

INSPECTION REPORT

FOXHILLS JUNIOR SCHOOL

Colbury, Southampton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115956

Headteacher: Mr M J Espezel

Lead inspector: Mrs M E Cooper

Dates of inspection: 8th to 11th March 2004

Inspection number: 256166

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:	429
School address:	Foxhills Lane Colbury Southampton Hampshire
Postcode:	SO40 7ED
Telephone number:	023 8029 2126
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Arscott
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very large junior school that draws pupils from beyond its immediate area, and with slightly more boys than girls on roll. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are above average. Although wide-ranging, attainment on entry to the school is average overall. There has been a change in the profile of pupils since the last inspection with an increasing proportion of lower attaining pupils and pupils from unsettled family backgrounds. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and none for whom English is an additional language, although two pupils are bilingual. The number of pupils on roll has declined in recent years reflecting a local demographic trend. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual times is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average and includes one pupil who has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The needs of these pupils are varied but most have moderate learning difficulties. Until last summer there was a higher than normal proportion of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school has been through a recent period of turbulence, with difficulties linked to staff turnover and a high proportion of pupils in two year groups presenting challenging behaviour. These pupils have now left the school. The school received the Healthy Schools Award in 1996, International Schools Award in 1999 and Heritage Millennium Award in 2000.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15175	Margaret Cooper	Lead inspector	English Geography History
8919	John Kerr	Lay inspector	
28009	Ruth Allen	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology (ICT) Art and design Music
14997	Valerie Emery	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of this school is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is sound overall, and good in mathematics and for pupils with special educational needs. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils show good attitudes to each other and to school. There is a good level of care. The curriculum is broad, well planned and meets statutory requirements. The school is satisfactorily led and managed and is now improving at a steady rate. Most parents are satisfied with the school and it provides sound value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in mathematics are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- Although standards in English and science are average and teaching is satisfactory, both could be better.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The roles of subject managers and co-ordinators are underdeveloped.
- Assessment information is not used well enough to ensure work is matched closely to the needs of all pupils, particularly higher attainers.
- Teaching of information and communication technology is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good
- There are shortcomings in arrangements for ensuring parents' satisfaction and responding to their concerns.
- Accommodation and learning resources are very good.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards are not as high as they were. However, this is largely linked to the changing profile of pupils entering the school, including a higher proportion of lower attaining pupils. Improvement has also been adversely affected by a recent period of turbulence caused by staffing difficulties and the challenging behaviour of pupils in two year groups that have now left the school. A robust response to the behavioural difficulties and to the dip in mathematics and science results in 2002 has brought about significant recent improvement in pupil behaviour and in standards in mathematics and science. The key areas for improvement have been addressed satisfactorily, particularly written guidance for pupils, homework for older pupils, information for parents, and time for year leaders and support assistants to carry out their responsibilities. Despite sound improvement, further development is required in assessment and time for subject managers. There has been substantial improvement in the management of special educational needs, and good improvement in provision for information and communication technology.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Current standards are average in English and science and above average in mathematics by the end of Year 6. Pupils throughout the school achieve satisfactorily in English and science, but they achieve well in mathematics and information and communication technology due to better teaching. Pupils with special educational needs are

supported well and make good progress. Although satisfactory, the achievement of higher attainers could be better, particularly in English and science. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. They relate well to adults and to each other, enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, are willing to take on responsibility and show positive attitudes towards their work. Attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory and promotes sound learning. Mathematics and information and communication technology are taught well. In subjects where teaching is satisfactory, notably in English and science, the pace of learning could be better and assessment information is not used well enough to ensure work is consistently challenging for higher attainers. Teachers establish good relationships, manage pupils well and use a good range of teaching methods. As a result, pupils respond well and show a good capacity to work independently and productively. Learning support assistants are used well and have a positive effect on the progress of lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs.

The school provides a sound curriculum with a good range of enrichment activities such as visits and themed days. Pupils benefit from the very spacious indoor and outdoor accommodation. Pupils are well cared for. The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the community are satisfactory overall, although some parents feel that the school does not deal with their concerns adequately.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of both leadership and management is satisfactory. The governing body is supportive, well informed and fulfils its responsibilities appropriately. The leadership of the headteacher, senior management team and other staff with responsibilities resulted in the effective response to recent difficulties and significant improvement since the dip in test results in 2002. Assessment information is used appropriately to track pupils' standards and monitor school performance. Shortcomings in arrangements for subject managers to monitor and develop their subjects slow the pace of whole school improvement. Systems for financial management are good and there is due regard for the principles of best value. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents hold positive views of the school and support it well. They are pleased staff expect children to work hard, and that their children are helped to settle in and enjoy school. A significant minority are dissatisfied with information on their children's progress with the school's response to their own concerns, and would like more clubs and competitive sport. The inspection team agrees with these views. Several were concerned about bullying, but the inspection team found this situation to have improved. The inspection team also agrees with pupils who say teachers show them how to make their work better, listen to their ideas, and expect them to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve standards and teaching in English and science.
- Use assessment information to match work closely to individual needs, particularly for higher attainers.
- Develop the roles of subject managers and co-ordinators, particularly in English and science.

- Improve arrangements for ensuring parents' satisfaction and responding to their concerns.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Overall standards are average by the end of Year 6 and pupils in all year groups achieve satisfactorily. By the time they leave the school pupils reach average standards in English and science, and above average standards in mathematics. There is no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well to attain above average standards in mathematics.
- Standards in English and science are not as high as they might be.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Although satisfactory, the achievement of higher attainers could be better.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well in information and communication technology.

Commentary

1. Results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 were average in English and science compared to both schools nationally and to similar schools. This particular Year 6 group included a higher incidence of pupils with challenging behaviour than is normally found in the school. Standards in mathematics were above average compared to schools nationally and to similar schools. This demonstrates the good provision for mathematics and the effectiveness of the school's strategies for managing pupils with behavioural difficulties in this subject. These results have improved significantly since 2002 when, despite above average standards in English, standards in both mathematics and science were below average. Over the last five years, the improvement in test results has been broadly in line with the national trend. Although similar in English and mathematics, boys performed significantly better than girls in the 2003 science test. Inspection evidence did not show a significant variation in the achievement of boys and girls, although it did find boys more confident and assertive than girls in some classes.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.1 (27.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (26.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.0 (27.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 121 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Overall, pupils in all year groups achieve satisfactorily. Bilingual pupils make similar progress to their peers across the curriculum and there is no significant variation in the achievement of any groups related to ethnic origin. However, the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and achievement is now good in mathematics. This is the result of improvements in planning and teaching, and in the use of assessment information to meet individual needs more closely by organising pupils into ability sets within all year groups.
3. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily but, although pupils make sound progress in English and in science, standards could be higher. There are two main reasons for the inconsistency between subjects. Firstly, shortcomings in the role of subject managers in English and science mean that weaknesses in provision are not identified and

addressed quickly enough. Secondly, higher attainers do not achieve as well as they could in English and science because tasks are not always matched closely to their needs, and this is borne out by analysis of test results and the school's own tracking data, scrutiny of planning and observation of lessons. It occurs due to the lack of a systematic approach to providing suitably challenging work for higher attainers, based on the school's own assessment information. In many English lessons, for example, higher attainers are given the same writing task as others although teachers expect them to write at greater length. Thus, their task is no more challenging than that provided for other pupils and even the expectations of quantity are not always made clear to them. In contrast, lower attainers achieve well because teachers take good account of their needs in providing well-matched work and support.

4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because of the very good support provided. This is because clear targets are set for all pupils that are regularly monitored and changed accordingly. Pupils are challenged and supported in their work across the curriculum and clear records are kept of progress made.
5. Although standards in information and communication technology are average, there has been considerable recent improvement in teaching and in resources. As a result, pupils are now achieving well in this subject. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in religious education and attain the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They are encouraged to become mature and to make a positive contribution to school life. Attendance is good and pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to learn.
- When given the opportunity they are very willing to take responsibility.
- Pupils behave well and are considerate of each other's needs.
- They work well in small groups, when collaborative learning helps pupils of all abilities to progress together.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to be aware of life in a multi-cultural society.

Commentary

6. Pupils' good attitudes have a positive impact on their achievement. They are very keen to learn and to contribute ideas to the class. When set challenging questions in science, for instance, most of the class want to reply. They are given confidence to make their contribution, as teachers skilfully direct their thoughts towards the object of the lesson. Even in a lower attaining mathematics set when pupils were nervous in giving a verbal answer, they were given time and suitable encouragement to overcome their diffidence. This not only encourages learning but also helps to boost their confidence and develop self-esteem. Only where there is occasional unsatisfactory teaching are pupils unwilling to learn, waste time and behave inappropriately.
7. Most pupils behave well in class and about the school. They respect each other and their teachers. They know and understand what is expected of them. From their early days in school they acquire a good sense of community. They know the procedures in place to minimise the disruption to learning, although a number of parents and pupils feel the 'turning the card' strategy for promoting good behaviour is not applied consistently. Pupils have a respect for school property. They tidy their classrooms and the headteacher congratulates them for pointing out defects that need repair or for achievements that are worthy of praise. There are only occasional instances of bullying or harassment. Selected Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' to assist others worried about being bullied and this helps to resolve disputes quickly. More

serious cases are referred to an adult. Although most instances are dealt with quickly and efficiently, parents report this is not always the case. As a result of considerable time spent last year in the upper school to maintain equilibrium, behaviour has improved considerably this year. Last year it was necessary to exclude one pupil for a fixed term following verbal abuse of a teacher.

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	421	1	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0

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

8. Pupils' relationships with each other and with their teachers are good. Pupils of varying attainment are paired in lessons such as science and information and communication technology. This arrangement helps pupils support one another as they plan or reason out their tasks and promotes the development of personal skills as well as subject knowledge and technical skills. When given the opportunity, pupils are keen to offer help and are enterprising as seen, for instance, when school councillors take charge in running the Health Food Shop at break time. The School Council is well established. Representatives on the Council gain in confidence as the school listens to pupils' views, working with the Council to plan school improvements and events.
9. Provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils are given time to reflect in class and in assemblies although opportunities to encourage pupils' spiritual awareness in the subjects they are studying are sometimes missed. Teachers provide good role models and pupils are trusted to do things on their own. Achievements are celebrated and pupils are encouraged to value good work and to be considerate to others. However, there are occasional lapses of consideration of their fellow pupils. The school encourages pupils' social skills by residential trips and other out-of-school activities. Outside speakers are invited to school and pupils are given the chance to speak to them and ask questions. There is a significant minority of parents who say there are too few opportunities for pupils to relate to their own age groups through local sporting events. Cultural development is satisfactory. The school provides pupils with a good knowledge of their own culture but, despite opportunities, for example in religious education, English, music and assemblies, preparation for life in an ethnically diverse society is a weaker element.
10. Attendance continues to be good and pupils are punctual at the start of the day. Absence is well monitored and parents are kept aware of the adverse effect on their children's progress if extra holidays are taken in term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.3
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education overall, including a sound curriculum. Teaching is satisfactory and there are examples of lessons where teaching is good or better in all year groups. Pupils are well cared for by staff and there are sound links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

Both teaching and learning are satisfactory. In about four lessons in ten teaching is good or better. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good capacity to work independently and productively.
- Mathematics and information and communication technology are taught well, which promotes good achievement in these subjects.
- Although satisfactory, there is room for improvement in the quality of teaching in English and science.
- Teachers manage pupils well, encouraging them to learn and insisting on good behaviour.
- Assessment information is not used well enough to match work to all individual needs.
- Time is not consistently used well in lessons.
- Learning support assistants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching methods.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (9%)	16 (35%)	24 (52%)	1 (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.

11. Satisfactory teaching promotes sound learning overall. However, pupils achieve well in mathematics and information and communication technology largely because of the good planning and teaching in these subjects. Good resources in both subjects, as well as the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and setting arrangements in mathematics also make a positive impact on learning.
12. Teachers establish good relationships in classes and insist on high standards of behaviour. They use a good range of teaching methods, including opportunities for collaborative, independent and practical activities, and give careful attention to encouraging pupils and meeting their interests. As a result, pupils respond with interest and confidence to their experiences and demonstrate a good capacity to work independently and productively. This was seen, for example, in a science lesson in which Year 3 pupils investigated the effect of shape, size and material on the fall of a parachute. The pupils clearly had fun making and testing out their own parachutes and maintained their interest and concentration well. They co-operated well in small groups, discussing their ideas and suggestions for improvement, whilst the teacher monitored each group and extended learning by skilful questioning to help pupils develop their understanding of the processes involved.
13. Lessons are carefully planned and work is matched well to the needs of lower attainers so that they make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding. There are satisfactory

arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment. This information is used appropriately to match work to the needs of lower attainers, to group pupils by level of attainment and to provide writing targets for pupils. It is not, however, used effectively to ensure work is consistently challenging for higher attainers, particularly in English and science, and this impacts negatively on achievement.

14. Planning takes very good account of pupils with special educational needs. Learning support assistants demonstrate good expertise and are used well by teachers. Support staff plan with class teachers on a weekly basis to ensure work is matched effectively to pupils' needs and very clear targets are set. As a result, pupils with special educational needs are appropriately challenged in their work and are very keen to do well and succeed.
15. A weakness in lessons that are overall satisfactory is the use of time, particularly in English and science. Activities are often managed at a moderate pace, which limits the pace of learning. Additionally, insufficient time is allowed for pupils' own tasks and this constrains their opportunities to practise skills and increase knowledge and understanding.
16. Features of lessons where teaching and learning are very good are strong subject expertise, lively introductions, stimulating resources and a brisk pace. These were seen, for example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson in which pupils in the top set made very good gains in their capacity to select and use appropriate number operations when solving problems. The practical activities engaged pupils' interest but were also challenging. Their learning was enhanced by the opportunity to help each other in small groups. The teacher used questioning skilfully to assess and extend their levels of understanding. Very good relationships within the class, combined with high expectations of achievement, contributed to the very good concentration, motivation and progress of pupils.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory and meets the interests of pupils. Opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation and resources are very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for mathematics is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school provides a good range of visits, visitors and special events.
- Opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive sport are limited.
- The school provides very good quality accommodation and is well resourced.

Commentary

17. The school provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning opportunities to ensure appropriate progress, and statutory requirements are met. Provision for mathematics is good, as the result of good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and strong emphasis on using and applying mathematics, and this contributes to the good achievement of pupils in this subject. Shortcomings in procedures for subject managers and co-ordinators to monitor and develop their subjects as seen, for example, in English, science and religious education, result in provision being satisfactory rather than good.
18. The curriculum is enriched by the school's emphasis on trips, field studies, themed days, visitors and a school production, which has a positive impact on learning and standards. Features such as a Caribbean workshop and Evacuation Day add interest and excitement for pupils. A very good feature of the curricular enrichment is the carefully planned residential trips for Year 5 pupils to Beer and Year 6 pupils to France. Both provide good opportunities for curricular and social development.

19. Provision for pupils with special needs is very good. There is a very clear process of diagnosis by the co-ordinator and class teacher and an effective programme of work is put in place to match individual needs. Support staff and teachers work well together to ensure pupils have full access to a broad curriculum and are well supported in their learning.
20. The number of clubs provided by the school is more restricted than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Opportunities at lunch times for pupils to play competitive football games within the school under the headteacher's supervision are a good feature. There is an athletics club as well as a sports week in the summer term and these promote enjoyment and athletic skills. The school does not provide for regular competitive matches to be played against other schools and lacks extra-curricular provision for the training of teams in sports such as football, netball, rugby or swimming. Thus, pupils' opportunities to be part of a team in a competitive sporting situation are limited and a number of parents are concerned about this.
21. The school is situated on a large attractive site, with good hard play areas separated by seating and trees, which provide shade during the summer. The hard areas provide good opportunities for ball games during break times. Rules for playing on these areas were set up and agreed by the School Council in 2002. The school has developed a six-acre nature reserve with a pond and paths that give good access all the year round. This extends curricular opportunities, for example in science, and a school conservation club works within the reserve. The school is well resourced with a large hall, central teacher resource centre and studio furnished for drama and music. The library is spacious and well organised, being managed by a librarian and having its own Internet access for pupils' research. The school also has a dedicated suite for 17 computers, and pupils benefit from the opportunities provided by these facilities to develop their skills in independent research and information and communication technology. Around the school are large playing fields that have recently undergone drainage improvement, though with only limited success. The very good accommodation enhances the learning for pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for pupils' welfare, their care and their health and safety. It provides them with effective support, advice and guidance and involves them well in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good emphasis is placed on pupils' pastoral support and well-being.
- Support for lower ability groups is very good and helps them to grow in self-esteem.
- The School Council is well developed and its views and recommendations are taken into account when planning changes.

Commentary

22. Teachers know their pupils well and use their knowledge in providing good levels of care. This is valued by parents. Child protection procedures are fully in place and staff are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are carefully supervised and safe at all times. Risk assessment is professionally carried out and there are regular inspections of premises and equipment, with defects dealt with swiftly. Staff are well qualified to attend to pupils if they are sick or injured. Careful records are maintained and parents are kept informed. The strong emphasis given to promoting healthy living is shown by the achievement of the Healthy Schools award. The school has taken steps to reduce risks to pupils' safety at the beginning and the end of the school day when traffic congestion is considerable, but the dangers from parked vehicles on the approach roads are still of concern to parents.
23. The school has had a number of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems. The staff spent considerable time and effort over the last two years to develop strategies to reduce the impact of erratic behaviour on the rest of the class. Though most of these pupils have now

moved on, the systems are well established, including opportunities for counselling and a stepped programme of rewards and sanctions arising from the school's 'Working Together' policy. With very few exceptions, pupils' behaviour is now well managed. In the few instances when bullying is reported, staff act quickly and efficiently to restore harmony. The school gives priority to the pastoral care of all pupils. Most pupils feel secure and they know their teachers and the learning support assistants will listen to them if they have a concern. Pupils feel that they have good opportunities to air their views in school. They make good use of classroom discussions, for example about playground monitors, and pass their ideas on through the School Council.

24. There are good systems in place to monitor pupils' progress. Teachers track aspects of pupils' personal development formally and informally and transfer information to each pupil's next teacher. There are formal arrangements for pupils with individual educational plans. There are good opportunities for staff to review the progress of individual pupils whose progress is below expectations. In almost all of these cases, parents are involved with the plans to help their children make better progress. Pupils are aware of their weaknesses and, as a result, know what they need to do to improve.
25. The school has good induction procedures. Pupils entering from feeder schools are helped by the good relationships that exist between the schools. Parents are very happy with the arrangements and say that pupils new to the school are helped by the friendly atmosphere and by older pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents and the community is satisfactory, as are links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at home.
- Procedures for responding to parental suggestions and complaints are unsatisfactory.
- Parents are dissatisfied with information about their children's progress.
- There are good arrangements as pupils are transferred into school and as they leave to move to their secondary school.

Commentary

26. Parents' views of the school are mostly positive and the school has many good procedures for working with parents. However, there is clearly a significant level of dissatisfaction over communication with the school, particularly with information about pupils' progress and in taking account of parents' views, and inspectors agreed with these concerns. The statutory information for parents is good and is well presented, sometimes in considerable detail and with interesting illustrations. Parents receive good information about aspects of school life through the school's newsletters. Parents are informed of their children's progress through meetings arranged each term with class teachers. Mid-year targets let parents know how their children should progress in English, mathematics and science. Written reports to parents state clearly what pupils have been learning with reference in the main subjects to what pupils know. There is a lack of clarity about the levels to which pupils are working in English, mathematics and science. Parents say reports are often received too late in the year and do not give them a clear picture of standards and progress.
27. Parents value the teachers who communicate well and take time to listen and plan with them to overcome their children's problems. However, when asked by the school for their views, parents feel very little is done in response. They would like more involvement by teachers in extra-curricular clubs and in competitive sports. They recognise the school is very supportive of

lower attaining pupils but would like more testing programmes for the higher attainers. These concerns were substantiated by inspection evidence.

28. Parents give good support to their children's learning at home and they volunteer their help in school and on school visits. There is a lively School Association that organises events and raises funds for charity and for school projects. Links with local schools are good. The transfer of pupils from the infant feeder schools works smoothly and is appreciated by parents and their children. The transfer to secondary school is equally well organised as their welfare and guidance are carefully considered. There are good links with the local and wider communities. A local college organises family learning groups for parents and the Southampton Civic Award initiative recognises pupils' achievements as young citizens.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership of the school by the headteacher, senior team and other staff with responsibilities is sound. Management is satisfactory. The school is soundly governed and fully complies with statutory requirements. The recent period of turbulence has had an adverse effect on the rate of school improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is supported well by the senior management team.
- Governors are well informed and have a positive impact on the vision and direction of the school.
- The management of special educational needs is very good.
- The roles of subject managers and co-ordinators are underdeveloped.
- Information and communication technology is led well by the subject manager.
- The pace of school development could be better.

Commentary

29. The governing body is supportive of the school and is committed to its further improvement. Governors are well informed of the work of the school and its performance through school visits, and studying data and detailed reports from the headteacher. They have a good understanding of the impact of recent difficulties on the school and staff and are giving careful attention to the possible impact on the school of a continuing decline in the number of pupils on roll. Governors influence the work of the school through their contribution to aims and policies and through support and challenge for the headteacher and senior management team. They ensure the school has clear aims and policies and their performance management policy operates effectively.
30. Sound leadership and management ensure that the achievement of pupils is at least satisfactory in all subjects and good in mathematics, in information and communication technology, and for pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher provides good leadership in many aspects of the school's work including his commitment to the caring ethos of the school and providing a broad and enriched curriculum. He is supported well by the deputy headteacher and by year leaders who provide good leadership in their establishment of effective year teams and a productive climate for learning. Subject managers and co-ordinators contribute well through sharing their expertise and contributing to school initiatives and to year group planning. Strategic planning is derived from an analysis of performance and is appropriately linked to identified priorities for the school. However, although subject managers and co-ordinators monitor provision and standards in their subjects, procedures for them to identify and address areas requiring development are not systematic and this puts some constraints on the pace of school improvement, particularly in English and science. This is seen, for example, in planned development in standards of writing, a current school priority which does not take sufficient account of shortcomings apparent in pupils' work. However,

recent development in mathematics and information and communication technology has been well led and effective in improving provision and standards.

31. The delegation of responsibilities amongst the senior management team supports the smooth day-to-day management of the school and promotes an inclusive education for all pupils. Effective management was shown in the robust response to lower standards in mathematics and science in 2002 and to the difficulties with pupil behaviour in the last two academic years. Provision for special educational needs is managed very well and has a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The co-ordinator advises and supports class teachers, ensures excellent communication with parents of pupils with special educational needs, and provides appropriate training for support staff. The governor responsible for this area is in regular contact with the co-ordinator and works alongside groups of pupils with special educational needs.
32. Day-to-day financial procedures are efficiently managed by the bursar, and financial planning helps the school achieve its educational priorities. The school pays due regard to the principles of best value.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1112959
Total expenditure	1166440
Expenditure per pupil	2460

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	56392
Balance carried forward to the next	2911

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards are average and teaching is satisfactory, both could be improved.
- Pupils demonstrate a good command of vocabulary in their spoken and written language.
- The technical skills of spelling, punctuation and handwriting are underdeveloped.
- Insufficient use is made of work in other subjects to promote writing skills.
- Pupils' skills in locating and using information are well developed.
- Lower attainers achieve well.
- Procedures for managing the subject are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

33. Standards are average by the end of Year 6 and pupils in all year groups achieve satisfactorily. Most attain the levels expected for their age and above average pupils attain a higher level. Lower attainers achieve well because work is matched closely to their needs and learning support assistants provide good quality support. For the same reasons, pupils with special educational needs also achieve well. Although higher attainers achieve satisfactorily, they could do better. Standards are not as high as they were at the previous inspection and could be higher.
34. Standards in speaking and listening are average. Year 6 pupils listen carefully and effectively to classroom staff and to each other. As a result, they respond appropriately to questions and ideas. They express and develop their own ideas clearly when speaking to others, demonstrating a well-developed vocabulary used with precision. Pupils take part in formal debates and show an appropriate grasp of standard English vocabulary and grammar. In some classes, girls appear less confident than boys in contributing their ideas in large groups.
35. Standards in reading and writing are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily in their literacy skills. Year 6 pupils read junior fiction and other books with sound understanding, fluency and accuracy. Their skills in locating and using information from a range of sources, including library books and the Internet, are well developed. Higher attainers read avidly and use inference and deduction to formulate their views about the key features, themes and characters in their reading. In their writing, they use a range of forms appropriately, including stories, letters and poems, and explain and develop their ideas clearly. Pupils use grammatically complex sentences, and vocabulary is used imaginatively and with precision. Technical writing skills are less well developed. Many pupils do not use a consistently joined handwriting style, and there is a lack of accuracy in simple punctuation and the spelling of simple and common words.
36. The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons carefully, establish good relationships with pupils and have high expectations of their behaviour. As a result, pupils concentrate well on their tasks and work productively. Work is matched well to the needs of lower attainers, who achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well because of the good quality support provided by learning support assistants. Work is not matched as closely to the needs of higher attainers and, as a result, these pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. However, assessment information is used to provide appropriate writing targets for pupils so they are aware of how to improve.

37. A weak feature in lessons that are satisfactory rather than good is the use of time. Whole class introductions are often managed at a moderate rather than brisk pace and this does not promote a lively response from pupils. Moreover, pupils are often engaged for too long a period in listening and other passive activities so that, by the time they are expected to write and develop their own ideas, their concentration and enthusiasm are waning. Where the timing of different elements of the lesson is well judged and the pace of learning is good, pupils are well motivated, take pride in their efforts and work very productively. This was seen, for example, in a Year 4 lesson in which pupils made very good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the rhythmic and rhyming features of limericks and in composing their own. The teacher's written guidance following their first attempt in a previous lesson helped them understand how to improve. Pupils of differing levels of attainment were able to achieve very well through carefully adapted tasks and good quality support and guidance from classroom staff. The teacher also made clear her high expectations both of writing standards and of behaviour, to which pupils responded accordingly.
38. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily. Information and communication technology is used well through carefully planned work in the computer suite using a range of programs to support literacy skills. The subject manager provides sound leadership in sharing expertise and contributing to year group planning. Systematic procedures for her to monitor provision and progress, identify areas requiring development and plan school improvement are underdeveloped. As a result, shortcomings are not being identified and addressed at a fast enough rate and this slows the impact of the school's efforts to raise standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

39. There are good examples of work in other subjects, such as history and religious education, being used well to promote language and literacy skills. This was seen, for example, in a Year 5 history lesson in which pupils developed their reading skills through researching information from books and the Internet. Good opportunities are provided in many subjects to promote speaking and listening skills through discussions and co-operative learning. Overall, however, insufficient opportunities are provided across the curriculum to promote writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and, as a result, achievement is good overall. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6.
- The subject is well led and assessment systems are well established.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and a good emphasis on different methods of calculation means that pupils can explain their strategies well and share them with each other.
- Good setting arrangements are established but within setted lessons there is a lack of work matched to different abilities.

Commentary

40. There are several reasons why standards are higher in mathematics than in other subjects and achievement is good. Above average standards at the end of Year 6 have been maintained since the last inspection, but have varied considerably over the last four years before returning to above average in 2003. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well, teaching is enthusiastic and work is carefully planned to be interesting and challenging. There is a consistently good focus on practical work and discussion, which strongly supports pupils' understanding. Discussion partners are used very effectively to exchange and develop ideas and to give pupils confidence. Year 6 pupils subtract numbers with three or four digits in their

heads, and work with numbers up to a million. They have a clear grasp of key strategies for solving problems. Higher attainers measure and draw angles accurately when constructing shapes, and divide numbers to two decimal places.

41. The subject manager gives good leadership and closely monitors standards in partnership with the headteacher. The teaching staff work effectively as a team and pupils are carefully setted according to results of regular assessments. Action plans for each year group are carefully worked out, based on this information. The manager works closely with year groups to support and implement these plans.
42. The quality of both teaching and learning is good. A strong feature of the good teaching seen was the way in which pupils were encouraged to explain their strategies. For example, in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher used pupils' ideas very effectively to help them gain strategies for division problems with specified remainders. There were numerous other good examples in the mental warm-up sessions of most lessons, where pupils were given frequent opportunities to explain their different ways of working. This helps other pupils to learn well and gives them confidence.
43. Setting arrangements are well established and are fluid, allowing pupils to move from class to class after careful consideration by the teachers concerned. Regular assessments are undertaken, using optional national tests and computer programs. The results of these are carefully scrutinised for any relative weakness within a class. This information is used well to inform future teaching and to set individual pupil targets of which parents are informed. For example, there is a current emphasis on problem solving in Year 6 as a result of the analysis of assessment information. Lessons are well planned overall to address identified needs. There is, however, a lack of activities that are matched to a small number of higher or lower attaining pupils within a setted class. In a higher ability set, all pupils were working on the same practical challenge of sorting problem solving sentences to make a problem. The level of challenge could have been higher for a small number of pupils whose ability was above the average of the setted class.

Mathematics across the curriculum

44. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum. Graphs, tally charts and measurement are used in science and geography. Good links with information and communication technology are established, for example, in developing data handling skills where pupils use graphs and tables to present information. Additionally, computer programs are used well to assess pupils' understanding of specific aspects of mathematics and this contributes positively to standards.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards are average and teaching is satisfactory, both could be improved.
- A higher focus has been placed on investigational work across the school and, as a result, pupils are developing their investigative skills more effectively.
- Procedures for managing the subject are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

45. Standards are average by the end of Year 6 and are not as high as found in the last inspection, when pupils were making good progress by the end of Year 6 and attainment was above average. This is partly due to the changing profile of pupils entering the school and the recent period of turbulence. Pupils' achievement is currently satisfactory and could be better. However, standards have risen since the below average test results in 2002.

46. The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory. Planning across the school is detailed and developmental and all teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject. In some classes, where teaching is good, pupils are given the opportunity to experiment and try out investigations and think through the problems they encounter. For example, in one Year 6 class, pupils worked out how to separate a variety of materials by sieving, filtering, evaporation, floating and using magnets. The higher attaining pupils were given more materials to sort and the lower attaining pupils were well supported in their learning by support staff. Where teachers are less secure, activities set are more passive and little account is taken of extending the knowledge and achievement of higher attainers, particularly at the lower end of the school.
47. All the strands of science are planned for and covered well across the school. The higher focus placed on pupils' investigational work means that pupils are enjoying their work more and feel they can remember what they have learned more easily. This was seen, for example, when Year 3 pupils investigated how shape, size and materials can affect the fall of a parachute. At the end of each term, pupils are assessed on their knowledge of fair testing and predicting outcomes for development. Pupils' recorded work is less well developed and low expectations result in untidy presentation of work that is often unfinished and unmarked. Scrutiny of work shows little account taken of planning for the differing levels of attainment within classes.
48. The co-ordinator has led the recent improvement in investigative work well and this has had a good impact on pupils' involvement and enjoyment of the subject. She monitors planning and is aware of many inconsistencies in the approach to science teaching in the school including, for example, insufficient attention given to extending the knowledge and skills of higher attainers. Arrangements for her to monitor standards and achievement and plan development in the subject are underdeveloped and this slows the pace of improvement to attain higher standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in the subject are good.
- The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

49. Teachers are developing their knowledge and skills in the subject very effectively under the guidance of the co-ordinator. These skills are being used to plan for pupils' learning in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are very enthusiastic in lessons and the good teaching ensures good learning by pupils of all levels of attainment. Very good use is made of specific learning programmes for pupils with special educational needs. Support staff use these programmes very effectively to ensure pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of specific phonic and spelling skills, and this has a positive impact on achievement.
50. Standards are average by the end of Year 6 and pupils now achieve well throughout the school. Good teaching and learning are ensuring that the achievement of all pupils is improving and standards are rising. Thus, although standards are similar to those found at the last inspection, teaching has now improved and pupils are learning at a better rate. Use of the computer suite and computers available in other areas of the school is ensuring that all pupils have equal access to a well-planned curriculum. Year 3 pupils make their own story books with appropriate illustrations and design Egyptian jewellery to support their history project. Pupils in Year 4 design character profiles with illustrations and use mathematics assessment programs to assess their knowledge and skills in four-number operations. Year 5 pupils design their own bedroom in three dimensions. By Year 6, pupils present their work through the use of multimedia software with titles and paragraphs and inserted pictures to enhance their work.

51. Pupils explain enthusiastically about designing spreadsheets to find averages, such as how long pupils can hold their breath, and then present their findings using a spreadsheet. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills in using e-mail and digital cameras in school. It is clear through discussion with Year 4 and Year 6 pupils that they all enjoy their work and are learning new skills very quickly.
52. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject manager is proactive in supporting the less confident teachers and has ensured that planning meets all requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject manager is constantly researching new resources in order to support teaching and learning still further and is currently designing a spreadsheet to support the tracking of pupil progress across the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

53. There has been a clear focus on providing sufficient software to support information and communication technology across all areas of the curriculum. Observations of lessons, conversations with pupils and examples of work show that pupils have regular access to programs that support their learning across all subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils have made their own questionnaire comparing two villages in geography and Year 6 pupils have used technology to design a Tudor newspaper in history. Computers are used extensively to support literacy and numeracy throughout all year groups. Information and communication technology is also used effectively in supporting pupils with special educational needs every morning through specific spelling and phonic programs.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in detail and is reported in full below. History and geography were sampled.

54. In **history** and **geography**, scrutiny of planning and pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicate that an appropriate range of learning experiences are provided in these subjects, enriched by special events and themed days such as an Evacuation day, Tudor day and field study trips. In **history**, Year 6 pupils show factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of the history of Britain and the wider world. They describe characteristic features, significant events and people from past eras including Ancient Egypt and Greece and the Tudor period. They understand some of the causes of the Spanish Armada, and select and combine information from different sources including the Internet. In a Year 5 lesson seen, pupils made good progress in understanding the legacy of the Ancient Greeks and in developing their research skills. This was due to good teaching, including well-chosen methods that incorporated opportunities for practical research, for pupils to work together to support each other's learning, and tasks matched carefully to the differing needs of pupils within the class.
55. In **geography**, Year 6 pupils demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding from their studies of a range of places and environments, including their own locality. They know, for example, how the landscape, climate and human features of St. Lucia compare with their own area, and how changes can affect the lives and activities of people.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links with other subjects contribute positively to standards.
- Procedures for managing the subject are underdeveloped.

Commentary

56. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils throughout the school achieve satisfactorily to attain average standards at the end of Year 6. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection. Pupils have a sound knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. Year 5 pupils study the Passover Festival through the story of Moses and recall in their writing from the viewpoint of a Jewish slave the meaning of the Passover Festival and the various plagues encountered. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show they have appropriate knowledge of Christian celebrations such as Easter and Christmas and can compare these to festivals studied within the Hindu and Jewish faiths.
57. The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils well so that they are attentive and behave well. Key weaknesses within lessons that are otherwise satisfactory are shortcomings in the timing of different elements within the lesson, and insufficient challenge planned for higher attainers. As a result, pupils' achievement is sound overall rather than good. The co-ordinator fulfils her responsibilities within the limitations of the school's job description. An overview of what is covered is monitored and there is good liaison with year group leaders. Arrangements for monitoring teaching and pupils' work are underdeveloped and this limits the pace of improvement.
58. Good links are made with other studies such as the Tudors and Egyptians and this helps to develop pupils' understanding. For example, when covering issues such as death within the Christian, Hindu and Jewish context, links were made sensitively with the Egyptian belief in 'life after death'. The good teaching encouraged pupils to reflect and think more deeply about their work as, for example, when they chose what they might take as artefacts and why, if they were Egyptians going into the after life.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

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

59. Only one lesson in **art and design** was observed during the inspection. Here, teaching and learning were satisfactory and pupils developed their modelling skills using paper and paste. Displays on walls show pupils to be working at an appropriate level for their age. Art is linked into topic themes such as the Greeks and the Egyptians. Skills are planned for progressively and pupils have the opportunity to explore a wide range of media throughout the school. In a satisfactory **design and technology** lesson seen, there were good links with information and communication technology. Pupils were using the computer suite and, in pairs, were designing a three-dimensional plan for a bedroom. They were asked to take account of who would be using it and the placing of the furniture to ensure access to different parts of the room. This was good support for the design process and also a good use of skills for information and communication technology. Another lesson observed focussed on making puppets. Pupils were able to choose from a wide range of materials provided and to find appropriate joining methods.
60. In **music**, it is clear from the two brief lessons seen, scrutiny of teachers' planning, talking to pupils and work displayed that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. A music room provides a pleasant environment for pupils to enjoy musical experiences and for 56 pupils to take advantage of opportunities for instrumental tuition. Pupils clearly enjoy singing together and Year 5 and 6 pupils, as well as some from younger classes, benefit from the opportunity to take part in an annual production of high quality. There is a variety of musical instruments to support teaching and learning. In a Year 3 **physical education** lesson, both boys and girls

responded well to the teaching of dance. Pupils were encouraged to find their own ways of moving to the mood of the music and responded well. Boys were encouraged and supported well in gaining confidence in dance by the teacher, by the choice of good quality pupil demonstration and good use of praise and encouragement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

61. In the one lesson seen during the inspection, Year 6 pupils were exploring their feelings and becoming aware that it was appropriate to talk about good and bad feelings. They were helped to explore what evoked these feelings. In addition to 'circle'¹ time activities, aspects of personal, social and health education and citizenship are covered in assemblies, religious education and science lessons.

¹ Times when pupils sit in a circle and discuss their ideas and feelings

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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