

# INSPECTION REPORT

## CUPERNHAM INFANT SCHOOL

Romsey

LEA: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116048

Headteacher: Mrs H Evans

Lead inspector: Mrs D Wilkinson

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2003

Inspection number: 255941

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: 206

School address: Bransley Close  
Woodley Lane  
Romsey  
Hampshire  
Postcode: SO51 7JT

Telephone number: 01794 514494  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Ian Roger

Date of previous inspection: June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Most pupils come from the area within easy reach of the school which statistics show to be in the broadly average socio-economic band. The prior attainment of children in the reception class is generally below that expected, especially in their literacy and numeracy skills. However, this varies from year to year; and in some years there is a higher than usual proportion of pupils with levels of attainment that are well below average. The vast majority of pupils are from white English speaking families although a small number are from ethnic minority backgrounds. A very small number do not speak English at home. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs has increased since the school was last inspected. Taken overall it is around the national average at 23.5 per cent. However the proportion varies considerably between year groups where it can be as high as a third, which is above average. Currently no pupils have a statement of specific need. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school part way through this stage of their education, at around nine per cent, is broadly average. The school is popular with parents, but changes in local demographics has resulted in fewer young families, and the school's roll falling.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23048	Mrs D Wilkinson	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Information and communication technology History Physical education Religious education
19639	Mrs G Anderson	Lay inspector	
21245	Mr W Lowe	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Music Special educational needs
3855	Mr D Langton	Team inspector	English Design and technology Art and design Geography English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school.** Very good monitoring and support of pupils' progress, the good curriculum and the very good care given to pupils are helping them to achieve well. The school has higher than average costs due to having experienced staff, balanced against a lower roll, and therefore provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- From a below average base when they start school, pupils achieve well to reach average standards by the time they leave.
- Standards in science and art are above national expectations.
- The school's ethos and the care given to pupils are very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- The monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress and the use made of this information is very good.
- The curriculum is well planned, being broad, rich and interesting and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and governors are very good.
- Teaching in reception is good and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 where continued development of cross-curricular links and more exciting activities would improve it further.

The school has improved well since the last inspection and the key issues identified then have been tackled successfully. It has maintained its very caring ethos and pupils' positive attitudes and relationships are now very good. Both the curriculum and the quality of assessment have improved. This has helped to underpin improvements both in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Teaching in the reception classes has improved and is good, and although that in Years 1 and 2 remains satisfactory overall, with a higher proportion now good. As a result of the good improvement, pupils now achieve well and the majority reach expected standards by the time they leave.

### 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	C	D	B
Writing	E	D	D	C
Mathematics	E	C	E	D

*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*

**Overall achievement in the school is good.** Since the last inspection standards on entry have fallen and now vary considerably from year to year. There are now fewer higher attaining children on entry and significantly more who have not achieved the expected levels for their age at that stage. Children in the reception classes make good progress and most in the current classes are likely to achieve the goals expected by the end of reception. In some year groups there is a considerably higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than is seen nationally. This, together with that fact that over 50 per cent of the pupils had summer birthdays, were the main reasons for the lower standards seen in the tests in 2003, particularly in mathematics in which standards on entry were low. The school's very good tracking systems show that the majority of this group of pupils did better in the tests than looked likely from their entry assessment. Pupils currently in Years 1 and 2

are achieving well and the majority are likely to reach expected standards or above by the time they leave and above average standards in science and art.

**Pupils' personal qualities are very good overall.** Provision for their personal, spiritual and cultural development is good. Provision is especially good for moral and social development. Pupils enjoy coming to school, have very good attitudes to their work and want to do well for their teachers. They enthusiastically take part in all activities and take pride in their work. The caring ethos of the school helps to encourage very good relationships and behaviour. All pupils, including those from minority groups, work and play happily together. Punctuality is good and attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good in the reception classes and satisfactory overall.** The broad, rich and well-planned curriculum, together with very good monitoring of pupils' progress help teachers to plan well for lessons, setting challenging activities, well matched to the different stages at which individual pupils are working. This is the main reason why pupils are achieving well. The basic skills of literacy, science, and information and communication technology (ICT) are well taught so pupils make good progress in acquiring these. Pupils concentrate and remain on task because of teachers' high expectations of behaviour. Very little unsatisfactory teaching was seen, teachers do not often make it clear to pupils what they are going to be learning in a lesson or take the opportunity to challenge pupils further when a task is completed which limits their progress. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and classroom assistants play a major role in their support. Teaching in reception is good and the wide range of interesting activities engage and motivate children. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, but is not as stimulating or exciting, which is the main reason why learning is not as good. Also, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical and ICT skills in other subjects. The school is aware of these weaknesses and has introduced a new creativity initiative and the development of cross-curricular links to address them. However, there has been insufficient time for these to have had a significant impact on learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher provides very good leadership and is instrumental in successfully moving the school forward. Governors have a very good knowledge of the school and carry out their duties very effectively, managing the school's budget realistically and prudently. Good teamwork has meant that staff are fully committed in helping the school to improve. Subject co-ordinators provide support to colleagues and monitor pupils' work, although opportunities to lead their subject forward through working with colleagues in lessons is limited.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents have positive views about the education of their children, being especially happy about the level of care and the good curriculum. Some parents feel the school could do more to seek their views although the inspection team considers this to be satisfactory. Pupils themselves love their school, feel very happy and secure, and enjoy being there.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

Ensure that in all lessons; -

- pupils are moved on to new challenges when they have completed the tasks set;
- teachers make it clear to pupils what skills or knowledge they are going to be learning so they have a good understanding of this;
- learning is stimulating and exciting;
- pupils use their mathematical and ICT skills more to help learning in other subjects.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects.**

The vast majority of pupils achieve well in the reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards on entry have declined since then and they vary considerably from year to year so, although pupils have achieved well, some year groups do not reach national standards by the end of Year 2. Most reception children are likely to achieve the early goals for learning (the standards expected for their age) by the end of reception. Current Year 2 pupils are likely to reach average standards in the majority of subjects by the time they leave. Standards in science and art and design are above average and pupils achieve well in these subjects by the end of Year 2.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching in science and art and design helps pupils to make rapid progress and attain standards that are above average.
- Throughout the school pupils achieve well and the majority of pupils currently in the school are likely to attain the expected standards by the time they leave.
- The school's very good assessment and tracking procedures show that the achievement of the group of Year 2 pupils who left this summer was good although their results in the national tests this year were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics.

#### **Commentary**

1. The assessment of children starting in the reception classes shows that, since 1999 the levels of prior attainment have been below average. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register has risen and fewer children are in the higher band. Good induction procedures and the school's caring ethos help children to settle in well and to make good progress in their learning. The majority of children currently in the reception classes are likely to achieve the early goals for learning in literacy, numeracy, their knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their personal, social and emotional development. Children's' scientific investigative skills and information and communication technology skills are above those expected for their age. It is not possible to make overall judgements about the standards and achievement in creative and physical development although children achieve well in art and role-play activities and are likely to reach the expected standards in these aspects.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point score in 2003***

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (16.4)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	14.05 (13.7)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.25 (16.6)	16.4 (16.5)

*There were 55 pupils in the year group who took the tests. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good although this is not always evident from the raw results in the national tests which vary considerably from year to year, being very closely linked to the prior attainment of the pupils when they started at school. This is particularly so for the group of pupils who took the tests in the summer term this year. The overall standards in reading and writing were below the national average and those for mathematics were well below. Entry assessments of this group of pupils show their overall prior attainment was well below that expected for their age and forty per cent were placed on the special educational

needs register. At this stage only a very small number exceeded the expected standards. Despite this, over 80 per cent of the group reached average standards in the reading and mathematics tests, with 75 per cent reaching average standards in writing. In addition, many more pupils reached the higher levels in the tests than would have been expected from their prior attainment on entry to the school. The school's very good tracking systems show that the vast majority of these pupils made more progress than expected. The better results in reading and writing reflect the good teaching seen in English. The good achievement has been clearer for other year groups, with the 2002 results being above average overall when compared with similar schools. Similarly good results are likely to be achieved in the 2004 tests, with the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 reaching the standards expected for their age and an average proportion reaching the higher standards. Boys tend to reach higher standards than girls, but this is mostly because they entered the school with higher attainment.

3. There are several reasons for this good achievement. First, pupils like school very much, develop positive attitudes to their work and try hard to please their teachers. The vast majority of parents acknowledge that their children do well and are very happy with the school's provision. Secondly, the very good medium term assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress has led to good curriculum planning. As a result, the work provided in lessons ensures that the needs of pupils from different prior attainment groups are met well and so their achievement is good. The aspects of teaching that could be further improved are not to do with the level at which work is pitched.
4. Pupils identified as having special educational needs attain a good level of overall achievement due to the school's very good provision for them. Many are on course to reach levels of attainment in line with those expected nationally. Especially good tracking of their progress, well focused individual education plans, very effective classroom and group support and the caring and nurturing ethos of the school all help to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils who speak English as a second language are also well supported and achieve at least as well as others. Challenging work is planned for the higher attaining pupils and on nearly all occasions this enables them to reach the levels of which they are capable.
5. Effective teaching of scientific skills throughout the school has helped the pupils currently in Year 2 to achieve standards in science above those expected for their age. For example, they understand and describe the similarities between two different materials as both being opaque, and they know that some changes are reversible while others are not. Pupils have a good knowledge of the conditions, which some animals need in order to survive, and a good awareness of healthy foods.
6. The standard of art and design on display during the inspection was above the national expectation. Year 2 pupils are skilled in portrait and observational drawing. They produce good painting, pastel and collage work in the style of famous artists such as Lowry and Van Gogh and effective landscape paintings. They make clay figures of a good standard and are developing a wide range of art from different cultures including those from Africa, India and Australia.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good and there are no exclusions. Their moral and social development are very good and their spiritual and cultural development good, making these aspects of personal development good overall. The attendance of pupils is satisfactory. They are punctual at the start of the school day and for lessons.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attitudes and behaviour are very good because of the very good ethos of the school.

- Relationships between pupils and adults and with each other are very good because of the positive impact of the provision for pupils' personal development.
- The school is very good at ensuring pupils with special educational needs adopt a positive attitude to their work.
- The school very successfully promotes pupils' moral and social development.
- Pupils' awareness of their own culture has improved since the previous inspection and is now good.

## Commentary

7. The very good attitudes that pupils bring are supporting their achievement especially well. They are positive about their learning and like school very much, and this reflects the views of their parents. Pupils' attitudes are an increasing strength and are even better than at the last inspection. Pupils are very interested in their activities so that, for example, in a music lesson in a reception class, children sat quite still, taking seriously their turn in playing to the beat of the music and handling the instruments with great care. Children responded very well to the teacher and clearly enjoyed themselves, singing confidently and discovering the joy in music. Pupils respond very well to the caring environment and high expectations, behaving well at all times, so that time in lessons is not wasted. Children in the reception classes are likely to achieve the early goals for learning in this aspect of their development.
8. The behaviour and the attitudes which pupils with special educational needs adopt towards their work are very good and in line with that of their peers. The school is careful to promote these pupils' self-esteem by providing work that is best suited to their individual needs within an atmosphere of praise, security and very good levels of individual and group support
9. The strong moral and social provision inspires the very good relationships between all members of the school community so that pupils have a sense of well being. They are sensitive to the needs of others and are courteous, thoughtful and kind. This makes a very good contribution to their developing confidence and self-esteem because they feel valued by others. As a result, pupils clearly enjoy being at school and say that children behave well. It also leads to an environment where pupils are keen to learn, and respect and value each other so that bullying is not an issue. The school is inclusive, provides a strong sense of community, and has a happy atmosphere.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	198	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

10. Pupils' self-knowledge and spiritual awareness are well developed through planned provision for reflection in lessons and in collective worship, supported by the good use of music for spiritual uplift. Moments of excitement and wonder were observed in a science lesson in the making of jelly and when old photographs of the school were displayed in assembly. The very good provision for social and moral development is an improvement since the previous inspection and is reflected in the very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships seen around the school. This is well supported by 'Circle Times' and the planned provision for personal, social and health education, introduced since the previous inspection. Pupils are very polite; for

example, one Year 2 pupil asked an inspector, “Excuse me, would you help me with this stapler, please?” School and class rules are kept to a minimum and pupils well know the difference between right and wrong, and what is socially and morally acceptable, and what is not. They show good understanding of their responsibilities to their own school community. All adults are good role models for their pupils. The ‘Buddy Bench’ and ‘Games Gang’ social innovations are very effective in promoting good relationships on the playground.

11. Pupils show an increasing awareness of culture, especially through their study of the works of artists such as Lowry and William Morris, and in their music and literature. The school is situated in a mainly mono-cultural area where it is more difficult to raise pupils’ awareness of the cultural diversity of society. The school is aware that this aspect needs to be developed and has already begun to make links with a school of very different background and ethnic mix. Resources for other cultures have been improved and pupils are made aware of festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. Other cultures, such as African, Australian Aboriginal and Indian are studied through art, drama and music.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

Attendance is satisfactory, and the school’s procedures to improve attendance are good. Nearly one and a half per cent of absence is due to holiday, which the head teacher believes parents need due to their circumstances. Pupils are punctual because of their very good attitude to school, and because parents enjoy bringing them.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a good quality of education overall. This is founded on the rich, interesting and well-planned curriculum, which ensures that the learning activities provided for all pupils meet their needs well. Another reason why pupils’ needs are met well is the very good quality of the tracking and monitoring of their progress. This also helps teachers to plan work which will moves pupils on from the level at which they are working. Children are given a good start in the reception classes where both teaching and learning are good.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in the reception classes and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Assessment throughout the school is good. The quality of teaching is under-pinned by the very good monitoring and tracking systems and the good curriculum.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are very keen to learn and behave very well in lessons.
- Planning for the next steps in learning is based on good assessment and the very good tracking of pupils’ progress.
- Basic literacy, scientific and ICT skills are taught well, but few opportunities are provided for pupils to use their mathematical and ICT skills in other subjects.
- Classroom assistants make a very good contribution to helping pupils’ learn.
- An increase in stimulating and exciting activities in Years 1 and 2 would help to promote pupils’ learning further.

- The objectives for the lesson are not always shared with pupils to encourage their understanding of what they are learning.
- Pupils are not always challenged further if they complete their tasks before the lesson ends.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	16	11	1	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.*

12. Due to the effective support given to this aspect by the headteacher, teaching and learning have improved well since the last inspection. Now there is very little unsatisfactory teaching and a greater proportion is good. In particular, teaching is now good in English and science and has improved greatly in ICT. This is reflected in the improved achievement of pupils and in the rising standards, especially in writing and in pupils' ICT skills.
13. The caring ethos of the school has resulted in relationships at all levels being very good. Adults' high expectations of good behaviour are clearly understood by all pupils. As a result, behaviour in lessons throughout the school is very good. This means that little time has to be wasted ensuring that all pupils are listening or working on task. The good relationships have also helped to encourage pupils' very good attitudes to school. Parents say their children want to come and pupils enjoy school very much, enthusiastically taking part in lessons.
14. The school's very good systems for analysing and tracking pupils' progress are making an especially good contribution to teachers' yearly and termly planning. Teachers know the level at which individual pupils are working so they can plan different activities based on their prior attainment. Good assessment of the learning that takes place in lessons helps teachers to move pupils on to the next stage. In each year group, teachers meet to plan the weekly activities and these are well planned. These strengths are a major reason why pupils at all levels are making good gains in developing their skills and knowledge and why their achievement is good.
15. The planning for individual lessons is satisfactory overall. Teachers sharing learning objectives for the lesson more frequently would lead to improvement. Where this is done well, for example, in a good Year 2 lesson in ICT, pupils more easily recognise what they have to do and therefore their progress is rapid. However, on most occasions, although clear about what they have to do for their teachers, fewer pupils are sure why they are doing it. This limits the progress they can make.
16. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan challenging activities for them. This helps pupils to achieve well. Where the level of challenge is extended in lessons very good learning takes place. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, the teacher continuously assessed pupils' achievement and set them new goals. As a result, pupils were making much better gains in their skills and knowledge than expected. However, this only took place in a small minority of lessons, with teachers rarely setting extra challenges for those pupils who have achieved the objectives set out in the planning. The lack of challenge was the main reason for the one unsatisfactory lesson seen.
17. Classroom assistants are especially well deployed by teachers and make a very effective contribution to learning. During individual or group activities they work with specific pupils and this is having a positive impact on learning. They provide sensitive support for pupils with special educational needs and the lower attaining pupils, particularly in supporting literacy skills.

18. Pupils who have special educational needs are well taught, both in class lessons and when withdrawn for group or individual work. The school's very good level of provision for them ensures that teachers are fully aware of the problems being experienced by individual pupils and how they can best be supported. Pupils' well formulated individual education plans are used effectively to inform the work provided for them. There is very close liaison between special educational needs staff and class teachers and this ensures that much of the work done in groups and individually is linked closely to the school's curriculum. For example, the small groups regularly withdrawn from the classrooms for the literacy hour receive the level of support that they need while doing the same type of work as their peers. Pupils who fall just outside of the school's special needs provision are supported well; for example, by the 'hot house' system in which they receive focused help over a fixed period of time.
19. Throughout the school, the basic skills of reading and writing are taught well. This has helped pupils to make very good progress in developing their reading skills and the school's results in this aspect are above those of similar schools. Basic writing skills such as handwriting, spelling and punctuation are also well taught and pupils achieve well in these aspects. However, the school has recognized that the creative element in writing has not been taught so well. A new 'Creative Curriculum' has just been put in place aimed at promoting this aspect. This is also intended to make teaching more stimulating and interesting for pupils, which, despite the good methods that most teachers use, was lacking in the majority of lessons seen during the inspection. Most of the good lessons seen did engage pupils' imagination. For example, the literacy lessons in Year 2 were consistently good because of the interesting stimuli to encourage creative writing; for example, in using works of art. Other strategies for promoting creativity include the growing emphasis on role-play and practical ways of designing story settings; for example in art and design activities. However, there has not been enough time for this new strategy to have a significant impact on standards.
20. Throughout the school science investigation skills are taught well and this helps pupils to reach above average standards by the time they leave. For example, during the inspection, even the newest children in the reception classes were being encouraged to use all their senses when identifying the characteristics of different fruit and vegetables. In a good lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher very effectively encouraged pupils to recall previous learning to help predict what was likely to happen when some materials were heated and whether the resulting change could be reversed.
21. ICT skills are taught well and pupils are beginning to apply these in subjects such as mathematics and science. However, the opportunities to use these skills and also mathematical skills are not yet planned sufficiently in other subjects. This limits pupils' ability to apply and practise their skills. The school is aware of the weakness and is developing cross-curricular links to alleviate it.
22. The consistency of approach and very well organised activities help to make teaching and learning in the reception classes good. There is very good teamwork amongst all adults and the learning support assistants make a very good contribution to children's learning. This was evident in the science, role-play and art activities seen during the inspection. Activities are very carefully planned to ensure that, each day, children work on focused activities led by an adult as well as having the opportunity to choose activities themselves. The activities are challenging for children, having high expectations of what they can do; for example in beginning to build up sentences including using previously unknown words. The good level of resources are used effectively to support learning in all areas and have been very carefully chosen to stimulate children's interest. A good example of this could be seen in the care taken with the role-play area to ensure that there were activities to interest both boys and girls. Another example is that children are helped to develop brush control by using large brushes to paint on the playground.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced, inclusive, innovative and has improved since the previous inspection. It is well enriched and effectively supported by the accommodation and resources. These strengths are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good quality and richness of curricular activities are helping pupils to achieve well.
- Curriculum development, including innovation, is very good.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The good accommodation, staffing levels and resources are used well to support learning, but there is no covered outdoor play area for pupils in the reception classes.

### **Commentary**

23. The curriculum has been improved since the previous inspection to make better provision for the needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment. This has already had a significant impact on improving achievement. Current strategies are focused on providing better cross-curricular links and a more imaginative, stimulating approach to learning. These also are beginning to have a beneficial effect on achievement. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson the teacher had created miniature seascapes as a prompt for lower attaining pupils, and good use of drama and role play such as seen in puppet dialogues of the story of the "Three Little Pigs", enacted out by Year 1 pupils, promoted good levels of speaking and listening skills. The identified need for a more creative approach to learning, especially for writing, in order to provide pupils with more first hand experiences, is still developmental and needs time to become effective and have an impact on raising standards. The new leader of this area has plans to increase the range of activities provided and the potential for future improvement is good.
24. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is well planned and organised. There is an appropriate emphasis on personal and social development and the basic skills needed to enhance learning in literacy, numeracy and science. A good mix of interesting and stimulating activities, some led by an adult and others that children choose for themselves promote interest well.
25. Pupils with special educational needs, and lower attaining pupils are well supported through identified 'hot-housing' groups, and these pupils, together with those for whom English is an additional language, are achieving well. There is good awareness of, and procedures for ensuring equality of opportunity and teachers' awareness of the needs to include all pupils is good. Year 1 pupils from the Year R/1 class regularly join with other of their age group for sessions of literacy and numeracy. Pupils are well prepared for transfer to the adjacent junior school, and transfer arrangements from the Foundation Stage to Year 1 have recently been improved. Leadership and management of the curriculum at all levels is good.
26. The school's provision for special educational needs is very good overall. Liaison between all adults who work with these pupils is very good. The individual education plans for pupils are well formulated and provide an achievable number of well-focused targets, challenge, and a means of measuring their success. Learning support assistants are well trained and form an important element in the school's overall special needs provision. The school is aware of the need to provide suitably challenging work for the higher attaining pupils. On some occasions extra challenge is provided through special tasks; for example, the project on problem solving with money in which the pupils were expected to explain their methods and reasoning. Those pupils identified as being 'able pupils' are encouraged to develop their skills by producing a newspaper, and undertaking additional work, perhaps in art. A good differentiated curriculum ensures that their needs are appropriately met in most lessons. However, in a minority of lessons, they are not given extra tasks when they have completed the work set.

27. Good use is made of visits, such as to Marwell Zoo and Longdown Farm, and visitors, such as an author and a poet to enhance pupils' learning, with carefully planned cross-curricular links. During the inspection week good work was seen in geography, art and English, arising from Year 2's recent visit to Southsea. At the meeting for parents there was unanimous support for the curriculum provision. Parents like the fact that it is rich and well balanced. Provision for clubs to support learning is less well developed, and there are no extra-curricular sporting activities, and no after-school clubs. There is good participation in the arts such as a book week, an art week, a multi-cultural week, and special curriculum days, all carefully planned on a rolling programme to meet the needs of all pupils, and enhance their learning.
28. Most classrooms are spacious, and good use has been made of outdoor areas to develop learning. There is an 'outdoor classroom' with terraced seating, and an environmental area with a pond, but there is no covered play area for the youngest children. However, they do have access to the hall in inclement weather, which allows the requirements for their physical development to be met. Teachers and learning support staff are appropriately trained and work very well together. Staffing provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. Year 1 pupils cannot reach their classroom block without leaving the main building, which causes some problems in bad weather. Learning resources are of good quality, well organised and effectively used by teachers to support learning, but an insufficient number of electric power points is restricting the efficiency of delivering some aspects of the curriculum, especially for information and communication technology. The school caretaker maintains a high standard of cleanliness throughout the building and gives generously of his time to construct items such as a ship and 'buddy bench' for the playground.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good. The support and guidance given to pupils is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- This is a very caring school where pupils and their families receive exceptional support.
- Child protection and health and safety procedures are good.
- Teachers make good use of 'Circle Time' to listen to pupils and value their views and, when appropriate, the school considers these and takes suitable action.
- Based on the very good systems in place for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress, very effective support, advice and guidance is given to pupils to help them improve.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well.

### **Commentary**

29. The parents' meeting and the questionnaires, including the pupils', confirm that the whole school is very caring and that a great deal of effort is made to support individual pupils and their families. This can be exceptional in cases of particular need. It makes a very good contribution to the caring partnership between school and home. Care and guidance has developed especially well since the last inspection when it was judged satisfactory. The school's aims, values and ethos are present in the school's day-to-day work and staff are good role models. Children feel safe and secure in school, which creates a positive learning environment and promotes their achievement. Child protection procedures and the liaison with the police and school nurse are good, but the support from some other services is not always as strong.
30. Pupils know that their teachers are supportive and respect and value their views. This is especially evident in 'Circle times'. For example, in a lesson observed in Year 1, pupils spoke very thoughtfully about friendship. In other lessons, teachers are careful to encourage all pupils to take part and question them sensitively to encourage even the most reluctant to respond.

31. The school has put in place especially good procedures to monitor and track the stages at which individual pupils are working as they move through the school. This gives staff a clear indication of any difficulties specific pupils may have as well as showing which pupils would benefit from accelerated learning. This, together with the rigorous analysis of the national test results, is used effectively to adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. For example, evidence indicated that pupils did less well in the creative aspects of writing and this has been addressed through a new 'Creative Initiative'. Other positive outcomes can be seen in the identification of pupils who would benefit from 'hot-housing' activities to help them achieve better levels in the national tests. Results show that these activities are effective. Monitoring of pupils' personal development although mainly informal is equally good. All adults know pupils particularly well and understand their needs so that they are very well supported. These procedures and the way the school uses them are another example of its very caring ethos. This aspect of its work, although good at the time of the last inspection is now even better.
32. Pupils with special educational needs receive a very good level of both individual and group support that is very well organised and matched to their particular needs. Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress and individual education plans are discussed with them. Records are very well maintained and used to very good effect to track the progress of individual pupils. Where they are available, the school uses the support of outside agencies and the local education authority to good effect. For example, the Speech and Language Service provides help for individual pupils and training for learning support assistants to enable them to continue speech and language support within the classrooms. A major factor in the good levels of support and subsequent achievement experienced by pupils with special educational needs is the safe and understanding environment in which they work and the school's recognition of the importance of maintaining their self-image.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has good links with parents and other schools. Its links with the community are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have positive views of the school's care and support for their children.
- Parents feel very well supported, particularly in stressful circumstances when the school gives them exceptional support.
- Parents clearly enjoy the school environment and arrive early to talk with other parents in friendship groups, fostering a strong sense of community.
- Induction arrangements are good.
- Links with other schools are good and ensure good liaison into the junior school.

### **Commentary**

33. Parents are provided with good information about the school and about their child's standards and progress, through reports and formal and informal meetings. This gives them a good opportunity to be active partners in taking their child's learning forward. The school does all it can to ensure the satisfaction of parents because it listens to them and values their views, when appropriate putting them into action. In particular, parents know that they can approach the school when the child has a problem at home and the school will be fully supportive, ensuring that all is done to minimize the effect on the child's education and well-being while at school.
34. The parent teacher association is very active and gives the school very good support through social and fundraising events. A few parents come into the school each week to help with its work in class because it is an environment in which they feel valued and welcome. Parents are encouraged to wait in the playground with their children when they bring them to school. The

headteacher regularly meets with parents at this time and this fosters a real sense of community. The school has maintained the successful partnership with parents seen at the last inspection.

35. The school's caring ethos ensures that new children joining the school are helped to settle in well. For example, during the inspection, the teacher made sure that a new pupil in Year 1 was fully included in class discussions and had friends to look after her at break and lunch times. There are good arrangements to help children starting school in the reception classes to settle in well. These include a programme of visits for both parents and their children. Very careful thought is given to planning the activities on the day when children start. Evidence of the effectiveness of this was seen during the inspection when one tearful child soon forgot to be sad and enthusiastically joined in with everyone else. Parents also report that this level of care and support continues as pupils move through the school.
36. There are good relationships with other educational institutions. The joint site, which is large and very attractive, enhances good liaison with the junior school. The young pupils are happy that their older siblings are close by in the junior school. There is a sharing of catering facilities and good subject co-ordinator links between the two schools. This all contributes to a good transition between the two schools. There are also good links with local nurseries and playgroups and this is beneficial to children when they begin school. Links with local colleges mean that a number of students receive placements in the school. The school makes very good use of the extra personnel to help enhance pupils' learning. Links with the local community support the curriculum satisfactorily; with local shops they are good, but the small number of businesses in the area limits wider opportunities.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Management procedures at all levels are very good. The leadership of the headteacher and governors is very good. Staff with subject responsibilities are very supportive of the headteacher and their contribution to leadership is satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's leadership and management is very good and she has a high level of aspiration for the school.
- Governors' very good understanding the school's strengths and weaknesses helps them to provide very effective support for senior management.
- Strategic planning is very good and fully reflects the school's ambitions and goals.
- Management procedures are successful in helping to ensure pupils achieve well and can take part in all that the school has to offer.
- Subject co-ordinators offer support and are knowledgeable about their areas, but lack of opportunities to monitor and support teaching affect their ability to take the lead in developing their subjects.

### **Commentary**

37. The headteacher benefits from the very effective support the school receives from its governors. As a body they share the vision, high aspirations and sense of purpose of the headteacher and in a very real sense they are an important element in the development of the school and in deciding its future direction. They have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are able and willing to challenge the senior management team about proposed development. However, they are all very supportive of the headteacher and the school in general. The headteacher and governors have been instrumental in fostering an ethos of pride in the school and a commitment to the continuous improvement of its overall provision. An example of this is the very good improvement to the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress since the last inspection which is having a significant impact of pupils' achievement. Whilst recognising the importance of high academic standards, the headteacher,

governors and staff also place strong emphasis on the development of the pupils as individuals and in this they are very successful. This is particularly apparent in the very good levels of behaviour and relationships observed during the inspection.

38. The headteacher motivates and inspires, staff and pupils and their parents and has developed a school in which everyone is an important part of the team. This is good improvement since the last inspection. A measure of her success can be seen in the improved curriculum, which now meets the needs of pupils of differing prior attainment well. In particular, The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs, judged to be very good during the inspection, is a clear indication of the very high level of determination of the headteacher and governors to ensure that all the pupils in the school, no matter what their individual abilities, are given the opportunities they need to reach their full potential. It also demonstrates the very good level of management of this area of the school's work provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The headteacher has also been largely instrumental in bringing about the improvements in teaching so that virtually none is now unsatisfactory and a higher proportion is good. She has also identified and put in place effective strategies to address aspects of teaching which need to improve further.
39. The school has correctly prioritised the areas for development in its provision. The strategies adopted are continuing to have a positive impact in these areas, for example in helping to improve achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Subject co-ordinators make effective use of assessment and tracking information to ensure that any areas of weakness in the curriculum are quickly addressed. They monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work and this helps them to judge the effectiveness of any developments. However, falling rolls have meant that less money is available to allow them to monitor the teaching of other colleagues, nor to work alongside them to help disseminate good practice. This makes it harder for them to set a direction for development in their subjects. Where classroom observation has been able to take place good improvement has been made, for example in increasing teachers' expertise in information and communication technology. However, these occasions are infrequent and this has limited the effectiveness of their leadership in the school's ability to continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
40. The level of strategic planning of the senior management team is very good and priorities are linked to strategies for improving pupils' achievement and means of measuring progress. The school's development plan focuses well on ways of improving standards and provision and its effectiveness is carefully monitored. Due to its falling rolls the school is suffering from a current budget deficit that will inevitably adversely affect its development provision. However, the headteacher and governors have formulated plans to deal with the overspend in this and the next financial year. They have already taken steps to limit its overall effects. Their reaction to the overspend is indicative of their good level of financial management and control. The management of the school is very successful in seeking to apply the principles of best value for money.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	571,296
Total expenditure	561,296
Expenditure per pupil	2,724

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	41,358
Balance carried forward to the next	10,000

41. Senior staff and governors measure the school's performance against available data and take the appropriate action to remedy any identified weaknesses. For example, the results of yearly standard assessment tests are monitored and identified weaknesses in subject provision

rectified. This monitoring process is also used by the school very effectively, as is self-evaluation to decide on future priorities.

42. There is a strong commitment to continuous professional development that has seen a broadening of training opportunities and is aimed at increasing class teacher overall confidence and a consistency of approach. As a result, teaching has improved since the last inspection and current strategies are helping to bring about further improvement. Performance management is linked to the school development plan and whole school initiatives; it values all members of staff and is applied to teaching, administration, and classroom support and caretaking staff. There is a high level of satisfaction in working in the school, which has led to a very low level of staff turnover in the past few years.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Children start part time in the reception class according to the date of their fifth birthday, with all attending full time by the end of the autumn term. At the time of the inspection, the spring born children had only just begun to attend full time and summer born children started school on the first day of the inspection. Induction arrangements are good and this, together with the school's caring ethos, helps children to settle in to school quickly. The prior attainment of children varies from year to year, but overall it is below that expected for their age. At the time of the last inspection the curriculum was good and it remains so, with the effective introduction of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The wide range of activities provides an appropriate mix of activities that are led by an adult, and those that children can choose for themselves. The teaching seen during the last inspection was satisfactory, but this has improved and it is now good and provides children with an effective start to their education and a good platform on which to build as they move into Year 1. The Early Years team has a good understanding of the children's needs and the activities provided motivate and challenge them. All adults insist on high standards of behaviour and very little learning time is wasted. The contribution made by the classroom assistants is especially good and makes a valuable contribution to learning. The provision is now well managed by the Early Years co-ordinator and she is supported by an effective team. Assessment is good and helps staff to plan effectively for the next stage in learning. The good provision and positive attitudes that children form helps them to learn well so that they make good progress and achieve well. The majority of the children currently in the reception class are likely to reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. However, especially when there are a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group, the standards on entry to Year 1 are not so high.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The caring ethos of the school supports this area of learning especially well and the teaching and curriculum are good.
- Good induction arrangements help children to settle quickly and adopt very good attitudes to school.
- Children achieve well and the majority are likely to reach the early goals for learning by the time they enter Year 1.
- When they enter the school children need extra guidance and support in helping to organise their work and choose the resources to help them learn.

#### **Commentary**

43. The school is especially good at providing an effective learning environment in which children feel secure and know that adults will help them to learn. This, together with the effective induction arrangements, help children to settle into school very quickly and to develop very positive attitudes towards their work. As a result, even the reluctant new children soon forget about their worries and enthusiastically join in discussions with the teacher and other activities. The relationships between children and adults are very good and so children are not afraid to attempt new work, knowing that they will be helped to correct their errors. Consequently, they develop confidence and self esteem. The curriculum in this area is good and many activities during the day ensure that children learn to work well with others and to concentrate on their tasks. Relationships are very good, as is children's behaviour, so that very little time is wasted in lessons. On entry to school, the majority of children find it difficult to make choices about their resources or to decide how they will work. Staff have made good arrangements to ensure that these areas are given special emphasis and children are beginning to accept responsibility

for simple tasks. The good provision means that children achieve well and most are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Basic literacy skills are taught well and children make good progress.
- The creative elements of writing are promoted especially well through role-play activities.
- Children are confident speakers.
- When they start school, the majority of children's reading and writing skills are below those expected for their age.

### **Commentary**

44. The assessments made on children when they enter the school show very few recognise that the print in a book, as well as the pictures, tells the story. In addition, only the higher attaining children are beginning to form letters in their writing and only a very small minority can write their own name. Many of the planned activities in the reception classes help children to develop their language and literacy skills and this helps them to achieve well. For example, during an art activity, the learning support assistant held a good discussion with the children encouraging their vocabulary development. The sensitive support of children also encourages them to respond well in class discussions and this, together with the regular role-play sessions, is supporting their speaking skills well. As a result, by the time they move into Year 1, most children are confident speakers and the vocabulary they use is at the level expected for their age. Children make good progress in developing their reading and writing skills. A good promotion of this aspect means that most children recognise the simple common words expected for their age. They find it more difficult to build up words using the letter sounds. This is mainly because, when they start school, their skills in this aspect are below those expected for their age. Every opportunity is taken to help children to progress and, by the time they enter Year 1, most children can build up simple words like 'tap' and 'fed', but they find it more difficult to read two vowel words such as 'fair'. From the time they enter school, children are taught that writing is organised in sentences. This has a positive effect, with the majority of children being able to write a sentence unaided before they enter Year 1 and the higher attaining children beginning to write at length. The whole school initiative to develop pupils' creativity, especially in writing, through promoting role-play, is given a very good foundation in the reception classes. During the inspection, the role-play area was set up as an arcade of shops. Children thoroughly enjoyed being a 'customer' or 'shopkeeper', talking together effectively in their different roles. In this area of learning, most children currently in the reception classes are likely to achieve the early goals for learning by the time they enter Year 1.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Numeracy skills are taught well in a range of activities throughout the school day.
- Children achieve well, especially in their number work.

### **Commentary**

45. The teachers take every opportunity to promote children's numeracy skills and this helps them to make good progress and achieve well. For example, as they enter the classroom at the start

of school, children stick their names on to cards to register their presence and whether they are eating school lunch or sandwiches, or going home. Counting activities are made relevant and fun. For example, during the inspection children were counting different quantities of potatoes. In the same activity also, the teacher took the opportunity to help children to compare the potatoes as 'larger' or 'smaller' and to decide which was the largest. Role-play activities, such as weighing different quantities in the 'greengrocers' or giving change also encourage good progress. Good resources in both classes encourage mathematical development, for example, two boys thoroughly enjoyed sorting the shells and seeing how many there were of each type. By the time they move on to Year 1, nearly all children have a clear understanding of how to add and subtract numbers up to 10 and they record these accurately, such as  $4 + 3 = 7$ . The higher attaining children are working with numbers up to 20. Most children count accurately beyond this. Overall, the early goals for learning are met by the time children move on to Year 1.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Learning, through many first hand experiences, is good so children achieve well.
- Children's early scientific and information and communication technology skills are promoted well.

### **Commentary**

46. The curriculum has been well planned to encourage children's interest and stimulating resources are provided in many activities. For example, during the inspection, the theme on 'Fruit and Vegetables' was explored in role-play, mathematical, art and scientific activities. In the adult led activities, observational skills were being developed exceptionally well. Children were learning about the different characteristics of fruit and vegetables by looking, feeling, smelling and tasting them. This is especially good in promoting scientific investigation skills. Many of the activities, which children can choose for themselves, are planned to promote curiosity and this also helps children to make good progress. Children enjoy working on the computer and are helped to develop confidence in operating simple programs. For example, by using the mouse to move objects on the screen. Overall standards are in line with expectations, with children currently in the reception classes being likely to gain the knowledge expected by the time they enter Year 1. However, they are on course to exceed the expected levels in their investigative science skills and also those for information and communication technology so achievement in these aspects is very good.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

47. It was only possible to observe a small number of activities in this area of learning during the inspection. Therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the provision or about the standards that children attain. The curriculum is well planned and the activities provided are good. Children have access to daily outdoor play when the weather is good, but there is no covered outdoor area. However, they also have use of the school hall which ensures there is sufficient emphasis on this area of their development. Resources are good and include wheeled toys, climbing apparatus and construction equipment of various sizes. In the activities observed, children were developing their manual dexterity appropriately and most were holding a pencil correctly. Children also cut, stick and mould materials at the level expected for their age. In a music and movement lesson, children were beginning to control their movements and respond appropriately to the music. Most children can dress and undress themselves with little adult help.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

48. Only a small number of activities were observed so it was not possible to make an overall judgement about provision or standards. The curriculum is well planned and, as part of the school's drive to promote creativity in learning, there is a good emphasis on role-play. Children enjoy this very much, for example when 'buying' new clothes or weighing fruit in the shopping arcade. When they enter the school, most children's drawing skills are below those expected for their age. Artistic skills are promoted especially well and during the inspection children produced printed patterns to a high standard. In these aspects of their creative development children are achieving well and are likely to reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum is good, well enhanced and increasingly creative in development.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and contribute positively to their good achievement.
- The subject co-ordinator gives good leadership and is prepared to innovate.
- Pupils do not use their ICT skills enough to support learning in this subject.

#### Commentary

49. Despite pupils now entering the school with lower levels of attainment, the average standards identified at the previous inspection have been maintained, representing good achievement for current pupils, and an improvement since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator has played an important part in this and, as a result, the curriculum has been well planned and takes good account of the different needs of pupils in a year group. This helps support the good teaching and learning which takes place and ensures that pupils are developing their basic literacy skills well.
50. Pupils are also increasingly being encouraged to develop their creativity. For example, in the best lessons, good use is made of an imaginative creative approach to stimulate interest for pupils with special educational needs, whilst maintaining a more formal approach for the rest of the class. The work planned for pupils usually matches the stage at which they are working and is challenging, helping them to make good progress. However, in the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, too much time was spent on a creative exercise, resulting in very little new learning being accomplished. Classroom assistants and parent volunteers provide very good support in group activities and the work set for homework is well matched to pupils' prior attainment and helps them to develop their reading and spelling skills. In addition, good contact is maintained with parents through dialogue in homework diaries. Assessment procedures are good, and are increasingly being used to help plan for the needs of all pupils.
51. Teachers do not give enough emphasis to stating clear learning objectives at the beginning of lessons to help pupils understand what they are going to do. In addition, few teachers check, at the end of lessons, that pupils know what they have done and how well they have performed. This means, that although pupils are making good progress in acquiring new skills and knowledge, their knowledge of their learning and what they need to do to improve further is not as good as it could be. Pupils' work shows that some is word processed although there was little evidence that the use of ICT to support learning is an integral part of lessons. The school is

aware of the need to promote this further and is in the process of planning better cross-curricular links between subjects.

52. Pupils' achievement is considerably supported by the very good attitudes they have to their work. This helps them to listen attentively and behave well. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and take pride in their written work which is presented carefully.
53. Speaking and listening skills are developed well. Teachers provide good role models as listeners and use effective open-ended questions to stimulate lengthy and well-considered answers. The pupils spoken to by inspectors were articulate, confident and polite. The planned use of drama and role-play also successfully promotes speaking skills. For example, Year 1 pupils were observed using stick puppets to act out a dialogue for the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'. This creative approach was effective in improving their language skills.
54. The school has a good stock of high quality reading material, which is carefully chosen to match the level at which individual pupils are working. This, together with the fact that teachers hear individual pupils read regularly ensures teaching and learning in this aspect is good and so pupils achieve well, reaching average standards by the time they leave. Year 2 pupils heard to read were confident and accurate, with good basic skills, breaking words down into syllables and using their knowledge of letter sounds and picture clues to recognise words. They show secure understanding of the plot and characters and use the index to find information in non-fiction books.
55. The school has done much recently to raise standards in writing. The practice of 'hot-housing' small groups of lower attaining pupils and the good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language have contributed to the good achievement seen and most pupils are likely to reach expected standards by the end of Year 2. There is a good emphasis on developing basic writing skills and, since the last inspection, pupils have also been introduced to a wider range of writing genres, such as instructional writing on how to make a sandwich. Pupils use sentence punctuation correctly and there are good strategies in place for the learning of spelling and standards are at the level expected for Year 2 pupils. Handwriting is well taught and standards of presentation are generally good. The school is aware that technical writing skills are better than the imaginative and creative, and has taken steps to address this. Pupils are improving their skills in these areas, for example in using similes.
56. Through the monitoring of lessons, the subject co-ordinator has helped to improve the provision, including introducing new initiatives to promote better creativity. This has contributed positively to the raising of standards.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

57. There is good provision to develop language skills through cross-curricular links for writing activities in science, history, geography and religious education. Standards in this aspect are in line with what is expected. All classrooms have inviting and attractive reading areas and, in Year 2, good provision has been made for pupils to use specific writing areas. Teachers plan opportunities in all subjects for pupils to discuss their work, and this is helping to raise standards.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' very good attitudes are helping them to achieve well and reach average standards by the end of Year 2.

- The work given to individual pupils is well matched to the stage at which they are working as a result of the very good use of assessment and monitoring information.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of marking in this subject.
- The opportunities for the subject co-ordinator to work alongside other teachers are limited.
- Information and communication technology skills are not used sufficiently to support learning.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.

## **Commentary**

58. Standards on entry to the school are now lower than at the time of the last inspection, but pupils achieve well and the majority currently in Year 2 are likely to achieve expected standards by the time they leave. Most pupils identify odd and even numbers and add and subtract those with one and two digits. They name the properties of some two and three-dimensional shapes such as the number of corners and edges in a cube and record data in the form of block graphs. The higher attaining pupils also add and subtract double-digit numbers whilst lower attaining pupils can add and subtract numbers up to 20. Pupils with special educational needs are included well in activities due to the very good levels of support they receive either as individuals, in small groups or within the classrooms. This helps them to achieve well.
59. Pupils have very positive attitudes and say that they “Enjoy finding out things.” They are very confident about their skills and feel “They know a lot.” This is an indication of the very good relationships between pupils and adult and the good level of support and well-targeted work they are given. Pupils are eager to talk about their work, doing so clearly and showing understanding because they have to explain their reasoning when answering questions, which helps to develop their mathematical thinking. Pupils’ attitudes significantly support their learning and help contribute to the good achievement seen.
60. Another reason for the good achievement is the school’s response to curriculum weaknesses identified through a rigorous analysis of national tests. Consequently the curriculum is well planned. This, together with very good use of assessment information and tracking of pupils’ progress ensures that future planning and takes especially good account of individual pupils’ prior attainment. This means that pupils can be set challenging work to help move them on well from the stage at which they are working.
61. Teachers’ expertise has improved since the last inspection due to good in-service training with the quality of teaching and learning satisfactory overall. A significant minority of the lessons seen were good. Most lessons are well planned with work, which is well focused on the learning objectives and the needs of individual pupils. In good lessons effective questioning ensures pupils have to explain why they have reached an answer and this helps their understanding so they make good progress in their learning. Teachers are also using homework effectively to help pupils consolidate their learning. Although some teachers mark pupils’ work well, on other occasions the marking does not show how the work can be improved. In other work, the digit reversals made by some pupils have not been corrected. There was evidence of some teachers making good use of computer programs to support learning, but not enough emphasis is given to this aspect. The co-ordinator has had limited opportunity to further improve teaching through work in classrooms with other teachers.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. Pupils do use their mathematical skills in other subjects such as design and technology and science. However, this aspect is not specifically planned for and so opportunities are missed. The school is aware of the need for improvement and this is a priority in the current school development plan.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching and curriculum are good and have improved well since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well and those currently in Year 2 are reaching standards above those expected nationally.
- Pupils are very well behaved and attentive during lessons and are keen to answer questions.
- Assessment is used well to track pupils' achievement.
- There is no focused monitoring and support of teaching and learning to set a direction for further development.

### **Commentary**

63. Children in the reception classes are given a particularly good start in developing their early scientific investigation skills. This good achievement is built on well as they move through the school. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to carry out their own scientific enquiries and record their findings independently. These initiatives are having a very positive effect on pupils' achievement and those currently in Year 2 are on course to reach above average standards by the time they leave. This represents good achievement.
64. Pupils recognise the importance of scientific investigation and their knowledge in the identified areas of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study is above the level expected. For example, pupils have a secure knowledge of the properties of different materials. They know what will happen if they are heated and whether the change is reversible or not. In discussion, pupils demonstrated an understanding of the basic needs of a variety of living things in order to survive, such as water, food and heat. For example they know some are plant eaters while others eat meat. Partly as a result of the school's participation in 'The Healthy Schools Award', pupils' awareness of the elements that are necessary for human health is good. They know the importance of fruit, vegetables and exercise and what happens if we neglect them – "We become fat."
65. The curriculum is rich and interesting and is effectively based on the assessment of previous work. Science investigative skills are promoted well, and this helps to promote pupils' understanding of different concepts. Good use has been made of advice from various experts and the work carried out in special environmental and science based weeks. These special projects are designed to promote the use of the school grounds as a classroom and thus provide first hand experience for the pupils.
66. Underpinned by the good curriculum teaching and learning are good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is helping pupils to achieve well and to reach above average standards. Good assessment, which is effectively linked to the National Curriculum Levels of Attainment helps to track pupils' progress and makes it easy for teachers to plan effectively for future lessons. Teachers create a positive learning environment and set challenging and interesting work, which helps pupils to develop very positive attitudes and to work hard. Investigation skills are promoted well. This was evident in a good Year 1 lesson seen where pupils were making good gains in classifying living things in a variety of different ways. Classroom assistants and other adult helpers are very effective in supporting learning, especially for the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The well-targeted activities help to ensure that all pupils, whatever their prior attainment or needs achieve well, including the higher attainers. Opportunities are provided for pupils to record their work in different ways and this encourages the use of literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils are encouraged to record their findings in tables as seen in a lesson on the changes to materials caused by heating them. In this same lesson pupils were encouraged to put forward their ideas and to use the correct technical vocabulary. However, teachers do not make enough use of ICT to help support pupils' learning.

67. Curriculum provision is monitored effectively by the subject co-ordinator and she has been instrumental in setting up the good assessment procedures now in place. However, she has little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, nor to work alongside other colleagues. This limits her ability to promote further improvements in the provision.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection and pupils now achieve well, especially in their skills development.
- Pupils enjoy their learning very much and this helps them to make good progress.
- The curriculum is good and teachers are more confident.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use their skills to support learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

68. From the time they start in the reception classes, children are helped to make good progress in developing their skills. By the time they move on to Year 1, very nearly all children are competent in using the mouse, including being able to 'drag' items on the screen to a new area. As a result, from Year 1, teachers can concentrate on helping pupils to operate a range of different programs and applications.
69. At the time of the last inspection, the subject expertise of teachers varied, with some lacking confidence. Good support and in-service training from the subject co-ordinator has rectified this. This, together with the good curriculum, has meant that skills are now taught well so that pupils make good progress in this aspect. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident in loading or exiting programs and know how to save their work. They competently use many of the icons to control programs. They have secure word processing skills, changing the type, size and colour of the font. Pupils know how to operate simulation programs, for example, to help their work in mathematics. They can operate a programmable robot and can follow a route, changing direction correctly when using the 'turtle'. Pupils use CD ROMs to help their learning in subjects such as science and geography. Pupils are making good gains in learning new skills. However, they do not use them enough to support learning in other subjects and this means their achievement is satisfactory overall.
70. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their learning and concentrate very well when the teacher is introducing a new skill, as was seen in a good lesson where the pupils were being taught how to save their work. However, currently it is difficult for the whole class to view the screen and the school has recently purchased a digital projector to address this.
71. The effective teaching of skills is underpinned by the good curriculum, which has been designed by the subject co-ordinator. This, together with the good in-service training which she has led, has helped teachers to develop confidence and expertise. Only one lesson was seen in which direct teaching in the subject was seen and this was good. Other evidence is taken from the observation of pupils using their skills in some other subjects and from the study of pupils' records and interviews with pupils. This shows that the subject is now taught satisfactorily or better. The curriculum provides well for pupils to build on and extend their skills over the full range of the National Curriculum Programme of study.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

72. Where possible, the subject co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues, including working alongside teachers and helping with weekly planning. Where this has been possible, teachers are increasingly using programs to support learning in other subjects. However, this is not yet fully effective across the school and has meant that pupils' application of their skills to help their learning in other subjects is not as good as it could be. The co-ordinator is aware of this weakness and has already produced plans to address it.

## **HUMANITIES**

73. Only one geography and one religious education lesson were observed. Teachers' plans were studied and evidence was also gathered from assemblies. Assessment and record information for the past year was scrutinised, as was some work from this term in geography and religious education. A discussion was held with the religious education subject leader. Geography and history were not focus subjects for this inspection therefore provision and standards are not reported on in any detail. However, evidence shows that the full requirements of the National Curriculum are being met.
74. History is taught alternatively with geography in each term and had not been taught this year so no work was available for scrutiny. Records show that, by the time the current Year 2 pupils, leave they will have learnt about what schools were like in Victorian times and about famous people and events such as Florence Nightingale and the Gunpowder Plot. They can use a range of sources including artefacts to identify differences in the past.
75. Provision in geography has improved since the previous inspection, with a new policy and scheme of work. There is an effective emphasis on learning from first hand experiences through a range of visits and visitors and this is having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes. The recent visit by Year 2 pupils to a contrasting location, Southsea, has been followed up effectively by teachers. This has enabled pupils to identify human and physical features and to compare differences with their own locality, an improvement on the weakness identified at the time of the previous inspection. For example, pupils identified features such as a windmill, airport and chalk hills and used specific geographical vocabulary such as 'promenade', 'shingle' and 'lighthouse'. Good cross-curricular provision has been planned in art and writing in English, with pupils producing booklets for 'Come to Southsea' and 'An Infant's Guide to Southsea'.

## **Religious education**

76. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision. However, evidence taken from the lesson and the scrutiny of work shows that pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
77. Under the guidance of the subject co-ordinator, good improvement has been made to the curriculum since the last inspection. Based on the locally agreed syllabus, it is well established and resourced. Pupils now learn about Hinduism and this helps them to develop a better understanding of the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom. There is a good focus on the importance of symbolism in religion and, during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were learning about the symbolism of harvest festivals. There are also opportunities to learn about other Christian symbols, for example, through a visit to Romsey Abbey. Pupils are helped to gain an understanding of the importance of festivals such as Diwali, Holi and Easter. Evidence shows that pupils are likely to reach the standards set out in the locally agreed syllabus by the time they leave. The quality and quantity of resources have improved and pupils are able to learn through looking at religious artefacts.
78. Religious education makes a positive contribution to developing pupils' awareness of and respect for people who are different from themselves. This helps to make relationships throughout the school very good.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

79. It was only possible to sample work in these subjects as only a small number of lessons were seen.
80. During the inspection no art lessons were seen. However, a scrutiny of work, documents and photographic evidence was undertaken and discussions held with the subject co-ordinator. The high standards recorded at the time of the last inspection have been maintained, and pupils continue to achieve well. The curriculum is good, well supported by special events such as art week. It is being developed further in conjunction with the 'Creative Initiative'. Year 2 pupils' work showed good skills in portrait drawing, and other observational drawing such as chrysanthemums and still life, and in pastel shades of water-colour paintings of seaside scenes following a recent visit to Southsea.
81. Art has a strong focus around the school, with high quality, well displayed work by pupils inspired by a wide variety of artists such as Lowry, Renoir, Van Gogh, William Morris, Clarice Cliff and many others. Resources for the subject are good, and practical areas in classrooms are used well for teaching. Teachers have become more confident since the previous inspection. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about teaching, but from the standards of work seen it is likely to be good. Three dimensional work such as the clay figurines seen, and landscape painting, show that pupils have undertaken a wide variety of work. The subject co-ordinator plays an effective role in helping to maintain high standards. Art is used well to promote other cultures such as those from Africa or India.
82. In the one lesson observed in design and technology Year 2 pupils reached the expected levels when designing and making a hand puppet. They achieved well during the lesson due to the very good attitudes they displayed. They were learning well through enjoyment. Pupils understood the concept of a template, drew accurately round their hands, showed good skills in cutting and stapling, and imaginative design features as a preparation to making an animal hand puppet with felt. They had good awareness of the need to work safely and concentrated well throughout. Pupils' recorded work revealed good consideration of what they needed for the tasks, and satisfactory evaluation of work completed earlier.
83. Development in music is continuous and outlined well in the school's position statement for 2002-2003. Achievements noted in the statement cover such aspects as the review of the scheme of work across the school and the provision of a better stock of compact discs. The school is well resourced for the teaching of the subject.
84. Physical education is also well resourced and the accommodation, both indoor and out is good. Only one lesson, in dance for a mixed class of reception and Year 1 pupils, was observed. In this lesson pupils were learning to control and co-ordinate their actions and move responsively to the music at the levels expected for their age. Planning shows that pupils have access to the full range of activities provided in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. However, there is not enough evidence to judge the quality of the provision, nor standards and achievement overall.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

85. There was not enough evidence to report on this area individually as only one 'Circle Time' lesson in Year 1, was seen. In this the teaching was satisfactory, as was learning and achievement. However, the very strong provision for pupils' moral and social development, together with the school's caring and supportive ethos make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in this area. Consequently pupils are developing very positive relationships and a respect for others as well as gaining confidence and self-esteem. The school's involvement in 'The Healthy Schools Award' is also having a positive impact on pupils' development and they are gaining a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and exercise.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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