that teachers do not review pupils' work sufficiently and as result the unsatisfactory level of recording of a few pupils has gone unidentified.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Overall provision in Information and Communication Technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching assistants provide very good support to teachers and pupils during lessons.
- Planning identifies very specific learning objectives, though these are not always matched to the needs of all pupils.
- Some more able, older pupils are insufficiently challenged in lessons.
- The ICT suite ensures that all pupils have regular, frequent practice using a computer.
- Limited use is made of ICT in other lessons.

Commentary

63. Standards in ICT are in line with those expected. Lessons during the inspection were focused on word processing work. Standards in these lessons were broadly in line with expectations although this varied from class to class. The overall achievement of pupils is satisfactory, although that of some Year 1 pupils is sometimes good as they are producing the same work, using the same skills as their older Year 2 classmates. Pupils are familiar with the keyboard and have good mouse skills. In one class, higher attaining Year 2 pupils were able to independently format the colour, size and style of the font they were using, as well as correcting errors using the delete or back space keys. They used the arrow and shift keys confidently.

64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, the teacher achieves and extends the agreed learning objective and adapts the lesson to meet the needs of different abilities, ensuring that higher expectations for more able pupils mean that they are challenged appropriately and their skills extended. Teaching assistants are used very well to support pupils of different abilities and to help with saving and printing work. Where teaching is less good, insufficient account is taken of the different ages and levels of ability in the class, this limits progress especially of the older and more able pupils.

65. The ICT co-ordinator is very new and is in the early stages of leading and managing a subject area. Although there are plans to re-site and equip the suite and there is an action plan for ICT, it is too soon for her to have had an impact on the subject.

66. Standards broadly reflect those found at the previous inspection. Since the last inspection more computers have been added to the suite, this means that working in pairs, all pupils benefit from class lessons and practise using their skills regularly. However, the computers have limited software loaded, which restricts their effectiveness.

ICT across the curriculum

67. Most ICT takes place in the ICT suite. The lessons during the inspection linked well to work in literacy. For example, the teaching of how to use the Caps Lock on the keyboard aided pupils' learning about the various uses of capital letters. However, few examples were seen of ICT being used in other subject lessons although there were some examples of ICT generated work in other subjects in pupils' books.

HUMANITIES

No lessons in geography and history were observed during the period of the inspection, and it was not possible to make overall judgements about provision in these subjects. However, it was possible to make some judgements on standards by looking at pupils' work and by talking to the children. In addition, discussions were held with the subject co-ordinators and appropriate documentation scrutinised.

Standards in geography are broadly in line with those expected. It is well integrated into topic plans and extends pupils' learning in other areas, for example in literacy and history. Pupils identify places where they have been on holiday and can describe the weather and, if they have visited a foreign country, make comparisons between that country and England. For example, the type of food eaten and the language spoken. They are beginning to extend their geographical vocabulary and can make observations such as the fact that England is an island and there is sea all around it. From the work seen these observations were mainly recorded pictorially with limited written work.

Standards in history meet those required at the end of Year 2. Pupils recognise that fifty years ago children took different things to the beach to have fun. They understand that there are many more options available on the beach today and make appropriate comparisons through annotated drawings. They use a range of resources such as the library to research these facts and compare these with their own experiences. There was very limited written recording.

Both subjects are managed satisfactorily, although there is insufficient monitoring of pupils' work to ensure consistency in the quality and quantity of work produced in the different classes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 often complete the same activities and there was little evidence to show that older pupils were working on more advanced tasks. Good photographic evidence has been collected to show the range of work, which has been undertaken in these subjects.

Religious education

Provision in Religious Education is **satisfactory** and in line with the requirements outlined in the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school explores and investigates a range of religions, which supports pupils' learning of other cultures and their spiritual development.
- There are good opportunities for speaking and listening.
- There are limited opportunities for writing.

Commentary

68. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This reflects the judgement made at the previous inspection. There were limited lesson observations during the inspection, however it was possible to look at pupils' work and talk to them about their experiences and work. The subject leader's files including photographs were also available to show the range of work undertaken over a period of time. Examples of work relate to the themes of celebrations, Christmas, birthdays and christenings. The pupils have visited churches and cathedrals and they are able to compare these with other places of worship such as a synagogue. They articulately describe similarities and differences both in the buildings and the practice of different faiths. For example, pupils can explain how Jewish people are expected to pray three times a day.

69. In the small number of lessons observed teaching was satisfactory overall. In a lesson introducing the topic, 'Jesus as a story teller', strengths included a good introduction which ensured that pupils recognised effective methods of story telling, and how Jesus fitted into this category. Pupils were encouraged to draw on previous learning and describe how he might have looked from their previous knowledge. Pupils had the opportunity to look at different artists' portrayals of Jesus before being encouraged to draw their own images. The many and varied results enabled pupils to understand that no-one really knew what he looked like and there was no specific 'true' image of Jesus.

70. In the lessons observed and in the work examined there were limited opportunities for writing. The majority of the work was pictorial with some labelling of different parts, for example drawings of the Christmas story with one-word headings. When talking to the children it was clear that they had a good understanding of the sequence of events and that this could have been developed further through writing additional text.

71. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has a very good subject knowledge and she has compiled a comprehensive range of planning materials and topic plans based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. As yet she has not had the opportunity to monitor lessons or work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Two lessons were seen in art, and only one in music during the inspection. As a result it is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision. However, pupils' work was examined carefully and there were discussions with them about what they had learned in both these subjects.

From the work observed around the school, standards in art are broadly in line with what is expected at the end of both key stages and pupils experience an appropriate range of materials and media, as well as studying the work of a range of artists. The teaching observed was good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 studied the work of a number of artists in an effort to identify similarities and differences in portraits. In another lesson pupils were experimenting with a range of ways to represent hair, this involved the use of pastels, chalks, string and wool among other things. Pupils were enthusiastic and worked hard creating original and appropriate ideas. From studying planning it is clear that pupils have opportunities to develop a range of techniques.

Standards in music are broadly in line with those expected. Pupils sing tunefully in assembly and have a good sense of time and rhythm. In the lesson observed pupils were learning about pitch and how to relate sounds to symbols. They sang a song which successfully reinforced the idea of high and low sounds before going on to suggest how they could represent high and low sounds in writing. The teacher's very good questioning and resources illustrated how pupils could create a simple score – which they then went on to do, successfully working in small groups.

Design and technology

Provision in Design Technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of interesting activities are planned.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Links with other subjects are good, although use of ICT is underdeveloped.

Commentary

72. Standards are in line with expectations and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Photographic evidence suggests that the school consistently provides a wide range of interesting designing and making activities, some of which result in exciting experiences for the pupils, for example designing and making skateboards then testing them at a local skateboard park.

73. The lessons observed during the inspection focused on investigating a range of fruit and vegetables. The teaching was sound. Teachers took good account of health and safety and made good use of questioning. Their high expectations of behaviour ensured that pupils remained focused on the lesson. Good links were made with other subjects enabling pupils to reinforce and further develop their skills and knowledge. For example, in a lesson investigating fruit and vegetables, a good link with geography was made when pupils were encouraged to think about why the strawberries they tasted came from Israel. They explained that Israel is close to the equator and therefore hot. Pupils then went on to do observational drawings of cross sections of fruit, supporting and extending their skills in art. Literacy and mathematical skills were also used and developed through extending pupils' vocabulary to describe taste and texture and when sorting fruit into different groups.

74. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. She understands the requirements of the national curriculum and supports other staff well. There is a scheme of work which has been adapted to take account of mixed age classes and ensures provision of a wide range of interesting experiences for the pupils.

75. Since the last inspection overall provision has been maintained, however the use of ICT in the design element of tasks remains underdeveloped.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a strong commitment to physical exercise and health.
- Lessons are well structured, well organised and managed.
- Pupils are confident and respond to lessons well.
- Pupils do not often evaluate and improve their own performance.

Commentary

76. The school's commitment to physical exercise and health was recognised by the achievement of the Healthy Schools Award in 2002. Their continuing commitment is demonstrated by the daily sessions of exercise undertaken by all classes in addition to their timetabled lessons. There are also a number of out of school clubs such as football, skipping and outdoor games which offer additional opportunities to all pupils to further develop skills learnt in lessons.

77. The quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection. Standards are in line with expectations and pupils' achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in developing their co-ordination and disciplining their movements. They understand the effect of exercise on their

bodies and the contribution exercise makes to their health. They are able to perform short sequences of actions with control and imagination, many moving with expression and agility. They listen to music carefully and understand how to reflect moods and feelings in their facial expressions, gestures and body movements.

78. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are calm and purposeful, enabling pupils to focus on their learning. Teachers structure the lessons well, always starting with a warm-up, the purpose of which is well understood by pupils. They follow lesson plans with clear learning objectives linked to the scheme of work which ensures that lessons follow a sequence which will develop pupils' understanding and skills. Teachers demonstrate and explain movements clearly, providing a good model for pupils to follow in their own work. They encourage pupils to think about their actions and sometimes give specific praise to individuals enabling them to understand what they have done well.

79. Pupils' responses are confident and creative. Their actions reflect what they have learnt in previous lessons and they are able to discuss their movements using and understanding appropriate vocabulary such as 'spinning' and 'gliding'. They understand the relationship between weight and speed in movement and enjoy demonstrating to the class. Although they can describe their movements well, pupils do not always have opportunities to evaluate their own performances or that of their peers, consequently they miss opportunities to refine their movements and do not know how to improve their performance.

80. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has been in post for one year. She monitors the subject through discussion with colleagues and looking at their planning. She has a sound knowledge of the curriculum and gives appropriate guidance to other teachers.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

No judgement can be made on the overall quality of teaching and learning or the standards achieved in personal, social and health education and citizenship because no lessons were observed. However, the school has a **very good** programme in place for developing pupils' awareness and opportunities are regularly built into many subjects of the curriculum in order to promote pupils' development and give them opportunities to discuss a range of issues that affect them. There are **good** policies in place and the school tracks the personal development of pupils closely as they move through the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).