

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FAIRISLE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Lordshill

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116253

Headteacher: Mrs Yvonne Adams

Lead inspector: Sue Orpin

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> –17<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 256096

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	259
School address:	Fairisle Road Lordshill Southampton Hampshire
Postcode:	SO16 8BY
Telephone number:	023 8073 3415
Fax number:	023 8073 4473
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michael Dant
Date of previous inspection:	January 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a large junior school with 259 pupils. Pupils are organised in eleven classes, three in each of Years 4, 5 and 6 and two in Year 3. Pupils mainly live close to the school and are in families from a wide range of social circumstances, many from homes where incomes are lower than that found nationally and where levels of overcrowding are higher than those of most families nationally. Twenty-seven per cent of the pupils have free school meals, which is above the national average. Pupils' attainment when they start school is at a level below that expected for their age. Eighty-five pupils, an above average proportion, have been identified as having special educational needs, which are mainly social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. Two have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is below average. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds, with a very small minority from other white, black and Asian backgrounds and no pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. There have been high levels of staff and pupil mobility in recent years and a particularly turbulent period of leadership and management until May 2003. In the last two years, the number of pupils has fallen although this trend looks set to change in the coming year. The attendance of a few pupils is very low and has a depressing effect on their achievement. The school gained a School Achievement Award in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17808	Sue Orpin	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, personal, social and health education and citizenship, music.
8919	John Kerr	Lay inspector	
17693	Esther Digby	Team inspector	English, geography, history, religious education, special educational needs.
12367	Anthony Green	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education, English as an additional language.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective and improving school that provides good value for money.** Standards at the end of Year 6 are generally below average, while representing satisfactory achievement overall. The quality of teaching is good and standards are improving rapidly as a result of good leadership and management. Despite the school's very good efforts to promote attendance, high levels of absence, together with high levels of pupil mobility, adversely affect the achievement of a small number of pupils.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Despite the downward trend in results of the last two years, standards are now improving rapidly.
- Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT), and pupils with special educational needs achieve well in all subjects inspected.
- The headteacher's very good leadership and management are helping to raise standards.
- Teaching is good overall and pupils are assessed well so standards are rising rapidly, but, some work planned for a few higher attaining pupils is not challenging enough.
- Attendance is well below the national average and punctuality is poor, preventing a small number of pupils from doing as well they could.
- Pupils' attitudes to lessons and their behaviour are good, positively affecting their learning.
- The school cares for pupils very well and their relationships with adults are very good.

Since the last inspection, improvement has been good, although the school has been through a difficult period, lacking stable leadership. Under the strong leadership of the recently appointed headteacher, standards are now rising rapidly and pupils' attitudes and behaviour have been improved significantly, ensuring that learning is now good. The school has dealt successfully with most key issues from the last inspection by improving standards in reading, mathematics and ICT and improving the assessment of all pupils and the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. However, despite recent improvements, standards in writing and science remain as they were at the time of the last inspection.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	E	E	E*
mathematics	D	E	E*	E*
science	D	D	E	E*

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* - very low  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement is satisfactory.** In 2003, results were well below average and very low when compared with similar schools. However, pupils' progress has accelerated in the last year, with older pupils recovering missed ground from turbulence in their previous time at the school. Standards have now improved and in the current Year 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are now below average, rather than well below average. As younger pupils progress through the school, the trend of improvement is likely to continue. In ICT, pupils are achieving well and standards are already in line with those expected. A small minority of higher attaining pupils sometimes do not achieve as well as they might in English, mathematics and science. For a few pupils whose attendance or punctuality is erratic, achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in all subjects.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** Pupils' relationships with other pupils are good and everyone is included in all aspects of school life very effectively. Pupils respect the views and opinions of others well and have a very well developed sense of right and wrong. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work are good and contribute well to learning. Although the school's efforts to improve attendance are very good, the level of attendance continues to be low because not all families appreciate the importance of school.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall,** although this is not yet fully reflected in pupils' achievement as they are recovering from previous gaps in their learning. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils and planned activities usually match pupils' abilities and their interests well. In a few instances, higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged and there are too few opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. Teachers usually make the purpose of the lesson clear, and expect them to behave well. Pupils are assessed well, although there are a few inaccuracies and too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work. The curriculum and extra-curricular activities are satisfactory but some foundation subjects need further development. The care and welfare of pupils is very good. There are good links with other schools and with the community, and the partnership with parents is good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a clear picture of how the school can develop. The school is managed well and governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and although recently appointed, already provide a challenging, yet supportive role. The school evaluates its success very well and is clear about further improving the school. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school and the progress their children make. They think that teaching is good and that their children are expected to work hard, but would like more information about how well they are doing. Most pupils like school and know adults will help them. The inspection confirmed these views except information to parents, which is good.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Continue to improve standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science, and in particular the development of skills.
- Make teaching more consistently good so that all teachers plan work that challenges all pupils.
- Continue to lift levels of attendance and punctuality in order to improve achievement.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are below average but their achievement is satisfactory.

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

- Pupils' results in English, mathematics and science have declined in recent years, particularly in 2003, but standards seen during the inspection were better.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of good support by staff.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT and their standards are average because of recent improvements.
- A small minority of higher attaining pupils sometimes do not achieve as well as they might, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

#### **Commentary**

##### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.7 (24.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	22.9 (25.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	25.8 (27.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 296 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. National test results in English and mathematics have declined over the last two years and results in science declined in 2003. In 2003, pupils achieved results that were well below national averages in English and science, and were very low in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, results in English, mathematics and science were very low, suggesting that these pupils did not achieve as well as they might. However, through the very strong leadership of the new headteacher, there have been improvements to pupils' attitudes, behaviour and teaching so standards have begun to rise rapidly. Standards in Year 6 are now below average and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Older pupils are making good progress in lessons, compensating for gaps in their earlier education, and younger pupils are also learning well so that standards are set to rise in future years. Pupils' extended writing skills, their investigational and experimental skills and their skills in research are less well developed than other areas of their learning. This is partly as a result of too few opportunities in lessons and for older pupils, limited experience in earlier years.
2. Most pupils start the school with standards that are below average, although there is significant variation from year to year, and in the last few years there have been unusually high numbers of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties joining the school in Years 5 and 6. In recent years there have also been unusually high numbers of pupils leaving and joining the school and almost all of the current teaching staff are new to the school. The very effective leadership of the recently appointed headteacher has dramatically reduced the number of changes of teachers and despite the high levels of pupil mobility, succeeded in improving standards noticeably in a short time. Pupils' standards in ICT are better than in other subjects and are in line with those expected, as a result of improved teaching and resources. Pupils' achievement in ICT is good.
3. The school has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Throughout the school, their achievement is good. Well-trained learning support assistants

help them effectively, both in the classroom and in groups that have been withdrawn from lessons, and tasks are adapted appropriately for the needs of each pupil. In particular, pupils with challenging behaviour are making good progress in their social development and their improved attitudes to school are enabling them to learn more effectively and make good progress.

4. A few higher attaining pupils do not always do as well as they could in English, mathematics and science, partly because of weaknesses in the way they are sometimes taught. The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups is sound, as is that of pupils who are gifted and talented at such subjects as music or art and design, where their individual needs are met.
5. In spite of behaviour and attitudes having improved markedly in the last year, the continuing low levels of attendance combined with high levels of pupil mobility depress the achievement of some pupils.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and their pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is well below that of other schools and punctuality is poor.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance but despite the school's efforts, levels of attendance are low. The level of unauthorised absence has been successfully reduced through effective work with parents.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well in and out of lessons although they currently have few opportunities to take responsibility.
- The punctuality of some pupils at the beginning of the school day is poor, despite the very good efforts of the school.
- Pupils are able to judge right from wrong very effectively, they respect the views of others and they are learning to live and work together well.

### **Commentary**

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	1.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

6. In the last year attendance was well below the national average, and unauthorised absence was well above. The school has worked very hard to reduce the latter and has done so successfully but despite the very good efforts of the school and the local Education Welfare Officer to improve levels of attendance, they remain stubbornly low. Punctuality at the beginning of the school day is also poor with too many pupils arriving very late. The school has worked hard to make sure that all pupils and parents understand the importance of arriving at school on time, including providing a Breakfast Club to help, and although there has been some improvement, there are still too many pupils who miss the beginning of the school day. The school has good records and tracking systems and good attendance is rewarded through assemblies and awards. However, there are a few parents who do not ensure their children attend regularly enough nor on time, and therefore the achievement of these few pupils is adversely affected.
7. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to their work and these have a positive effect on their achievement. In lessons they are interested and keen to learn. They listen attentively to

teachers and each other and even when confused they try hard and want to do well. As yet, there are few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, but these are being developed and when given the opportunity, pupils respond well. Even pupils who have presented emotional difficulties in previous schools like being at this school and want to learn.

8. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The school has very high expectations for their behaviour and even the most challenging pupils, some of whom have been very difficult in previous schools, respond to this positively. Teachers generally use the school's very good policy consistently so that behaviour has improved dramatically in the last year under the direction of the new headteacher. Although there are still some instances of unsatisfactory behaviour, they are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils play well together during breaks, and lunchtimes are orderly occasions. Both pupils and parents think that in those few instances when bullying occurs, it is dealt with very effectively. The number of exclusions in the last year was very high, as a result of significant numbers of pupils who were badly behaved. The sanctions were used appropriately to maintain and develop an orderly atmosphere, and consequently this year very few exclusions have been necessary.

***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	172	50	0
White – Irish	4	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	2	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	71	0	0

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

9. The school provides good opportunities for spiritual development through assemblies and in lessons. For example, in a group lesson where a small group of pupils were learning about balance, forces and stability by sitting in a sailing dinghy, they were gasping in amazement while experiencing what stability and instability felt like. Music is used well to develop pupils' self-esteem and their cultural appreciation. Almost half of all pupils at the school are learning to play a musical instrument and many perform to others. Many pupils belong to the school choir, including several boys whose behaviour is sometimes challenging, and these opportunities are used very effectively to help all pupils excel in some aspect of learning. Generally, pupils' cultural development is developed in a satisfactory way, with fewer opportunities for pupils to learn about the cultural traditions of others. They value ethnic diversity and are developing an understanding that cultural and religious beliefs affect the way in which pupils live. However, displays in classrooms, corridors, the library and shared areas do not sufficiently reflect and celebrate the languages spoken by pupils within the school or the diversity of wider the community.
10. Teachers provide good role models for pupils, who are taught about right and wrong very well. Personal, social and health education lessons make a good contribution to pupils' social development, and teachers make good use of opportunities that present themselves during the course of other lessons. Boys and girls of all ages and ethnic backgrounds play well together, their relationships are good and they care well for one another.

11. The school makes sure that all pupils have the same opportunities to learn well, including those with challenging behaviour. Opportunities such as the Breakfast Club encourage pupils to come to school punctually and provide them with social training. The headteacher and two senior teachers lead by example and work very effectively to promote a positive approach to learning. They are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants. Consequently, as they move into older classes, pupils mature well and older pupils in the school have well developed attitudes to their work and responsibilities.
12. Since the last inspection, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have improved well, but attendance has deteriorated. This may in part be a result of the changing profile of pupils' family backgrounds.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching, learning and the assessment of pupils are good. The curriculum provided is satisfactory and the attention given to the care and welfare of pupils is very good. There are good links with other schools and with the community and the partnership with parents is good.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and teachers assess their pupils well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers usually plan activities that are well matched to pupils' abilities and interest them in their work, although in a few instances, higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged and there are too few opportunities for pupils to think for themselves.
- Teachers usually make the purpose of the lesson clear to pupils, which helps them to understand well what they are learning and why, although in a few lessons the purpose of the lesson is not shared effectively with the pupils.
- Teachers expect their pupils to behave very well and encourage them with effective use of praise and encouragement.
- Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and generally assess them well, using the information to help them plan suitable activities, although occasionally teachers' assessments are less accurate and there are too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (12%)	20 (61%)	7 (21%)	2 (6%)	0	0

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

13. Teaching and learning have improved recently because of the strong and effective leadership of the new headteacher and a more stable staff. Pupils are making good gains from the work they have studied in the past and their achievement is now satisfactory. Teachers plan interesting and stimulating activities that pupils enjoy and that help them learn because they are usually well matched to their abilities. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher used a game similar to one seen on television, together with practical activities to help pupils understand the meaning of better, or worse, value for money. The activities were stimulating and fun so pupils were very attentive and wanted to learn. All abilities in the group were suitably challenged, with some pupils being encouraged to work independently and

others learning through the use of practical activities to help them to make judgments about value for money. The lesson moved at a good pace and consequently pupils' achievement was good.

14. Teachers generally make the purpose of the lesson clear so pupils know why they are undertaking the tasks. Relationships are very positive with teachers encouraging pupils and using praise very well. As a result, all pupils, including those who are more challenging, behave well. Teachers are generally confident in the subjects they teach, plan lessons well and use resources to make lessons more interesting. Homework is set regularly and is satisfactory overall, although there is no home school reading record to enable parents or pupils to comment on reading activities.
15. In those few lessons where teaching was weaker, the teacher rushed explanations and the purpose of the lesson and therefore confused pupils. Although pupils were interested at the beginning of the lesson, their behaviour deteriorated and the teacher was unable to regain their interest.
16. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good and as a result they achieve well. In class lessons, pupils with challenging behaviour are helped well by learning support assistants who promote good attitudes to learning as well as providing additional teaching support. Effective 'Booster groups' give effective and specific help to pupils with their reading and writing skills. In addition, a number of adult helpers hear underachieving readers and this is helping to raise standards of reading. Well-trained learning support assistants lead small group sessions to develop emotional literacy so that some pupils with behavioural difficulties are able to learn effectively. A wide range of practical strategies to interest and motivate disaffected pupils is being developed by the school and implemented well by all staff. However, the learning targets on pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) are often too broad, and steps to achieve them are not clearly identified. The newly appointed special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) has recognised this as an area for improvement and has appropriate plans to address this issue.
17. Teachers mark pupils' work well and provide comments that help pupils know what they need to do next. Assessment of pupils' work and learning is generally good, recorded well and usually used very effectively to plan activities that ensure most pupils are suitably challenged at their individual levels. Occasionally, teachers' assessments are less accurate, with the result that some pupils, particularly those who are higher attaining, are not challenged by their work. Good use is made of the resulting information to track how well pupils are achieving and to identify where additional help is needed as well as weaker areas of teaching. However, generally teachers do not tell pupils which levels they are achieving and so they are unclear about how well they are progressing. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own progress and therefore become more involved and purposeful in their learning. Careful assessment and the use of interesting activities ensure that everyone has the same chance to learn. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has been maintained, and assessment has been improved well.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but it is enriched well. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities are satisfactory. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are also satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The review and development of the curriculum is being led very well by the headteacher to improve the interest and achievement of pupils.
- Improvements to the curriculum and resources for ICT are good and have led to improved standards and achievement.

- Good planning for pupils' personal, social and health education has contributed to improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils' learning is enriched well by visitors to the school, trips outside school, and very well by music activities.
- Improvements to the building and internal decoration are having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to the school.

## Commentary

18. The enthusiastic and energetic leadership of the new headteacher has led to a very full review of the curriculum. A strength of recent curriculum change is the way the subjects are being interwoven to produce learning that is both interesting and relevant to all pupils and prepares them well for later stages of education. Since the last inspection, provision for ICT and resources and planning for design and technology have been improved well. New strategies are being planned to foundation subjects such as art and design and design technology but as yet, these have not had time to take effect. For example, analysis of pupils' work shows that progression of skills to develop and raise standards in art and design and design and technology, by systematically building on previous knowledge and experience, is now in place to rectify gaps in pupils' previous experience. The new curriculum motivates pupils so they want to learn and, as a result, standards are rising, especially in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Because of the high number of newly qualified and temporary teachers at the school some subjects, for example physical education and music, do not have a full time co-ordinator. However, new and temporary teachers have willingly taken on the role of "shadow" or "caretaker" co-ordinator to ensure that innovations are being implemented.
19. Planning for personal, social and health education (PSHE), including sex education and drugs awareness, is good and contributes well to the way pupils relate to each other and are maturing, and generally supports the positive attitudes pupils have to learning. The "shadow" curriculum co-ordinator has recently, and comprehensively, revised the PSHE curriculum to make it more relevant to pupils.
20. The school makes good use of visitors and trips out, such as an annual residential visit for Year 6 pupils and very good use of music activities, which are well supported by boys and girls of all ages. Almost half the pupils partake of extra tuition for musical instruments, singing and choir. The success pupils have in these activities is having a very good effect on developing good attitudes towards learning, social development and the unity of the school as a whole. A daily Breakfast Club also supports provision and ensures that pupils who attend are ready and alert for the day ahead. Links with other schools are used successfully, for example, a local secondary school has helped develop the curriculum for ICT.
21. The curriculum provides well for pupils with special educational needs. The development of a topic based curriculum with links between subjects makes learning more interesting and meaningful for all pupils but has a particular impact on those with special educational needs. The range of support teaching, in groups and individually, is clearly focussed on the particular needs of individual pupils. Those with physical disabilities are catered for well. Although some modification to the building is still required to ensure full access to facilities such as the ICT suite, the school has interim measures in place to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged.
22. The overall accommodation is satisfactory. However, the recent commencement of a programme of room refurbishment, window replacement, and ground development is having a positive impact on the attitudes and motivation of pupils by instilling in them a sense of pride in their environment and a willingness to learn because they feel that adults are making them a priority. The new windows in the computer suite have led to a reduction in ventilation, which results in the suite becoming unbearably hot for pupils and teachers throughout most of the year. However, the school is addressing this issue. Resources are satisfactory overall and in ICT they are good.

## Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of its pupils. It provides good support, advice and guidance. Pupils trust adults in school and know that their views are valued and acted upon well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know pupils very well and their needs are met by dedicated teachers and support staff.
- Pupils work and play in a very safe environment.
- All pupils are secure in the knowledge that there is an adult who will help them if they have a concern.
- Pupils know their strengths and weaknesses and their targets help improve progress, although there are insufficient opportunities for them evaluate their own work.
- Programmes to help pupils settle into school are good.

### Commentary

23. Policies and procedures covering health and safety and child protection are well established to ensure pupils' welfare. Child protection procedures are fully in place and staff are vigilant, knowing their responsibilities. Pupils mature well and become more responsible for their behaviour as they progress through the school, partly because of the consistently good support, advice and guidance by all staff.
24. Teaching and support staff know the pupils well and use this knowledge as they help and guide pupils, providing for their individual needs. Pupils universally agree there is always an adult to help them if they have a concern. They settle quickly when they join the school, whether at the start of Year 3 or later, and value the friendly atmosphere amongst pupils and teaching staff.
25. Pupils' personal development is monitored informally by class teachers, who report their assessment to parents at the end of the year. When necessary, more formal arrangements are included in individual education plans (IEPs), particularly if there is a concern about behaviour. The school makes very good use of the emotional literacy support groups, which provide individual teaching, small group support, or guidance for individuals by learning support assistants in class. Parents of pupils who are benefiting from this support commend its work highly and confirm that their children make progress in school and at home. Teachers track pupils' academic progress effectively over time using test results to complement their own assessments. Results are analysed well, particularly in English and mathematics, and where pupils' progress is slower than expected, suitable action is taken to support them and supplement their learning. Reports are written well and targets for improvement are set regularly and thoroughly. Although these help pupils to know their strengths and weaknesses, they are not yet clear about how well they are progressing..
26. The school listens to the views and concerns of pupils well. In preparation for the introduction of a new school council, pupils are learning about democracy and the qualities needed to become a good representative in personal education classes. However, matters raised so far have been mainly the concerns of the older pupils. Additionally, written concerns can be posted in a 'worry box' and these are very carefully dealt with by members of the support staff working closely with the headteacher. Regular discussions in class, including during circle time when all pupils are given the opportunity to express their views and listen to the opinions of others.
27. Since the last inspection, provision for pupils' care, guidance and support has improved well.

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

There is a good partnership with parents as the relationship between school and home has considerably strengthened in the last year. Links with other schools and the community are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents' involvement with the school has improved during the past year and they have become increasingly supportive, as they have seen improvements.
- There are a few parents who do not ensure their children attend regularly enough nor on time, despite the school's very good procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality.
- There are very good procedures for dealing with parents' concerns and complaints.
- Good links with schools in the community have helped to make the transition between schools easier for pupils.

### **Commentary**

28. The headteacher and governors have given a high priority to the process of building the trust of all parents. Over the last year there has been a significant improvement in parental satisfaction and confidence in the way the school is managed. They are justifiably pleased with the way staff now work together and in the continuity of teachers, which benefits their children. Parents of pupils with special educational needs have learned the value of their own relationship with teachers and support staff. They, in particular, appreciate the lead taken by the headteacher in guiding new policies and procedures that underpin their children's progress. This improved partnership with parents has increased staff confidence in dealing with all pupils and has had a marked effect on their achievement.
29. As parents have generally increased their confidence in meeting with staff, so they now feel their role in the education of their children is valued and their opinions respected. Their views and suggestions are mainly gained through informal conversation and the headteacher has met formally with parents from each year group to listen to their concerns, providing a very effective channel for communication. Where there have been problems with pupils' behaviour, there has been consultation with parents to discuss the shared responsibility in helping their children manage their behaviour. This has resulted in such initiatives as contracts to help individuals and arrangements for staggered arrival at school in particular cases. These measures have had a beneficial effect and have increased the ability of staff to support pupils with behavioural difficulties. Parents volunteer help with reading, mathematics and the school shop and many parents help with home reading and other homework, thus making satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning at home and at school. However, for those few pupils who do not attend school regularly, or who are frequently late, their parents' lack of contribution to their learning is having a depressing effect on their achievement.
30. Parents and carers are kept well informed about the progress of their children towards their learning targets and are encouraged to attend meetings at school with teachers. Arrangements for the few pupils with statements of special educational needs meet requirements. The school is trying to encourage parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs to be more involved in the partnership between home, school and the various support agencies.
31. The information provided for parents is good and reflects the essential character of the school. Parents appreciate the regular newsletters, which stimulate their interest in the school and keep them up to date with school events. Annual reports to parents are well written and tell parents clearly and well what their children know and can do in all National Curriculum subjects. The reports contain sound advice to parents on how they can help their children progress. Targets are set for the coming year, written so parents can understand and help their children improve. Most parents are satisfied with the standard of information they receive about their children's achievements and progress but a small minority of parents find the information

on progress is not detailed enough. The inspection did not find this to be the case although there were some comments in reports that were insufficiently informative.

32. The school maintains good links with the adjacent schools. Pupils visit the nearby secondary schools for subjects such as ICT and sports activities. These visits provide interest and intellectual diversity, as pupils can take part in mathematics challenges and use the cyber café. Links with the adjacent infant school have been strengthened through joint governing body meetings and shared training days. Both of these initiatives have helped to promote a smooth transfer of pupils. The special needs co-ordinators of the two schools liaise well to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have a smooth transition and that their requirements are met appropriately. The well-developed ties with Southampton University assist in broadening the curriculum and provide student teachers who help to develop pupils' social skills by working with them in small groups. The school is well supported by local industry, gaining educationally as well as with material contributions. Since the last inspection the partnership with parents, other schools and the community have improved well.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. The leadership of other key staff is satisfactory overall, although the headteacher is supported well by the two senior managers. Management is effective and the governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The recently appointed headteacher is very effective in sharing her vision for the school with staff, pupils, parents and governors and her prompt actions in tackling key weaknesses have reversed a decline in standards.
- The two senior teachers provide effective leadership and support in raising achievement.
- The priorities on the school's effective improvement plan are informed by very good analysis and monitoring of the school's performance, and finances are managed well.
- The governing body is effective in helping shape the school's direction and it fulfils its statutory responsibilities.
- The high turnover of staff has limited the development of subject leaders' roles.

### **Commentary**

33. The school is very well led by the headteacher, who has been at the school for less than a year, following a turbulent period of changes in both leadership and teaching staff. She is providing a clear direction for the school and has taken significant and effective remedial action to reverse the school's decline. A key step has been to improve the behaviour and motivation of pupils, ensuring that pupils are given every opportunity to achieve. Robust systems for setting individual targets for pupils and tracking their progress in English and mathematics have been established, based on rigorous analysis of performance information. New ideas to help pupils with behavioural difficulties have been introduced and are overseen very effectively by the headteacher and the two senior teachers, who provide good support. The headteacher has established new procedures for monitoring standards and teaching quality within new performance management arrangements that have a clear focus on raising standards. She has modified curriculum planning to improve links between subjects and encouraged visual and practical approaches to make learning more interesting for pupils. These actions, which were clearly identified on the school improvement plan, and addressed systematically, have been effective in raising morale and improving parents' perception of the school. Standards have improved, particularly in mathematics, reading and ICT.
34. The headteacher has developed rigorous systems for monitoring the school's performance. Governors, as well as senior staff, are fully involved in this process. Standards are carefully analysed in relation to a range of national comparisons; pupils' progress is monitored and challenging targets for improvement set, with clear identification of what support pupils will

need to achieve them. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), with the headteacher and other senior teacher, analyses performance information very effectively to identify pupils who require extra support and to track their progress. The high expectations of the leadership team are not yet fully established throughout the school because of the recent high turnover of staff, which has resulted in many new teachers in the school, a high proportion of whom are newly qualified. However, the very effective induction, support and mentoring procedures are improving the quality and consistency of teaching. Staff work together closely and purposefully as a team and their morale is high. This includes learning support assistants, who are well trained and make a significant contribution to the conduct and learning of pupils, especially those with challenging behaviour. Staff give their time and effort unstintingly to support pupils, many of whom come from backgrounds that put them at a disadvantage. All staff are committed to making sure that all pupils have opportunities to learn.

35. The headteacher has developed good links with parents, local schools and the community. Strategies to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality have not yet had enough impact on parents' attitudes, although they have reduced the rate of unauthorised absence.
36. Although many of the governors are new to the responsibility, they play a strong role in the development of the school and fulfil their statutory duties well. Governors are aware of the standards achieved by the school and the need for further improvement and they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Some, such as the literacy governor, visit classes regularly and have a good understanding of their subject link. The SEN governor, although new, has good knowledge of the school's provision in this area as she works with pupils as a learning support assistant and is well known to parents. Together the governing body provides effective challenge and support for the headteacher and senior staff.
37. The roles and responsibilities of subject leaders are not yet well established. With the high proportion of new teachers and those who are newly qualified, many have had their subject responsibility for a term or two only and others will not be able to take on responsibility until next year. As a result, not all subjects are currently effectively managed, although planning is in place for future development. However, the two senior managers who carry responsibility for special educational needs and English and the coordinator for ICT are managing developments in these high focus priority areas effectively. They provide good support and are good role models for other teachers. The leadership of mathematics is weaker than the other key subjects of English, science and ICT because the subject leader is less knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Since the last inspection, the management of special educational needs provision has improved well, and the overall quality of leadership and management has been maintained.
38. The headteacher and governing body, with the support of the local education authority, have addressed the financial deficit of the previous year and introduced sound procedures for setting the budget and monitoring expenditure. The budget is now clearly related to school improvement priorities. A newly appointed school finance officer provides well-organised and efficient administration. The headteacher and governing body maintain tight control of the budget in order to finance school priorities appropriately whilst improving the financial security of the school. Good use is made of grants and support from local businesses and organisations. The unsatisfactory long-term planning, identified in the last inspection, is being addressed by the new headteacher and chair of governors, with support from the local education authority. Although spending per pupil is fairly high, the overall effectiveness of the school and the value for money it provides are good.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	715,680
Total expenditure	738,968
Expenditure per pupil	2,547

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to the next	- 23,288

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS**

### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Standards in English are below average but are improving, particularly in reading, as a result of new approaches to teaching and learning.
- Pupils' writing has not improved as rapidly as reading.
- Teaching quality is good and, as a result, pupils learn well in lessons.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The subject is well led and pupils' progress is carefully monitored.

#### **Commentary**

39. Most pupils enter school with literacy skills that are below average, although the attainment on entry this year of the youngest pupils in school is better. In the 2003 statutory tests, results were well below the national average and very low compared with those of similar schools. There has recently been improvement in pupils' standards of reading and, to a lesser extent, in writing so that standards in Year 6 are now below average. This is as a result of detailed monitoring and analysis of pupils' performance, which has guided strategies for raising standards including very specific support for individuals and groups of pupils. These ideas have been introduced by the new headteacher, ably supported by two other senior staff, one of whom is the subject coordinator for English.
40. Pupils' writing is often imaginative and short pieces of work are well presented. However, handwriting and presentation skills are not well developed so that when pupils write at length, there are often a high number of errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The current pupils in Year 3 have entered school with a better knowledge of spelling and most are able to write at the level appropriate for their age. In other year groups, spelling is improving as a result of strategies to help pupils learn more complex spelling patterns. The recent innovations in planning the curriculum, to improve links between subjects and make the teaching of literacy more interesting and relevant to pupils, are having a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes to the subject and their interest in learning. Year 6 pupils are currently being given focussed support to help them meet the requirements of the national tests in the summer term. They are able to use appropriate grammar and punctuation when writing in class, where the clear instructions and support of teachers provide useful guidance to enable pupils to improve the quality of their writing. Most pupils read regularly and can talk about the books that they have read. They read reasonably fluently and enjoy the books that they have chosen. The school has appropriately chosen to focus upon the development of reading, which has therefore improved. Standards in writing are lagging behind those in reading because these skills have not had the benefit of such focussed attention.
41. Teachers enthuse their pupils with stimulating activities that encourage writing for a purpose and in different contexts. Opportunities for appreciating and writing poetry are good and pupils learn the conventions for producing a play script. Pupils are developing a good knowledge of interesting and descriptive vocabulary through the clear explanations and modelling of teachers. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson explicit for pupils and explain very clearly what they will be learning. The very effective behaviour management seen in class, in group-work and in the special educational needs support sessions is providing a positive environment in which pupils feel valued and want to learn and, as a result, all pupils are achieving well.

42. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs. Support assistants are well deployed, both in class and in withdrawal groups, to provide specific support linked to a clear identification of pupils' needs, much of which is linked to emotional and social development. The promotion of pupils' speaking and listening skills is seen as an integral part of academic and social development and all adults work very effectively in providing a range of opportunities for pupils to discuss issues and offer opinions. Higher attaining pupils have been identified but their needs are not yet met consistently as not all teachers provide sufficiently challenging work for them in lessons.
43. Pupils' standards in reading are improving as a result of very focussed support based on analysis of assessment information. Many pupils read daily to adults, both individually and in groups. The quality and focus of adult questioning in these groups and the tracking of pupils' progress are having a very positive impact on raising the standards of under-achieving readers. The work of the English co-ordinator with a specific group of under-achieving Year 6 pupils was particularly effective in developing their understanding and interpretation of the text. However, some teachers miss the opportunities for regular reading development provided by guided reading sessions. As a result, although many pupils are getting very good support for reading and making good progress, there are a number of adequate readers who are not making as much progress as they might. The arrangements for pupils to take books home are good but there is no home school reading record to enable parents or pupils to comment on reading activities and evaluate the books read. Although they make use of the attractive library and use the computerised system effectively, their higher skills for information retrieval are not yet developed sufficiently.
44. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection with improvements to planning and target setting. Teaching is better than at the time of the last inspection and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Pupils' listening skills have improved considerably. The subject is well led and managed with the co-ordinator fully involved in supporting pupils. This ensures that their personal, social and emotional development is promoted to enable them to access the opportunities for learning. The school's leadership team makes very good use of assessment information to ensure that work is planned effectively to meet most pupils' learning requirements. Challenging targets are set and pupils' progress is tracked well. Teachers provide detailed comments when marking work, which clearly show pupils what they are doing well and improvements needed. Pupils are less clear about the progress they are making and have few opportunities to judge their own work. Effective review and evaluation procedures have recently been established which ensure that the school has a clear understanding of successes and areas for improvement, and this has contributed to the rise in standards.

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

45. The use and development of pupils' language and literacy skills in other subjects are satisfactory. The school has adopted a strategy of extending the teaching of literacy skills through other subjects, such as geography and history, to provide a context that is interesting and meaningful to pupils. For example, Year 4 pupils were given opportunities to write a diary, using a secret code for key words, which was linked to their recent history work on Sir Francis Drake and Drake's Diary. However, more opportunities in science are needed for written recording.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

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

- Standards are below the national average but are improving rapidly as a result of grouping by prior attainment in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, but inconsistent.

- Learning support assistants help lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs well.
- Pupils generally have good attitudes, behave well and work well together because they are interested and enjoy their work.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped.
- Errors and misconceptions by pupils are not always used to develop pupils' understanding of new ideas.

## Commentary

46. Standards are below those expected by Year 6, but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were well below average and pupils' achievement was unsatisfactory.
47. The quality of teaching is good overall and this is similar to the last inspection, although there is now a higher proportion of better teaching. Together with the smaller numbers of pupils in each class and the use of grouping pupils according to attainment in Years 4, 5 and 6, these factors are having a positive impact on pupils' learning and raising standards. Better teaching is also the result of a reduction in teacher mobility so there is more continuity.
48. In the better lessons, teachers' good subject knowledge helps them challenge pupils through well-matched tasks, which motivate them so they want to learn. The pace of lessons is good and questions are used effectively to assess pupils' understanding and help them move to the next stage of learning. As a result, pupils' attitudes are good and they help each other and work well together. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson the teacher used a game similar to one seen on television, together with practical activities, to help pupils understand the meaning of better, or worse, value for money. The activities were stimulating and fun so pupils were very attentive and wanted to learn. All abilities in the group were suitably challenged, with some pupils being encouraged to work independently and others learning through the use of practical activities to help them to make judgments about value for money. Where teaching was weaker, the purpose of the lesson and the explanation of the tasks were not clearly explained. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, there was not enough explanation or demonstration of the use of number cards or the number lines that were important to show pupils the relationship between fractions and decimals. The teacher's use of the number line was confusing because there were fractions on one side and decimals on the other. Consequently, when the card was turned over, the decimal equivalents to fractions were in reverse order to fractions and this confused pupils. Higher attaining pupils were shown a computer game about fractions but were not given the opportunity to try the game for themselves, and a few of them wasted several minutes sharpening pencils. Although pupils were interested at the beginning of the lesson, as the lesson progressed and they became confused by the activity, their behaviour deteriorated and the teacher was unable to regain their interest.
49. Learning support assistants are well briefed by teachers and give good support to lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. This ensures that the achievement of lower attaining pupils is similar to other groups of pupils, while particularly well-focused support helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve well.
50. Pupils' work is generally marked well and targets are set effectively for individual pupils. However, comments are not always written in a style of handwriting that is easy for pupils to read. Good use is often made of key vocabulary to support learning and language. Questioning in better lessons is often good and pupils' answers, comments, their errors and misconceptions are used well to support learning further. This results in pupils being given the opportunities to develop and refine their own strategies in mathematics. However, in weaker lessons these elements are often used less well.

51. The management and leadership of the subject are generally satisfactory. However, the co-ordinator does not regularly monitor teaching and learning or work alongside colleagues to demonstrate good teaching of the subject. Homework is regularly set for pupils, which supports and consolidates class activities.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

52. As a result of the recent review of the curriculum, opportunities to plan and use mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum have improved and are satisfactory overall. Teachers plan activities well in other curriculum subjects such as science, history and ICT to consolidate and extend pupils' numeracy skills. For example, in science pupils draw graphs and charts to show the results of friction experiments and in history timelines and dates are used to develop an understanding of chronology. These opportunities are having a positive impact on raising standards in mathematics.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Standards are improving and although pupils' skills of investigation and experimentation are weaker, they are improving rapidly.
- Pupils' attitudes are good and they are motivated to learn.
- Teaching is good although there are some areas for improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and all areas covered,
- Sometimes a few higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they might.
- The assessment of pupils is good and is used well to track pupils' progress, although it is not always fully used to plan work.

#### **Commentary**

53. Over recent years, standards have been below the national average for most pupils, but in 2003 they were well below the national average. Standards seen during the inspection show improvement, although they are still below the national average. Generally pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are making good progress in lessons and are rapidly recovering from earlier gaps in their education. However, a few higher attaining pupils are not yet achieving as well as they might and this is reflected in the 2003 test results for Year 6. Pupils make better gains in their knowledge and understanding because the teachers make lessons interesting and build on the work they have previously studied. Pupils' skills are less well established because rectifying gaps in previous skills' development work takes time for them to practise and improve. This particularly affects a few higher attaining pupils who are still sometimes limited by a lack of challenge in their work. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the properties of solids and liquids, and can recall information about electricity, electrical components and circuits. Higher attaining pupils know about physical and chemical changes, understand how to separate solutions and can identify a fair test. Their skills in making predictions, observing, recording, comparing events and reaching conclusions are more limited. Although pupils' work is generally well presented there is insufficient written recording of their learning.
54. Teaching and learning are good and ensure that pupils are achieving well overall. Pupils' achievement is better in the younger years, and in the older years pupils are regaining some of the learning missed in earlier years. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear and relevant to the pupils, making good links to previous lessons. They plan interesting and stimulating activities, so pupils enjoy their work, are motivated and are keen to learn. Consequently, their work shows care and pride, and they produce a good amount. Teachers mark pupils' work well and provide detailed guidance on how to improve. Lessons are

organised well and pupils managed effectively through the judicious use of praise, so they behave well and want to achieve. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good, and teachers carefully plan activities that usually meet individual pupils' needs. For example, in a Year 4 lesson about the effect of water resistance, pupils' learning was supported well by the teacher's good use of explanation and accurate use of terms, his careful demonstration and the good use of questioning to encourage pupils to think. Pupils were set the challenge of exploring the resistance of different shapes though the use of plasticine dropped into containers of water or washing-up liquid. Pupils were learning to make comparisons between the effects of two liquids and to make predictions about the impact of different shapes.

55. Pupils' work shows that where lessons are weaker, there are missed opportunities for them to develop their skills in experimentation and recording their findings, in particular. In a few lessons, teachers talk for too long so pupils' attention begins to wander because they are very keen to begin the practical activity. Teachers assess their pupils well, and their work is marked thoroughly.
56. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory and the coordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject and a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The subject is well planned to cover a wide range of topics, although there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of investigation and experimentation and insufficient opportunities for pupils to use ICT. Pupils use their mathematical skills well. Achievements are assessed well although the coordinator is not yet fully using this information to track pupils' progress and plan developments in the subject. The coordinator is beginning to take full responsibility for the subject and her role is developing. Since the last inspection, the subject has been maintained in a satisfactory way.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good overall and pupils are achieving well.
- The purchase of new equipment and the computer suite is having a positive impact on standards.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

57. By Year 6, pupils' standards are in line with those expected and are rising rapidly. The achievement of all pupils is good as a result of improved teaching and resources. This represents significant improvement since the last inspection.
58. The co-ordinator has very effectively led staff training for new and established teachers to ensure they are all competent to teach ICT. Learning support assistants have also benefited from training. As a result, staff confidence, teaching, learning and pupils' attainment have improved.
59. In one very effective Year 3 lesson, taught in the computer suite, the teacher showed very good command of the subject and used an interactive system, whereby he could control, monitor and over-ride each pupils' computer to confidently demonstrate the task and to share and use pupils' questions, comments, errors and difficulties as teaching points to support learning. This resulted in pupils being fully engaged by the demonstration and so they quickly understood the task, which was to control an on-screen robot by a series of commands. At the same time, a group of lower attaining pupils worked with a learning support assistant on a similar task but with real floor robots to control. Pupils were totally absorbed by the tasks, which resulted in excellent attitudes and behaviour and good progress throughout the lesson.

In an unsatisfactory lesson, the introduction was rushed and unclear, which resulted in a number of pupils not understanding the task so they were unable to access the program or understand the purpose of the lesson. The worksheet for the lesson was also difficult for lower attaining readers to understand. This resulted in generally unsatisfactory achievement in the lesson.

60. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths of the subject and the areas to develop. He has ensured that the key issues of the previous report have been addressed and effectively supports those teachers and learning support assistants who are less confident in using ICT. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are monitored to assess teaching, learning and pupils' progress. As all computers in the school are linked together he can also monitor the teaching and learning of any class in the computer suite from his classroom computer.
61. Since the previous inspection resources have been upgraded well and a technician is employed one day a week to maintain equipment. The number of computers, including laptops, is now in line with the national recommendation. A classroom has been converted to a spacious computer suite. However, it lacks adequate ventilation and becomes unbearably hot throughout most of the year. Although the computer suite is on the first floor, pupils with physical disabilities can fully access the curriculum by using classroom computers on the ground floor, which are linked to the suite. There are appropriate procedures for Internet use by pupils and links with the infant and secondary schools are being developed well through ICT. Year 2 pupils from the infant school use the computer suite and Year 6 pupils go to the local secondary schools to use their ICT facilities.

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

62. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum is good and has improved with the introduction of the new topic based curriculum. For example, Year 5 pupils use data handling and spreadsheet programs to support geography through a topic on St. Lucia. Year 3 history and literacy are enhanced by the use of a desktop publishing program to produce a newspaper front page about the sinking of the Titanic. These relevant links are helping to raise standards and skills in ICT and in the subjects being supported.

### **HUMANITIES**

*History, geography and religious education were sampled.*

63. Only one lesson was observed in **history** and **geography** and therefore an overall provision judgement cannot be made. Lessons are planned well in each subject to promote literacy skills through these subjects by identifying a common theme that will interest pupils and promote learning. For example, an effective history lesson was observed in Year 6 in which pupils' sense of chronology was developed through a time line of Irish history and supported by a literary text to illustrate current issues in Ireland.
64. The headteacher is currently holding a watching brief for both subjects because of the high turnover of staff and number of newly qualified teachers. She has been instrumental in developing the curriculum planning which clearly identifies the links between subjects. This has clearly had a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. However, as a result of the emphasis on literacy, the progression of history and geography skills from year to year is not always sufficiently well defined to ensure that all pupils make enough progress in developing their subject knowledge.
65. In both subjects, it is clear that a range of visits and visitors play an important part in making work interesting and relevant. During the inspection period a 'Viking trader' visited Year 5 and talked about his life whilst trying to barter furs. In the follow-up lessons, pupils could recall many facts about Vikings and were clearly enthused by his presentation. The local area is

used well to support learning; pupils see the 'Mary Rose' when studying the Tudors and environmental visits extend geographical understanding.

66. It was only possible to see two **religious education** lessons during the inspection. Lessons are planned well and there are effective links with other subjects, which make learning relevant to pupils. From pupils' work it could be seen that standards of attainment remain in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils showed good awareness of similarities between symbols of the Christian religion and those of Hinduism.
67. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on responsibility for the subject but is well experienced. She is developing useful planning models for each year group that clearly identify the learning focus and links with other subjects, and the activities required. A new locally agreed syllabus is to be introduced next term and the co-ordinator has been actively involved in developing this.

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

*Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled.*

68. It was not possible to see any lessons in **art and design** but pupils' work and planning show that statutory requirements are being met. Pupils' work shows that standards are well below those expected. Pupils have drawn some sound and detailed pencil sketches and there are a few drawn using pens and some work in watercolours, but generally there is a very limited volume of work demonstrating a narrow range of techniques being used. In the older years there is more evidence of detail, but there is very little work in the style of famous artists. There is no analysis of the artists' intentions, any comparisons to other works or opportunities for experimentation. Pupils' work shows very immature skills in drawing and painting throughout the school. The coordinator for the subject is aware of the need for improvement and plans have already been made to develop pupils' range of skills.
69. The samples of work for Years 3, 4 and 5 in **design and technology** indicate that standards are in line with national expectations in these year groups and that statutory requirements are being met. Not enough work was available to judge standards in Year 6. Design and make opportunities are linked well to school topics and themes. For example, Year 5 pupils design and make moving "moon buggies" as part of their science topic on space. Year 4 pupils design and make theatres to support work in history and literacy. In Year 3 pupils were observed evaluating different types of rice crispie biscuits for taste, texture, smell, sweetness and appearance. The lesson also contributed well to science and materials and mathematics, as pupils had to produce charts of their results.
70. Only one lesson of **music** was observed during the inspection. From this lesson and from observation of assemblies, it could be seen that pupils sing well and with enthusiasm. There is a regular choir that is well supported and a broad range of pupils participate and enjoy singing. Approximately half of all pupils are learning to play musical instruments, being taught by peripatetic music teachers. Again a broad range of pupils participate and many gain an important sense of achievement from their success in playing and performing music to others. In the lesson observed, pupils' achievement was satisfactory, they were interested and sang unaccompanied, remaining in tune and maintaining rhythm.
71. One Year 6 Irish folk dance lesson was observed in **physical education**. The teaching was good and pupils' attainment was in line with expectations. The teacher's enthusiastic approach to the lesson, which included joining in the dance, motivated the pupils well and so they wanted to take part and work together. By the end of the lesson good progress had been made and the class was able to sequence an Irish folk dance without further instruction from the teacher. Year 5 pupils use the pool of the neighbouring secondary school for swimming lessons, which results in most pupils being able to swim the expected minimum of 25 metres. A satisfactory number of after-school sporting activities are offered to pupils.

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

*This area of the curriculum was sampled*

72. Only two lessons were seen in this subject and there was little past work completed by the pupils that could be used to evaluate the standards achieved. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were good. Pupils in the Year 4 class were learning to use the library in order to find out about explorers. Pupils worked well together and were developing their skills of research effectively. Pupils in the Year 5 class were learning about voting in a democracy in preparation for the new school council. They were able to identify the qualities they would like in a representative and then share ideas about possible candidates. The lesson successfully encouraged pupils to think and there were good contributions from both boys and girls. The school plans well for pupils' personal, social and health education through subjects across the curriculum and a new scheme of work is being developed.

## 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
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	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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