

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 133704

Headteacher: Carole Bird

Lead inspector: Peter Lewis

Dates of inspection: 5–8 July 2004

Inspection number: 257017

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4–11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	343
School address:	Ullswater Road Millbrook Southampton
Postcode:	SO16 9EA
Telephone number:	023 8077 3363
Fax number:	023 8077 5063
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Charles Husband
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves a mixed area within a large estate to the west of Southampton. The school was formed in January 2003, following the amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools and, as such, has not been inspected previously. It is larger than most other primary schools with 343 pupils who come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. A very small proportion come from minority ethnic families and nearly all pupils speak English as their first language. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is above the national average at just over 40 per cent. Pupils starting school this year have attainments that are well below average which reflects the situation in previous years. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs is above average at nearly 36 per cent. Many of these pupils have significant difficulties, and are considerably behind their peers although only three have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The percentage of pupils leaving or joining the school at other than the normal time is above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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23482	Diana Mackie	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Newlands Primary school is a rapidly improving school that provides a good education for its pupils. Standards in English have greatly improved throughout the school and are now average, overall, by the time pupils are 11, although standards in mathematics and science are below average. Throughout the school, pupils learn rapidly. This is as a result of the headteacher's excellent leadership and the good teaching that promotes rapid learning. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school results in well chosen and very effective actions to secure improvement.
- Overall, pupils achieve well from a low starting point.
- Standards in speaking and listening, mathematics and experimental science are below average.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good and this has a positive impact on their learning.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Assessment is not yet used consistently in setting and tracking targets for pupils' learning.
- Although some subject managers have a good understanding of their subjects and use this knowledge well in planning for improvement, this is not yet consistent across the curriculum.
- The overall quality of the curriculum is good with very good links made between subjects.
- Children in the Foundation Stage are given a good start to their education.
- Despite the good efforts of the school, the level of unauthorised absence remains too high.

The school has not been inspected before, having opened in January 2003 following the amalgamation of the existing infant and junior schools.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

The achievement of pupils currently in the school is good. This is in sharp contrast to the achievement of the first group of pupils to take national tests in the newly amalgamated school in 2003, who, as the table above shows, did not achieve sufficiently well. Results in English and mathematics were in the bottom five per cent nationally. These pupils entered the school with standards that were well below those normally found.

Inspection evidence shows that the school's strong focus on improving teaching and the better use made of assessment have been successful in raising standards so that by the end of Year 6 standards are now average in English, except for speaking and listening, where they are below average. They are higher than they were, but still below average in mathematics and science, especially in experimental work. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and in religious education are in line with those expected. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons, and in carefully planned groups when supported by teaching assistants and

achieve well. Potentially higher attaining pupils regularly achieve as well as they should due to the high level of challenge that is present in much of their work.

Pupils' personal development is very good. It is well promoted through the very good provision for their moral and social development and the good provision for their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils behave well in lessons and at other times and have positive attitudes to their learning. Despite the school's best efforts, which have resulted in some improvement, attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory, particularly in relation to unauthorised absence.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion that is very good or excellent and so most pupils learn well and make rapid progress. This is because good relationships and interesting activities enthuse them and support their learning well. Teachers' use of assessment is satisfactory and is developing rapidly from a strong base in Years 1 and 2 but is not yet consistently applied across the school. The curriculum is good and clearly based on the requirements for the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. It is well supported by a range of visits and extra-curricular activities, by the good links with the community and other schools and the satisfactory links with parents. Relationships are very good and adults know and care for their pupils well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good, with some excellent features. The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent and that of key staff is good. The school's analysis of its effectiveness is accurate and clearly focused on improving learning and raising standards. As a result, appropriate actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning are clearly identified and this good management has had a positive impact on raising standards. Subject leaders are well supported in their role by the senior management team but more needs to be done in order to enable them to evaluate the effectiveness of their subjects and to plan for appropriate action. Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a positive view of the school and have no significant concerns. Pupils enjoy being in the school, feel that they are encouraged to work hard and know that they have an adult to turn to if they are worried.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in speaking and listening, mathematics and in science, especially in applied and experimental work.
- Ensure that the good assessment systems that are used in Years 1 and 2 are applied consistently across the school in teachers' planning.
- Extend the role of subject leaders so that they have a clearer understanding of standards, achievement and provision across the school and use this in planning for improvement.
- Improve attendance and particularly the rate of unauthorised absence.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement overall is good throughout the school. The inspection finds that standards have improved well this year and are broadly average in English, although standards in speaking and listening are below average throughout the school. Standards in mathematics and science are below average by the time pupils are eleven.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 national test results are much higher this year, especially in English.
- Pupils are well taught, and so achieve well. They make good progress when their starting point is taken into account.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well.

Commentary

1. The results of the 2003 national assessments for pupils in Year 2 in the table below show that standards were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, they were average when compared with the results of pupils in similar types of schools. As the school opened in January 2003, it is not possible to make comparisons with the previous years' results, and no information is available to indicate trends over time. Results for 2004 show clear improvement in reading and writing, with attainment that is now broadly average. Results in mathematics, and teachers' assessments in science, although improved from the previous year, are below average. This shows the success of the school's emphasis on raising standards in English through its first year and indicates that the focus now being placed on mathematics has begun to be successful.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.2	15.7
writing	12.8	14.6
mathematics	15.3	16.3

There were 51 pupils in the year group.

2. The table below shows that standards in the 2003 Year 6 tests were very low in national terms in English and mathematics and well below average in science. When the pupils' results are compared with those in similar schools, they were average in science, but very low in English and well below average in mathematics, demonstrating unsatisfactory achievement overall. Results for 2004 are much better, however, and show that pupils are achieving well now. The improvement of standards has been a major priority for the school in its first full year since amalgamation and has been successful, especially in English, where a great deal of work has been done, and the resulting improvement has been dramatic. Just under three quarters of pupils achieved Level 4 and above in 2004, compared with under a third in 2003. In both mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 has increased and, more significantly, in both subjects, there has been a marked drop in the number of pupils achieving at lower levels. The school's plans for further improvement are good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	21.9	26.8
mathematics	22.8	26.8
science	26.8	28.6

There were 74 pupils in the year group.

3. The quality of provision and the high expectations of staff contribute to the good progress made by the children who achieve well in most of the Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage. Progress in mathematical development is particularly rapid. Children who enter the school with special educational needs are identified and supported quickly to enable them to make good progress. Standards in line with those expected are achieved in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in physical and creative development. Because of the low standards on entry, most children do not achieve the expected standard in communication, language and literacy by the time they start Year 1.
4. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and, in many cases, their achievement is very good as a result of skilled teaching and the impact of clear strategies for improvement introduced by the school. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are well supported and make good progress and this is also the case for pupils with higher attainment who respond well to the challenges that are provided. Minority ethnic pupils make good progress overall and achieve similarly to their peers. Standards are broadly average in work seen in science, although below average in mathematics. In English, while standards overall are in line with those expected nationally, standards in speaking and listening are below average. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus, while those in information and communication technology are in line with those expected nationally.
5. Inspection evidence finds that standards by the end of Year 6 are average in English overall, but below average in speaking and listening. They are below average in mathematics and science. The headteacher's excellent leadership since the school opened in January 2003 has ensured that improvements made in teaching and the curriculum have been focused on raising standards in English and mathematics. As a result of these initiatives, the quality of teaching is now good and pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well against their individual targets and their own prior attainment. This is because of the good teaching and support they receive. The school has placed considerable emphasis on improving the quality of learning, and pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties are supported effectively to help them to perform in line with their academic ability. Standards in ICT are in line with those expected nationally following the investment in resources and training made by the school, while standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
6. Pupils apply their literacy skills well in other subjects of the curriculum and the school has appropriate plans for this to be further extended through a review of planning and the continuation of work to improve the quality of learning. Similarly, there is a good range of opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical and ICT skills to support learning in other subjects. This is having a positive impact on pupils' motivation and learning is more rapid as a result.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' have good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is good. Their personal development is very good overall. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory despite the school's good efforts to improve them.

Main Strengths and Weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy lessons, finding learning fun.
- Behaviour is good and reported as improving by pupils and parents. This is because all staff share the same high expectations.
- Too many pupils are absent or late without adequate reason.
- Very good moral and social development impacts positively on pupils' learning and achievement.

Commentary

7. Pupils are happy at school. The youngest children know how to listen and work hard. They respond eagerly to challenging questions, thinking carefully before providing confident, sensible answers. They are building positive social skills and relationships by seeing the very good example of the adults around them. There is often gentle humour that children enjoy so that they want to achieve well. Positive attitudes are seen in the majority of older pupils who react particularly well to their teachers' encouragement and enthusiasm. They settle to written work quickly with good concentration and collaboration, offering help to friends. All, including pupils with special educational needs, find new learning exciting and lessons fun. The school uses small 'circle' discussion groups very well to encourage pupils to express their feelings. This impacts well on their understanding of others' feelings, and on their understanding of their successes so that pupils now believe that they have better learning skills and are achieving well.
8. Younger pupils behave particularly well by thinking of others' needs. Pupils say that behaviour has significantly improved in the past year with less bullying. They know that any type of unacceptable behaviour or harassment is never tolerated and will be firmly and quickly resolved. This leads to very good social and racial harmony and pupils concentrate well on their learning. Through the highly effective school council, pupils decide their sensible school and class rules. They enjoy positive rewards, 'Golden Time' and getting special certificates. However, a significant minority of older pupils sometimes displays challenging behaviours, finding listening, concentration and learning difficult. The consistency of approach used by teaching and support staff ensures that they are supported well and their difficulties rarely disrupt the learning of other pupils. Parents feel that behaviour is improving throughout the school.
9. Although the percentage of authorised absence is the same as the average nationally, the attendance rate at the school is unsatisfactory, being below that of most other primary schools nationally. This is largely because of the high level of unauthorised absence and lateness. There are indications of increased absence around weekends, especially on Fridays. A small minority of pupils with long-term low attendance or punctuality receive support from the educational welfare officer and the school nurse who make joint home visits. Attendance monitoring is good. Pupils giving concern are known. Office staff ring home on the first day of absence to seek reasons. Records of lateness are kept so that emerging patterns can be noted. Prizes are given for improved attendance. Newsletters remind parents of attendance and punctuality. The breakfast club helps pupils to improve their attendance. Despite these efforts, not all parents realise how important regular and punctual attendance is for their children's learning and progress.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.5

National data	5.4
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National data	0.4
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The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Exclusions

In the last year, there have been a small number of fixed term exclusions for serious incidents. There is now less need for fixed term exclusion because pupils usually respond well to the available support.

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	274	3	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	1	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

- Staff give positive messages in lessons and in 'circle time' discussions so that increasingly, pupils can admit their mistakes and move on. Whole school themes from the school's social, emotional and behaviour strategy policy document are reinforced well in assemblies and work. Spiritual opportunities in music, history and English are good. Year 1 pupils gain insight of their five senses using 'feely boxes', thinking enthusiastically of words 'I can smell salt in the sea!' to write seaside poems. Assemblies meet collective worship requirements and are used well to share pupils' achievements and develop the new school community 'feel good factor'. Pupils' own and other cultural heritages are well represented in music, literature and art. Drama groups support drugs education and other visitors contribute effectively to history. Display is used well to provide pupils with a glimpse of other cultures. The school has made a good start in further developing its multi-cultural curriculum which, although satisfactory, would benefit from a greater direct involvement with members of minority ethnic communities. Pupils make significant progress in their social development and skills due to the strong whole school focus on building self-esteem and confidence. Responsibility and independence are always encouraged in Years 1 to 6, but could be extended in the reception year. School council meetings with pupils from Year R upwards provide very good chances for debate and decision-making on matters such as playground improvements. The council members showed their social skills when hosting the 50th Anniversary celebrations, talking to important visitors and guests with considerable confidence. The school has introduced several different clubs to help with relationships and teamwork. The lunchtime club is a very good example, with small groups of supervised pupils cooking and serving impressive meals to invited staff and visitors.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall. As a result pupils learn rapidly. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 1, 2 and 6 is consistently very good, and this is having a positive impact on standards.
- Teachers have very high expectations of good behaviour.
- There are good relationships between staff and pupils that set a firm foundation for learning.
- Good support from learning support assistants helps pupils to move forward.
- There is good inclusion of pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers have an enthusiastic and imaginative approach.
- Assessment information is not used as effectively as it could be and pupils do not always have a clear picture of what they need to do to improve.
- Questioning is used well to challenge pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (14%)	12 (35%)	7 (20%)	10 (28%)	1 (3%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

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

11. Teaching is good throughout the school, with much that is very good or excellent. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 6 is very good which is a significant feature in the improvements that have been achieved in standards. A focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning through support and training has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The school has a good range of plans in place to improve further.
12. There are common strengths in teaching that underpin the good quality of pupils' learning. These include high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which means that pupils concentrate well on the tasks that are set. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils like and trust their teachers and learning support assistants and are given appropriate assistance in tackling their work with confidence. The support provided by learning support assistants is good overall and frequently very good or excellent. This means that pupils with special educational needs have opportunities to work in small groups with adult help on work that is precisely focused on their needs. In lessons, learning support assistants are closely involved in teachers' planning and so are able to guide and support pupils through discussion and activities. In the best examples of their work, their contribution was excellent.
13. Interesting activities and the teachers' lively approach grips pupils' interest and helps them to move forward quickly. Crisp and well-focused questioning and discussion enable pupils to think carefully and develop their understanding while considering the contributions made by other pupils. In the very best lessons, teachers use very good subject knowledge to challenge all pupils through activities and questioning directed at individuals and the whole group. In an excellent Year 2 science lesson, for example, pupils' understanding of the potential dangers of medicines was enhanced by the teacher's excellent use of discussion to build their vocabulary and skills of recording. Tasks are accurately planned in relation to pupils' abilities and teachers have the confidence to adapt the planned activities in response to the work that pupils are doing, which promotes rapid learning for all groups.

14. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from well planned work and good support from teaching assistants. Teachers follow pupils' Individual Education Plans carefully. The plans are individually tailored and regularly reviewed so that pupils learn and adapt their behaviour in a cumulative way. All staff involved know about the plans and they all work to help pupils achieve their targets. Teaching styles have been considered and teachers now employ a more active approach to engage the pupils. Teaching assistants play a significant role in the teaching of individuals and groups of pupils. Pupils with severe emotional problems are managed effectively as staff follow the steps identified in their Individual Education Plans, which are known by the pupils. This provides stability and clear parameters for these pupils.
15. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are developing rapidly. Through the inspired leadership of the headteacher, and the very good management by the school's manager for assessment, sensible and helpful procedures are being developed to inform planning, teaching and learning. Systems introduced are monitored rigorously by senior staff to ensure that agreed practice is being followed, and that information is being used to provide work at the right level for all pupils. This thoroughness is resulting in clear, well-informed provision for pupils. Target setting for each pupil is in place in Years 1 and 2, but it is not yet fully established in Years 3 to 6. As a result, pupils are not always clear about the standards that they are working towards or how they will recognise success in their work. Computerised tracking systems are used to aid analysis of the performance of groups of pupils.
16. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good. Careful assessments lead to finely tuned programmes to help pupils to learn faster or to improve their behaviour. The headteacher has monitored the learning of pupils with behavioural difficulties and worked with staff to improve the engagement of these pupils in lessons. Pupils are dealt with in a highly professional way. Progress in learning is measured in smaller steps than for other pupils, so that success is frequent and snags are dealt with before they become difficult problems.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum which is enriched well by a variety of additional activities. The quality and range of learning resources are satisfactory, as is the quality of the accommodation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and helps them to achieve well.
- The curriculum takes good account of the different ways in which pupils learn.
- The curriculum is enriched well through visits, visitors and out of school activities.
- The building is in need of refurbishment and repair.
- The use of the outdoor environment in the Foundation Stage is not yet fully developed.

Commentary

17. The school curriculum meets all statutory requirements. Considerable work has been undertaken since the amalgamation to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the pupils' needs and supports the values of the school. The school continues to evaluate and review curriculum provision to ensure that the focus is on pupils' learning and the development of links between subjects. In the Foundation Stage the reception children are given opportunities to plan, do and review some of their activities and this is having a positive impact on their independence and decision making ability. Pupils throughout the school are taught thinking skills and this is having an impact on their understanding of how to organise their knowledge and skills to extend their ability to learn.
18. The school has a positive ethos which promotes the effective inclusion of all pupils into every aspect of the school's life. There is a good level of equality of opportunity and all pupils are valued for their contribution to the school. All staff are aware of the wide range of pupils'

attainment and meet their needs well and with sensitivity. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and is organised to meet their specific needs. Many of the teaching assistants have been trained to support special needs and they are skilled in encouraging pupils to achieve well. Individual Education Plans are based on effective assessments that identify individual needs and ensure that learning, physical, behavioural or emotional issues are dealt with appropriately. The school is committed to providing opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways, and has introduced innovative approaches. For example, drumming classes are held to raise the self-esteem of disaffected or underachieving pupils. Drama is a feature in many lessons, demonstrating the school's commitment to creative learning and enjoyment. Such approaches are beneficial for pupils who have problems with speech, language or self-esteem.

19. The quality of provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, including citizenship, is good. Pupils have a pride in the developments of their school, for example in the new garden. Overall pupils are prepared effectively for transfer to their secondary schools. They spend a whole day in their new school with the opportunity to reflect on their experience on their return to school. There is a structured admission to the reception classes and parents are offered a home visit as part of the process.
20. The curriculum is enriched well. The Active Learning Library is an attractive area for pupils and adults. The displays of artefacts and photographs are exciting and engage the interest of pupils, parents and visitors as they walk through. Good use is made of this resource in providing specific guidance to small groups of pupils, which has a positive impact on their interest and learning. There are many occasions when pupils go on visits as part of the planned curriculum. For example, Year 1 pupils have visited a farm and there are residential visits for pupils in Key Stage 2. Year 5 pupils participate in a mathematics challenge at the local secondary school. Pupils learn musical instruments and perform in school and the Guildhall and Turner Sims Concert Hall. Visitors to school include members of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and local sports coaches who lead activities throughout the school. A lunch-time science club has had a gardening focus to link with the new school garden at the front of the building.
21. The school is in need of refurbishment and funding has been identified for this purpose. Everyone has worked hard to improve the interior of the building to create an attractive learning environment. The new garden at the front of the school provides a dynamic feature and engages the interest of pupils, parents and visitors. The Foundation Stage pupils have limited access to a small outdoor area and this provision now needs to be extended to increase the space and frequency of use.
22. Accommodation is satisfactory and enables full delivery of the curriculum. Careful internal reorganisation has merged the two former schools successfully into one school, with a good working and learning environment that is appreciated by staff and pupils. Buildings are old with ill-fitting windows. Water collects on the flat roof with leakages in bad weather. The structural condition of the demountable buildings is decaying. The school has taken considerable trouble to create a bright and welcoming atmosphere, however, reflecting the importance it places on the pupils and their work. The main entrance is brightened by the new garden and colourful mural, marking the school's 50th anniversary. The foyer is family friendly and welcoming. There is satisfactory disability access.

Care, guidance and support

The attention to pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is good. The guidance and support offered to pupils is satisfactory, overall. Pupils' opinions are valued and given good consideration.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Close staff teamwork ensures that all adults know their pupils well. Methods of monitoring to ensure that all pupils' learning needs are consistently met are developing well.
- The very good mutually trusting relationships have a positive impact on pupils' personal development.
- Awareness of child protection issues is very good.

Commentary

23. The staff work as a united team. They understand pupils well and are sensitive to their different needs and circumstances, offering sensitive support that often extends to the families. There is a good induction programme for children just starting school and for older pupils arriving at other times. Staff take care to ensure that pupils settle happily into their new school. Arrangements for dealing with minor accidents or injuries are good. Pupils who feel unwell during the day are closely supervised with accessible expert attention. Some staff have specialist training with skills to support pupils' special educational or medical needs, including speech therapy. Procedures and practices related to health and safety are good.
24. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils with special educational needs are positively influenced by the school's recognition that pupils' personal development is fundamental if they are to achieve well. Through regular praise and encouragement, staff boost pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Lunchtime arrangements have been monitored, and a designated member of staff works with the lunchtime assistants to make this time of day enjoyable for pupils. Attendance is checked, and classroom rules have been considered so that a positive approach is adopted throughout the school. Individual Education Plans for pupils with emotional or behavioural difficulties are good. Pupils value the praise and certificates given for improvements.
25. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress, attainment and achievement is satisfactory. There are sound procedures and practices, most evident in English and mathematics, but less developed in other subjects. The introduction of a computerised assessment program allows the school access to more detailed pupil data and analysis. Assessment information is used appropriately to meet the needs of different pupil groups including those who are gifted and talented. However, not all pupils know their academic targets or fully understand what they need to do next to improve their learning and academic performance.
26. There are very good relationships between pupils and adults in the school. The pupils know that the staff are always ready to listen. There is strong mutual trust and respect. Pupils feel very comfortable in speaking to adults about any concerns they may have in or out of school. The adults take pupils' views and opinions seriously, quickly seeking solutions to individual concerns so that pupils are not distracted from learning.
27. The designated person for child protection is very experienced, well trained and fully aware of current issues. There is a child protection governor. All school staff know basic child protection procedures. The designated person notes any informal concerns and monitors confidential records frequently. There is accessible support through contacts with different external agencies. The professional expertise of the school nurse, who supports families to enhance their skills in raising children, is valued.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a satisfactory partnership with its parents, developed during times of significant change. Community links and those with other schools and colleges are good. The provision of extended services is good, enhancing educational outcomes for pupils and their families.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are pleased with the way that the school is supporting their children's learning.

- Community links are thriving, and are well-focussed on raising educational aspirations.
- The school is committed to lifelong learning.

Commentary

28. The school has worked hard to build solid links with its parents since the amalgamation. The efforts made are encouraging more parents to get involved with their children's education. They receive a friendly welcome whenever they visit and feel that they can approach staff for advice or support. The school is effectively counteracting negative views often based on parents' past educational experiences. A particularly good measure of this success is the impressive attendance at an evening concert held as part of the anniversary celebrations when over 160 parents proudly enjoyed their children's music making. During inspection many Year 2 families packed into the hall to see a class assembly and an evening music concert was exceptionally well-attended. The number of parents helping in school is rising. Some hear readers and others help, perhaps by planting the new garden or on school visits. The fundraising group is providing sound financial support through arranging social events, such as the children's end of term disco.
29. Newsletters keep parents well informed about events. Pupil reports meet requirements and provide a sound picture of progress. Parents value the school's openness and the way that good teaching helps their children to achieve well. They feel that under the very positive leadership of the headteacher, the amalgamation of the schools has been successful.
30. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the formulation of their children's Individual Education Plans. The school recognises the importance of working with parents to raise achievement and to improve behaviour.
31. There is an exciting cycle of positive change so that the school's reputation is growing across the local area. The school is very proactive in developing its community contacts and seeking sponsorship in order to provide pupils with the best possible opportunities. The reading volunteer scheme is well established and helping to raise standards. Pupils from the reception classes upwards are enthusiastic about the professional football skills coaching provided by the Southampton 'Saints'.
32. Pre-school settings are visited and there is a full transfer programme for Year 6 pupils preparing for secondary school. Students from local colleges are made welcome when they undertake their practical training in school. The staff visit other schools to share good practice as part of their own ongoing professional development.
33. The headteacher and governors are firmly committed to the development of local services and life-long education within the local community. Their commitment and determination have led to the building of a new 'Sure Start' multi-agency community centre on site, funded by the Primary Care Trust, which is due to open by September. This provision will ensure a full range of care for children from birth to age 19. Health services funded by Wessex Health authority will be available to families together with opportunities for training and employment through the 'Learning Hub' initiative.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. The school is governed soundly. The leadership of the headteacher, with good support from senior staff, is excellent. Management is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent.
- There is an unrelenting focus on raising standards.
- The headteacher, deputy head and senior management team have created effective teaching teams.
- Improvements in the school's provision are relatively new and have yet to achieve their full planned outcomes.

- Strategic monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school are clear and well focused on raising standards.
- While some subject leaders have a good understanding of standards in their subjects, this is not yet a consistent feature of the school.

Commentary

34. Evidence suggests that the school went through a considerable period of disruption in the time leading up to, and immediately following, the closure of the former infant and junior schools. Staff morale was reported as being understandably low and the need to improve standards, unify the curriculum and improve the quality of teaching placed considerable pressure on the school as a whole. The headteacher has very successfully established a united and supportive staff team that is committed to securing improvement in the way in which it works and, as a result, the achievement of pupils. Much has been achieved in establishing a sense of pride in the school amongst staff, governors, pupils and their parents and the school is very well placed to improve further.
35. In its high quality development planning, the school has rightly decided to focus its work on raising the very low standards in English and mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6. In this, it has achieved a high level of initial success but recognises that more remains to be done. The leadership of the work for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. This, together with the headteacher's very good understanding of the needs of these pupils and work that has been undertaken to unify teachers' understanding of how pupils learn, ensures that these pupils are supported well.
36. The headteacher and senior staff monitor and evaluate lessons and use the information well in determining priorities for improvement. The actions identified are already helping to raise standards. The headteacher has taken strong action, where necessary, to ensure the best possible provision for pupils. There is an effective system of performance management that is linked well to development and training priorities. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy and senior staff in monitoring the effectiveness of newly introduced initiatives and in working with staff to ensure their success. As a result, teaching teams share expertise well and all staff know their part in achieving the school's development priorities. New staff are inducted and supported well.
37. The role of subject leaders has been developed since the amalgamation. Time has been allocated for them to undertake the evaluation of their subjects which has included the monitoring of other teachers' planning. However, clear systems to enable subject leaders to evaluate teaching and learning are less well developed.
38. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The involvement of governors through the complicated processes of amalgamation has remained constant and steadfast. They have a strong belief in their school and the local community. They dealt soundly with difficulties such as those involved in the running of three separate budgets for a short time following the amalgamation. Statutory responsibilities are met. Their support for the new headteacher is very positive. This enables her to focus on the key priorities to move the school on to the next stage of its development. The governors are developing their own skills soundly in order to enhance their understanding of the work needed to raise standards and pupils' achievement.
39. Budgets are set in accordance with statutory requirements and monitored well by senior staff and governors. A good range of administrative procedures is managed well by the skilled administrative staff, who also provide a very good first point of contact with the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1 079 710
Total expenditure	1 149 170
Expenditure per pupil	3 360

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	69 462
Balance carried forward to the next	7 3157

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Good teaching in the two reception classes has a positive impact on children's learning. The environment is well organised and structured and the children have a clear understanding of the daily practice and routines. The outdoor provision needs to be developed further, however, to ensure that it provides a fuller range of opportunities to support all areas of children's learning.

Children enter the reception classes with attainment well below the national expectation. The quality of provision and the high expectations of staff contribute to the good progress they make. In both classes the teachers and assistants work together very well as a team and have a clear understanding of the learning and emotional needs of all children. Individual needs are identified early and children receive high levels of care and support. The school has good arrangements for children starting school, including home visits, and links with parents are positive and supportive.

The school's relationship with the pre-school, which is on site, is good. Some resources are shared, including the outdoor area. The organisation of the curriculum now includes opportunities for a plan, do and review approach which encourages decision making and independence. This requires further development to ensure that children have enough opportunities to make their own decisions, without adult direction. Satisfactory assessments are undertaken to monitor children's progress throughout the reception classes but these are not yet fully analysed in order to evaluate what the children know, understand and can do.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between children and with adults are very good.
- There are high expectations of behaviour.
- There need to be more opportunities for children to develop independence in their learning.

Commentary

40. Children enter the reception classes with immature personal and social skills. The routine and structure of the classes provide a secure environment where the children settle quickly and relate well to the adults around them. As a result, most make very good progress in relation to their starting points and are likely to meet the expected goals by the end of the year. They achieve well, due to good teaching. Children are very keen to accept responsibility. For example, they take the completed class registers to the school office which is some way from their classrooms. When children are engaged in an activity without direct adult supervision; for example, when modelling with plasticine or playing a table-top game, they are able to sustain concentration and remain interested in the activity.
41. Behaviour in the reception classes is very good. There is a clear code of behaviour management which is understood and consistently implemented. Children are aware of the effect of their actions on others and the expectations for good behaviour are high.

42. Children are given opportunities to explain what they have been doing to the whole class. They are confident in doing this but sometimes teachers do not provide the children with sufficient opportunity to talk about their work in depth. Children are provided with a degree of choice when engaging in activities, but this needs to be extended further to provide more opportunities for them to develop greater independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children experience a good range of activities to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well.
- Some of the questioning by adults does not provide sufficient opportunity for children to respond extensively.

Commentary

43. Most children, including those with special needs, make good progress and have the confidence to speak with each other and adults, both in small groups and within the whole class. Teachers and support staff recognise that many children have weak language skills on entry to the reception classes and therefore plan a programme that is rich in opportunities for language and literacy development. Nonetheless, the majority have not attained the expected standard by the time they enter Year 1. Children listen well and can ask questions of each other and adults. They do not always have the opportunity, however, to develop and extend their ideas and vocabulary in all discussions.
44. Classroom displays raise children's awareness of print well. There are many opportunities for children to share books and to listen to stories. Children are regularly taught letter sounds and they are able to recognise key words in various contexts. Formal and informal writing opportunities encourage children to write for a purpose and many use their knowledge of sounds to attempt to spell words independently, although their accuracy is often insecure. A number of children understand how to punctuate simple sentences.
45. More able children can read simple texts fluently and with confidence. They attempt unfamiliar words using their knowledge of sounds. Although the majority are not yet sufficiently confident in using the strategies that they have been taught without support, their reading shows good progress from the time they entered the reception classes with standards that were predominantly very low. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for guided reading activities and there are other occasions during the day when children can enjoy books. Children take books home on a regular basis. These features have a positive impact on their motivation and their learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good so children achieve very well.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote mathematics across the curriculum
- Children are interested and confident in their learning.

Commentary

46. Children achieve very well and meet the early learning goals and beyond for mathematical development. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Number vocabulary is used well and during registration teachers use addition and subtraction activities in relation to the number of children present. This reinforces children's understanding and develops their confidence in completing mathematical operations. Adults use a variety of number rhymes and songs to help children count. Most children can count to 100 in fives.
47. Taped music and games are used to add fun to the activity and children respond well to the challenge and pace. Children are familiar with the names of basic shapes and are able to use everyday words to describe position. A very good range of teaching methods is used to develop the children's learning and an effective use of questions stimulates their mathematical understanding. The very good quality of teaching and learning is reflected in the children's ability to apply their mathematical understanding to all areas of the curriculum.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use a range of equipment with confidence.
- A good range of activities is provided to stimulate the children's interest.

Commentary

48. Most children will achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning. They achieve well due to good teaching. Children enjoy exploring materials to find out what they can do and they have opportunities to experiment with sand and water play. They display high levels of interest and good vocabulary when replicating a swamp area with sand and water and discuss the types of animals that might live there. Some children, when investigating soil whilst digging outside, are able to explain how the texture changes when it rains.
49. Children can use a range of tools, for example, scissors, glue spreaders, rolling pins and cutters, with varying degrees of skill and accuracy. They can discuss the best way of cutting through play dough and test various methods with adult support. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to initiate their own activities and choose and devise their own solutions in design and making processes.
50. The children have good access to computers and are very well motivated to use them. They use the mouse and a range of function keys confidently. They log on and use a program to create animals and then use the keyboard to print their name underneath before printing out their completed work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The limited outdoor area provides few opportunities for large scale movements such as climbing.
- Access to the outdoors is limited.
- Children handle tools and apparatus with confidence.

Commentary

51. Many children enter the reception class with limited physical skills. They are provided with a range of experiences and activities so that they can move with confidence and most will have achieved the goals for physical development when they leave the reception classes. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for dance and movement and a member of The Saints' football team introduces early ball skills. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall, and help children to achieve soundly.
52. The children use wheeled toys, such as scooters and bicycles, and plastic stilts for simple balancing satisfactorily in the outdoor area at times agreed with the pre-school. There are appropriate plans to develop the use of the outdoor space further. Staff currently make satisfactory use of the outside area. Children have an appropriate range of experiences but access to the space is limited and the range of work provided does not cover all areas of learning as well as it might.
53. Children are encouraged to use a range of tools to develop their skills of manipulation and accuracy. They are taught to be aware of safety issues and members of staff intervene quickly if they see an incident develop.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy their creative work and achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good and children achieve the early learning goals.
- Good links are made between areas of learning.
- Adults provide good support and encouragement which help to build children's confidence, imagination and observation skills.

Commentary

54. All adults support children well in their creative development through the provision of a wide range of experiences. The majority of children will attain the early learning goals in creative development. They become very involved in all creative activities and clearly enjoy this area of learning. They use their imagination in role play and become particularly engaged when using props to recreate a familiar story. They can organise themselves well and create new scenes for the story. Adults support children well. As a result, they are confident when exploring a range of media and when using plasticine, for example. They make models with very fine detail and describe their work with enthusiasm.
55. Children respond very positively to music and spontaneously join in, showing their ability to maintain a rhythm. In a challenging lesson children were able to use different types of paper to create the sound effects for a story. They displayed high levels of concentration and engagement and were able to improve upon their efforts.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Overall provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and a stimulating curriculum.
- Teachers' planning is very good.
- Speaking and listening are below average throughout the school.
- Leadership and management are very good and are having a positive impact on provision.
- In Years 3 to 6, handwriting is often untidy and not always joined.
- English is used and developed well throughout the curriculum.
- Target-setting is not fully established in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

56. Standards in Year 6 have risen rapidly since the school opened in January 2003 because of the high quality of leadership and the concerted effort of the staff. The improvement of standards in English has been a priority for the school, and former underachievement in Years 3 to 6, as shown by assessment information held by the school, has been addressed robustly. Results in national tests in 2004 indicate that 20 per cent of pupils in Year 6 achieved the higher Level 5, compared with only one per cent in 2003. Overall, this year, over 70 percent of pupils achieved Level 4 and above. In Year 2, no pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in 2003 or 2004, but achievement at the nationally expected Level 2 was broadly similar in both years with an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving at the lower end of Level 2 in 2004. Pupils achieve well throughout the school from a well below average start. Overall standards in English are now broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. They are in line in reading and writing. Standards in speaking and listening, though improving, are below national expectations throughout the school. Standards in Years 4 and 5, though below expectations for the age groups, reflect the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve in line with their peers.
57. The school's rigorous drive to improve the quality of pupils' learning has been extremely successful, and the overall quality of teaching and learning is now good. It is very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6, with teaching of high quality in Year 6. Teachers demonstrate effectively what pupils are expected to do and explain clearly what they are to learn. As a result, pupils can get on with their work confidently. In all classes, the planning of lessons is very good. Teachers know pupils' aptitudes and problems well, and adapt their lessons appropriately. They are reflective about their work, and look for ways to engage slower or reluctant learners and encourage them to enjoy learning. They add a sense of fun to lessons; for example, when pupils in Year 3 wrote tongue twisters. In discussions, teachers help pupils to tease out their ideas and recognise that communication is an essential feature of effective learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
58. Teachers, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 6, listen well to pupils and encourage them to participate in class discussions, explain what they have done in lessons and take part in drama activities. The school has placed considerable emphasis on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills through its focus on styles of learning. However, despite pupils' good achievement, shown in the school's assessment records, these improvements are too recent to have yet had a full impact on standards. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, the teacher used 'hot-seating', where one pupil is asked focused questions by the rest of the class, very effectively. Reading skills are taught effectively as part of whole-class teaching sessions, and when pupils are reading as part of a group. Pupils enjoy reading, and older pupils are able to discuss the work of their favourite authors and why they like particular books. Younger pupils

already know about fiction and non-fiction and can use the contents and index pages to look for information. Pupils take books home and read regularly as part of their homework. Letter shapes and sounds are taught and learned effectively in the younger classes, and good spelling is promoted throughout the school. The good achievement in writing of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is promoted through target setting. Throughout the school, pupils write for a good range of purposes. Writing by more able pupils is good in all classes. Handwriting is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but it is frequently untidy in Years 3 to 6, when many pupils are careless with presentation and writing is not always joined.

59. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are very well challenged and teachers inspire them so that they are alert, eager to learn and very well behaved. In Years 3 to 5, this is not always the case. In the very good and excellent lessons, and particularly in Year 6, there is no hiding place for slackers – every pupil is expected to knuckle down and work hard. In the satisfactory lessons in Years 4 and 5, this level of challenge is not evident; there are not enough opportunities for more able pupils to extend their learning, and some pupils do not show full commitment to the task in hand. Teaching assistants play a significant role in the teaching process. They are well trained and have a clear understanding of pupils' needs and of the school's commitment to provide appropriate provision for every pupil. The very challenging behaviour of a significant number of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is managed effectively because of the good quality of pupils' Individual Education Plans, and the well-organised intervention and support of teaching assistants. Occasionally, in Years 3 to 6, their role is supervisory, and this does not make full use of their considerable skills.
60. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They are sometimes withdrawn from class for special activities, and thoughtful planning ensures that these are usually tailored to meet the needs of pupils very well. They explore a broad range of literature, and most pupils enjoy the subject and acquire a love of books and a desire to express their ideas in writing.
61. As a result of intensive staff discussion and well-focused professional training, good procedures for assessing pupils' progress are now in place. Monitoring is of high quality and ensures that pupils' reading books are all at the appropriate level of difficulty. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 set regular targets for pupils in their writing so that they know what they have to do to improve. This process is being extended to Years 3 to 6 but is not yet embedded. Teachers evaluate the effectiveness of each lesson in pushing forward pupils' learning, and use this information to plan future lessons. Improvements in provision have resulted in better learning by all pupils, and no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls was noted during the inspection.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject manager has a clear vision for the development of teaching and learning and further improvement in standards. She monitors performance data, reviews patterns in results and is committed to action for improvement. Her enthusiasm is transmitted to teachers so that they work together well and approaches to teaching and learning are becoming more consistent as pupils move from class to class. Knowledgeable and innovative management of the curriculum and teaching is based on thoughtful self-evaluation. Exploration of relevant academic research helps teachers to employ a variety of teaching methods to help pupils to learn more effectively.

Language and literature across the curriculum

63. Language underpins learning in all subjects – it is planned and does not happen by chance. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson about growing plants, pupils were encouraged to describe their results and most pupils gave good reasons for locating plants in particular places. In Year 3, pupils have diaries to record the growth of plants that they have grown from seed. Discussions in groups or pairs are a feature of many lessons. In an excellent lesson in Year 2, the teacher used a recent visit to Burley very effectively to motivate pupils to write a leaflet describing the attractions. Pupils often use reading skills to research in other subjects,

and practise, apply and consolidate their writing skills. They frequently word-process their writing and use CD ROMs for research. Interesting topics from other subjects, particularly history and geography, are used to stimulate pupils' imagination and provide relevant reasons for writing. Writing of good quality by higher-attaining pupils results from teachers' good planning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving as a result of good teaching and effective leadership and management.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and generally behave very well in lessons.
- Support staff make a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Assessment data are used effectively to track pupils' progress throughout the school.
- Standards by Year 2 and 6 are below expectations.

Commentary

64. Standards in mathematics in 2003 were below national expectations in Year 2 and very low in Year 6 compared to schools nationally. Results for 2004 show a significant rise in the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2B and above in Year 2, which demonstrate their good achievement, although standards are below average. While achievement in Years 3 to 6 is also good overall, the results for Year 6 show a rise in pupils attaining Level 4 and above but still remain below average. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and their achievement is good when compared to their prior attainment.
65. Pupils behave very well and classroom management is good. Lessons have a good pace and pupils are provided with opportunities to work collaboratively and to discuss their work. The booster classes in Year 3 and the Springboard 5 strategy have helped to raise pupils' confidence and attainment. In the best lessons, teachers use a very snappy approach to oral and mental lesson starters and they provide good role models for mathematical vocabulary and strategy. Resources are used well during lessons and there is effective use of ICT to provide visual support. The use of mathematics kit bags is a good example of a Year 1 and 2 initiative being successfully introduced into Years 3 to 6 to provide all pupils with their own resources. Individual whiteboards are in use throughout the school and pupils use them well to make calculations and to support their thinking when problem solving.
66. Teaching assistants in all classes take an active role during lessons and their support has a significant impact on developing pupils' confidence and enjoyment in mathematics. In a Year 2 lesson focusing on multiplication, the teaching assistant interacted with the pupils throughout the lesson and her enthusiasm and perceptive questioning reinforced pupils' understanding and ensured that no-one was left behind.
67. The subject leader for mathematics, in partnership with the headteacher, has acted with rigour and determination to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the subject across the school. The school has benefited from support from the local authority. Clear priorities for development have been identified and a whole school strategy is now in place to secure improvement. The strategy to focus on one written method of calculation for each mathematical operation has had a significant impact on pupils' achievement. The subject leader is developing a programme of peer coaching and meets with individual teachers to discuss pupils' progress and to analyse data. The school target of two sub levels of progress per year for each pupil is closely monitored and reflects an overall trend of progress in mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. There is a drive on mathematics throughout the school and opportunities are taken to use mathematics in subjects such as science, geography and history. The focus on the fifties and other decades in connection with the school's birthday celebrations provides opportunities for consolidating numeracy skills within a meaningful context. Pupils can also plot temperatures on graphs in geography and there are examples of data logging in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach well.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well but standards are below average in Years 3 to 6
- Assessment information is not used consistently throughout the school.
- Pupils benefit from good teaching and a well-structured curriculum.
- Leadership is very good.
- Science is used well to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

69. Standards have risen since the school opened in January 2003 because of the high quality of leadership and the school's focus on learning. Results in national tests in 2004 indicate that, while only 11 per cent of pupils in Year 6 achieved the higher Level 5, over two thirds of pupils achieved the expected Level 4, which shows an improvement on the results in 2003. In Year 2, a quarter of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in 2003 and 2004 but although standards at the nationally expected Level 2 were below average, pupils achieved well from a well below average start.
70. Overall, standards in science are now below national expectations by the end of Year 2 and in Year 6. This is primarily as a result of weaknesses in pupils' skills in applying their knowledge of scientific facts in designing experiments and in interpreting the results. Achievement in other aspects of science is good. These standards reflect an improvement on the results obtained in the 2003 national tests which showed the school to be performing well below average at both key stages when compared with all schools. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 achieve well although standards are below expectation because of the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve in line with their peers.
71. A scrutiny of pupils' completed work indicates that pupils have too few chances to carry out experiments. The school recognises that more emphasis needs to be placed on improving pupils' ability to use their scientific knowledge in planning investigations and has planned a good range of support in this area. There are some good examples of teachers changing their planning in the light of what pupils have achieved, which resulted in pupils consolidating and reinforcing their learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 found drawing conclusions difficult, so the teacher clarified the difference between recording results and drawing conclusions. As a result of this further explanation, pupils' understanding was broadened.
72. Recently introduced assessment procedures for the experimenting strand of the subject help teachers to have a clear picture of pupils' attainment in this important element of the curriculum. Assessment is used well in Years 1 and 2 in planning future work. In Years 3 to 6, teachers' use of assessment to plan subsequent work is less consistent, although there are clear indications that this is developing as a result of actions taken by the subject leader. There is good use of mathematics and ICT to support learning in the subject. The school has

made a good move away from using pre-prepared worksheets and, as a result, pupils use a variety of recording methods and have good opportunities for writing in particular. Pupils' enthusiasm for science is demonstrated clearly through their keen involvement in the science club and, in particular, the care with which they have taken charge of the development of the new school garden.

73. Leadership is very good and management in the subject is good. The science subject leader has a very good level of subject knowledge which has enabled her to provide a good range of carefully planned support for colleagues. Results in national tests and assessments have been analysed and the information used very well in identifying areas for improvement. The curriculum has been modified to focus more closely on developing pupils' skills of interpretation and training has been provided in assessment. The school recognises that more needs still to be done to raise standards further and has an appropriate range of plans in place.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There have been good improvements in resources and staff expertise.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and standards in ICT are insufficiently developed.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information.
- The creative use of the accommodation and resources has helped to strengthen the provision.
- Direct teaching of ICT skills is good.
- ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

74. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' ICT skills are broadly in line with those expected nationally. In the direct teaching sessions seen in Year 6, very good teaching enabled pupils to make rapid progress and achieve well in their use of the internet to develop their research skills. Pupils are able to input text and graphics, select information and images from the web and use the software to sequence information. They use 'cut and paste' methods to produce their findings in a desired style. Examples of pupils' work showed that they are learning to use ICT for word processing, graphics, the Internet and data handling. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior learning because support staff make a significant contribution in providing targeted support for pupils who need individual attention.
75. The subject is well led. The headteacher is acting as subject leader pending the appointment of a member of staff to this post and has achieved a great deal since the opening of the school. Very good use was made of the opportunity of merging the ICT suites from the two former schools to establish a baseline curriculum and begin to develop staff confidence and expertise. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning and has worked well in establishing links with other subjects. There is a need to develop formal monitoring and assessment procedures and these have been identified as priorities for further development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. During the inspection many examples were seen of ICT being used in other subjects outside the direct teaching sessions. Pupils use computers well to complete programs that consolidate numeracy skills in mathematics, for writing purposes in English, to record science investigations, and to access the Internet for research. There is good access to the

computers for pupils of all ages. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is now a regular feature of teaching.

HUMANITIES

77. No lessons were seen in history or geography, though a short history activity in Year 2 was observed. It is not possible, therefore, to judge overall provision, standards or teaching. Evidence about the subjects was gathered from pupils' work, photographs and discussions.
78. In **geography**, pupils make good progress with mapping skills. In Years 1 and 2, they make simple maps of the local area. They become more aware of the wider world, and plot the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' – a teddy bear who goes on holiday with pupils, sends back postcards and keeps a diary of his trips. In Year 1, there are good links with literacy as pupils learn about the seashore and build up an appropriate vocabulary that helps them to read and write about features of the seaside. During a visit to a farm, pupils learned more about contrasting locations. In Years 3 to 6, pupils become more proficient in identifying features on Ordnance Survey maps and in looking for information from aerial photographs. Literature is used effectively as pupils read stories about children from other lands. This gives them an introduction to the wider world and makes them more aware of the different ways in which people live.
79. Geography is being developed as part of the school's curriculum review. Following an audit earlier in the year, more chances have been provided for pupils to undertake fieldwork in the local area. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have explored the school grounds, the school locality, old and new Southampton and Burley, a nearby village. The work has been exciting and motivating, and pupils' geographical skills have improved as a result. Fieldwork is carried out in Years 3 to 6 during visits to sites further away, and pupils' investigative skills develop effectively. Good links with history bring relevance and excitement to their work; for example, when they study the history of local smuggling during a topic on rivers. These aspects of the subject contribute well to pupils' personal development.
80. In **history**, pupils achieve well and develop a love of the subject. A range of visits and visitors plays an important part in making the work interesting and relevant. The interactive library is planned and used very well to bring relevance to pupils' learning. During the inspection, the focus of the library was on the 1950s, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the school's opening. This imaginative approach to the teaching of history underpins much of pupils' learning in the subject. Links with other subjects abound. A teaching assistant talked to pupils about the reading books featuring Kathy and Mark, that she had used in the fifties, and pupils laughed at the way a few words were repeated over and over again, unlike their bright and interesting books today.
81. The recently appointed subject manager provides sound leadership and management, and she is guided well by the deputy headteacher, who has a deep interest in the subject. Assessment procedures in both geography and history are simple and useful – pupils' achievement is recorded for two or three objectives for each block of work.

Religious education

Overall provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are of good quality and pupils achieve well.
- Work in religious education is linked well to other subjects.
- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to visit a range of places of worship.

- Written work is not always well presented in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

82. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils achieve well, and religious education contributes very well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Religious issues are explored in assemblies; for example, when the Creation was used as a theme recently.
83. By the end of Year 2, pupils know a number of Bible stories, from both the Old and the New Testaments, and can relate significant events in the life of Jesus. Stories are conveyed in simple terms so that pupils recognise how scriptures can help to guide people's lives. A recent visit to an old church helped pupils to understand the importance of religion in many people's lives. There was a deep feeling of respect in the classroom as pupils remembered how they had used their senses when they were in the church. They recalled feelings of sadness because of the memorial plaques and joy as they heard about the font. Pupils begin to understand the similarities and differences between faiths. They know about significant features of Judaism; for example, that the Seder plate is prepared at the feast of the Passover. Pupils know that each faith has its own festivals, special places of worship and holy books, and that the principal milestones of life, such as birth and marriage, are celebrated in many faiths.
84. In Years 3 to 6, pupils study a broader range of faiths, such as Hinduism, as well as Christianity. Similarities and differences are celebrated, and pupils can describe some religious practices and events and recognise words and artefacts associated with different religions. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils explored the similarities and differences between Hindu and Christian religious festivals. By the end of Year 6, pupils know that the Bible is in two main parts and is itself a collection of smaller books. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils explored the Book of Proverbs and considered its relevance today. The teaching was enthusiastic and energetic and included a well-organised drama session in which pupils acted out situations, such as not retaliating when provoked. As they studied the story of The Lost Sheep, pupils in Year 4 benefited from the good quality of the teacher's questioning as she got them to think hard about the message within the story. The teachers' approach in both of these lessons contributed well to pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Pupils can also express their own ideas of what is of value or concern to them. This links well with work in 'circle time', when pupils sit in a circle and discuss social and moral issues.
85. Management of pupils is good overall and teachers usually use a good range of strategies to engage pupils' interest and help them to learn effectively. There are good links with other subjects. Drama brings excitement to the subject, and religious connections are explored in art and design. Practical activities are used effectively to reinforce learning. Local heritage is celebrated when pupils visit Burley church, linking religious education with history and geography. Last Christmas, celebrations were planned with the local parish church, strengthening the community aspect of religion. Local clergy make a valuable contribution when they come into school to enhance teaching and help pupils gain increasing understanding of the deeper meaning of passages in the Bible.
86. Pupils illustrate their written work well, but handwriting is not always carefully presented in Years 3 to 6. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers evaluate pupils' learning at the end of each unit of work, but more effective measures to inform planning are to be implemented alongside the new curriculum.
87. The very recently appointed subject manager has made a good start in managing provision in the school, and ensuring that the current required curriculum is planned effectively. Her leadership is sound, and she is well set to re-organise the teaching programme when the new Locally Agreed Syllabus is introduced over the next year. Pupils visit churches and have good links with local Christian communities, but have not visited other places of worship; this is an area for development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. It was only possible to see two lessons in art, and none in design and technology or music during the inspection. Only one lesson was seen in physical education. No firm judgement can therefore be made about provision.
89. The work planned in **art and design** is varied and interesting and is seen as an opportunity for all pupils to succeed. The subject leader is enthusiastic and well qualified to lead developments to improve provision although it is recognised that art is not a current priority in the school. More focus on three-dimensional work and a reduction in the reliance on templates for some aspects of drawing have been identified rightly as areas for development.
90. In **design and technology**, pupils design and make a range of artefacts and models. Pupils' models show an appropriate and developing attention to detail and care is clearly taken in their construction and in the way that tools are used. Designs are undertaken before construction but are often lacking in dimensions, the identification of materials or evidence of evaluation. In common with the work seen in art and design, planning seldom reflects the range of pupils' ability or previous work and so the work that is produced is often similar within groups.
91. In the very good lesson seen in **physical education**, pupils demonstrated good standards in athletics which were well developed as a result of the teachers' very good subject knowledge. The school provides a balanced curriculum, which is enhanced by a wide range of well attended after-school clubs which make a significant contribution to children's learning. Systems for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning are not yet in place, and assessment procedures are at a very early stage of development.
92. **Music** is part of school life and pupils have the opportunity to hear a wide range of music playing in both planned music sessions and in the school generally. Pupils sing tunefully and with enjoyment in assemblies and to a standard that is at least in line with expectations. Teachers choose music carefully to fit in with assembly themes. Performing arts have a high and developing profile within the school and pupils have a good range of opportunities to participate in a range of events such as choral and orchestral festivals within school and the wider community.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high priority given to raising self-esteem is giving pupils freedom to learn and achieve with confidence.
- Teaching in the lessons seen is good overall.
- Procedures and practices for monitoring and assessment have not yet had time to embed.

Commentary

93. Citizenship is promoted well. The school reinforces pupils' awareness of their responsibilities, rights and duties, preparing them effectively to take their part in the school and the wider community. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to help with clearing up after lessons, taking registers to the office and getting themselves ready for lessons. They know that bullying is wrong and that they have a right to learn and play in an atmosphere free from harassment. Pupils learn to understand and respect the ways in which different ethnic groups live their lives. Very good relationships are promoted as an essential part of life and learning. Older pupils carry out duties during breaks and lunchtimes, and all pupils know that they should complete their homework on time.

94. The subject has a high profile across the school, in order to develop pupils' ability to become successful learners. The headteacher, working closely with the new subject manager, has developed a good, well-resourced programme that fully meets current needs. It is focussed on building basic skills, increasing self-esteem and empowering pupils with the confidence to learn. This is starting to impact well, through whole class 'circle time' discussions and specific small 'circle' groups running over several weeks, involving identified pupils who need focussed support. Pupils realise that they can adapt the skills learnt in discussion groups to other lessons and situations, enabling them to make better academic and personal progress.
95. Staff have had training so they are secure in teaching that reflects the new social, emotional and behavioural strategy (SEBs) being trialed by the local authority. In the best lessons, objectives are shared and planned activities hold pupils' interest well. Teachers make good use of questioning to build on and challenge pupils' own ideas so that there is good opportunity for speaking and listening. There are consistently high expectations of behaviour, understood and accepted by pupils. The use of well-trained, skilled teaching assistants in class and in leading the specialist 'circle' groups is a significant strength, providing pupils with valuable additional support.
96. The new subject manager is enthusiastic and keen to develop a comprehensive policy and scheme of work that ensures continuity and reflects school good practice. There is a draft sex education policy due for governor approval in the autumn. Other elements such as drugs education are under discussion with staff. As yet there has been little opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching to extend staff confidence and identify further training needs. Assessment procedures are at an initial stage of development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	N/A
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	3

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).