

INSPECTION REPORT

OLD TOWN FIRST SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Poole, Dorset

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 131694

Headteacher: Mrs G Taylor

Lead inspector: Brian Espiner

Dates of inspection: 7 – 9 June 2004

Inspection number: 257083

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 8 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	154 (39 part-time in the Nursery, so 134.5 full time equivalent)
School address:	Green Road Poole Dorset
Postcode:	BH15 1QB
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Stoodley
Date of previous inspection:	26 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Old Town, as the name suggests, is situated near the centre of Old Poole, an area where socio-economic circumstances are well below average, as shown by national deprivation statistics. There are 24 pupils (16 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs (SEN), an about average proportion. No pupil has a Statement of SEN. Eighteen pupils (12 per cent) enjoy a minority ethnic or mixed heritage, with no ethnic minority dominant. Six of these (four per cent) have English as an additional language, a slightly above average proportion, with two pupils at an early stage of learning English. Pupils' standards of attainment on entering the school are below average in English, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Last year, 18 pupils joined the school and 17 left, other than at the usual entry and exit points, so pupil mobility is slightly higher than average. The school is about to gain the 'Activemark' for physical education and 'Investors in People' status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective and very happy school. Pupils achieve very well. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, and sometimes very good. Leadership and management are very good overall. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. She is supported very well by all staff and governors, who have a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and where it might improve.
- The success of the school is underpinned by a very good ethos, supported very well by everybody working together as a very efficient team.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good because staff will accept nothing less at any time.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, as part of the school's very good educational inclusion, always considering the needs of each pupil individually.
- Pupils are looked after very well. The support, advice and guidance that they receive are very good, leading to very good provision for their care, welfare, health and safety.
- There are some very minor areas for improvement, already identified by the school, but there are no real weaknesses.

In the last inspection, which took place only two terms after the school had opened, there were two main recommendations for improvement. Assessment was unsatisfactory then, and is now good. More-able pupils were not challenged enough in writing, and the 2003 and 2004 Year 2 national tests show that they have achieved standards well above the national average. Since the last inspection, leadership and management, teaching and learning, and the achievement of pupils have all improved. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

This year's (2004) National Curriculum test results are provisional at the moment; they are better than last year's, with all subjects likely to be well above average and some in the top five per cent of schools nationally. **Pupils' achievement is very good.** Children enter the school with standards that are generally below average. At the end of the Reception Year, most children have reached the nationally expected level in all areas of the curriculum for Nursery and Reception children. Pupils leaving school at the end of the current Year 3 attain standards that are at least in line with national expectations, and above the national average in English, mathematics and science; attainment is lower in this group because it contains a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs than does the present Year 2 group. Pupils' progress is good in all years, and very good in Year 2, largely because of consistently very good teaching.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is well above average and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good in every class, and **very good** in Year 2. No observed lessons were less than satisfactory. The requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met, and the curriculum is supported well by good extra-curricular activities. The care, guidance and support of children are all very good. Links with the community are good, and with parents and partner educational institutions they are very good. All these factors have a positive effect on pupils' achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Both leadership and management are very good. The headteacher is an excellent leader and works very closely with her highly competent deputy. Their excellent clarity of vision, sense of purpose and aspirations are infectious, and all staff work very hard to give every child every opportunity to achieve highly. Governance is good. Governors are dedicated, selfless and hard working. The governing body is prudent and sharp in financial management, always aware of the importance of best value and constantly applying the relevant principles. Governors have a very good knowledge and understanding of the strengths of the school and where it can improve. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Answers to the parents' questionnaire were overwhelmingly (90 per cent plus) positive, and these were supported by written submissions and comments from parents at the pre-inspection meeting. Parents are extremely happy with the school. All parents say that the school expects their children to work hard and do their best, and that they are making good progress. The inspection team is very happy to agree. Pupils like school and look forward to their lessons and seeing their friends. All pupils say that they have an adult in school to whom they can go if they have a problem of any kind.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no recommendations for improvement, and this is unusual. The school is succeeding very well, and any recommendations that the inspection team could make have already been identified by the school and programmes put in place to improve the situation. Two such areas are the improvement of pupils' handwriting and the further extension of their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards on leaving the school are above average. Achievement is very good overall, and a large contributory factor is the very good achievement of pupils in Year 2. Standards and achievement have improved well since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the present Year 2 are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Standards in the present Year 3 are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils make good progress in all years, and very good progress in Year 2.

Commentary

1. Although children's attainment is below average at the time they are admitted to the Nursery class, by the time they are ready to move into Year 1 the good quality teaching they receive in the Foundation Stage has enabled them to make good progress and attain standards in line with those expected for their age group in all six areas of the curriculum for under-fives.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (15.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.9 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.4 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The point scores show that Year 2 pupils in 2003 were about six months ahead of the national average in writing and about a month ahead in reading. At first sight there appears to be a disparity here. However, standards are about the same in all areas, and the reason for the apparent disparity is that national standards are lower in writing than in the other aspects of English. This advance of national standards has been kept up in the present Year 3, showing good progress during the year. Good progress has also been maintained in mathematics and science, and standards are above expectations in both subjects. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations and in religious education they are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. There was time during the inspection only to sample other subjects and so no judgements were made on standards or achievement.
3. The very good teaching experienced by the present Year 2 for the last two years has ensured very good achievement and standards that are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They are a more able class than the present Year 3, with a lower proportion of pupils with special educational needs. From an analysis of pupils' work it is apparent that standards were above average when they started Year 2, and from this and school tracking records it is possible to piece together their achievement over the last four years. They entered the Nursery with standards that were generally below average in English, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world (which feeds into science, among other subjects in the National Curriculum). Good teaching in the Foundation Stage

ensured that when they entered Year 1 they had made good progress and standards were in line with national expectations. Very good teaching in Year 1 led to standards that were above average by the end of the year. Continued very good teaching in Year 2 has ensured that standards are now well above average. This is quite remarkable progress over the four years, from below average to well above. Year 2 national tests and tasks undertaken in May 2004 confirm this, although the results have yet to be validated. There are several areas where the results are likely to be in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Standards in ICT are in line with national expectations, and in religious education they are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in Key Stage 1 and well in Year 3. They are supported very well in their learning and, as a result, most attain standards that are close to or above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make very good progress and achieve well. Their self-esteem is clearly raised by the school's acknowledgement of their home culture. Class teachers obtain books from the pupils' mother countries in order to make them feel more secure. As a result of these supporting factors, and the very good quality support from teachers and teaching assistants, pupils make rapid progress in their learning. School records show that there is no difference in achievement between different ethnic minorities, and no significant difference was found during the inspection between girls and boys.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their attendance is well above average. Punctuality is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In their questionnaire, nearly all pupils said that they liked school and enjoyed their lessons.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and very keen to learn. They concentrate very well and want to succeed.
- Because teachers have very high expectations, pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons, assemblies and around the school.
- Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are very good.
- Pupils are confident and willing to take responsibility.
- Pupils show very good respect for others' feelings and beliefs and are supportive of one another.

Attendance

Attendance last year was well above average and there was (and is still) no unauthorised absence. The administrative staff monitor attendance very thoroughly, with good support from the Educational Welfare Service. This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection. Punctuality is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	School data	0.0
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.

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions for several years.

Commentary

5. At all stages, pupils enjoy school and all it has to offer. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle quickly into school routines and interact very well with older pupils. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and want to do well. They listen very well to the views of others and co-operate well. Pupils respond very well to teachers' very high expectations of good behaviour. They are courteous, friendly and helpful to visitors. This reflects the views of the parents who responded to the questionnaire and attended the parents' meeting.
6. Classroom rules are agreed with pupils at the beginning of each year. In discussions, pupils showed that they were very well aware of how they should behave and fully understood the difference between right and wrong. The school has very good systems to promote good behaviour through the 'Golden Rules'. At playtimes, because of good supervision, older and younger pupils and boys and girls play well together. No bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection. The school has very good strategies for handling bullying and pupils know what to do if it should occur.
7. Pupils are enterprising and respond well to the good opportunities for taking responsibility. In discussions with Year 3 pupils, it became apparent that they took pride in being allowed to help in the Nursery and the office. They are also keen to take part in extra-curricular activities. Relationships between pupils and adults and among pupils themselves are very good; for example, in a Year 2 design and technology lesson about puppets, the teacher's very good relationship with her class encouraged their imagination and initiative.
8. The social and moral development of the pupils is very good. Pupils behave with consideration for others and have a well-developed sense of how their behaviour might affect them. Their sense of community is very well developed through the good opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility. The School Council is under development, but all pupils feel free to express their opinions in assembly and circle time. In discussions, pupils felt confident that teachers would listen and act on their views. In their questionnaire replies, pupils said that they could ask for help at any time from an adult in the school. Staff act as good role models, presenting a calm and thoughtful approach to life and the school and discussing issues with pupils during the school day. Older pupils are encouraged to help younger ones and this provides very good support among pupils. The personal, social, health and citizenship education programme (PSHCE) makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to think of others and they support several charities.
9. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and the beliefs of others through religious education and during collective worship. They show good self-knowledge in discussions. Pupils have good opportunities to study their own community through visits and activities. They also have good opportunities to learn about other cultures through geography and through special days devoted to multi-cultural education.
10. When pupils' special needs involve improving behaviour or attitudes to work, the school involves the parents and draws up specific individual plans that are aimed at enabling the situation to get better. Individual pupils are supported very closely and helped to follow the plan's initiatives, sometimes led by a trained teaching assistant, involving activities that commence before school begins in the morning. A very high success rate is obtained and pupils also improve academically as a result.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. Teaching and learning are good. Curricular provision is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' welfare is very good, as are links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good in every year, and very good in Year 2. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Assessment is good overall, and very good in English and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan lessons very well throughout the school.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted very well, with the learning needs of groups and individuals taken into account.
- Teaching assistants are used very well in every class, and very good teamwork plays an important part in learning and achievement.
- All staff always insist on high standards of behaviour, and this has a very positive effect on learning.
- Assessment procedures are thorough and very constructive, but the very good use of assessment in English and mathematics needs extending to other subjects. This is already planned by the school.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	13	4	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

11. As can be seen from the table, almost 80 per cent of observed lessons were good or very good. Good lessons were seen in every class. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
12. Lesson planning is very thorough, comprehensive and thoughtful throughout the school. Plans show how learning should progress over time. Teachers plan for work at different levels in order to cater for the needs of groups and individuals. They use different levels of support, from themselves and from teaching assistants, different resources and different individual or group tasks in order to challenge all pupils and increase learning opportunities. In good lessons, i.e. the great majority, teachers make sure that the tasks are based firmly on what pupils have already achieved and their potential for achieving more.
13. All lessons have at least one good, clear, learning objective and are focused well on this, with pupils being made aware of what they are trying to achieve from the start. In good lessons this is revisited near the end and pupils are invited to indicate whether they now understand the main point of the lesson and feel confident in their new knowledge. In very good lessons, pupils are consistently reminded about what they have to do, given short times to complete each task, are told how much time is left to do this and encouraged to work harder in order to meet the deadline. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, the teacher continually told the class that they should use their intelligence (and they accepted without question that they were all intelligent, a good sign!) to complete tasks within the given time. More-able pupils were clearly working at the higher Level 3 of the English National Curriculum, because the tasks that they were given demanded this level of work. Even the least able were working at the now-expected Level 2B, a very high level for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Before the final whole-class lesson review, all pupils were given three minutes to look at their written work and improve it, and they responded with an enthusiastic, re-doubled effort. The lesson itself would have been excellent had the teacher repeated pupils' contributions in the final review so that all the class heard them clearly.

14. Teachers and teaching assistants work very closely together, mainly to support pupils with SEN, but also to challenge the more-able. SEN pupils are supported very effectively by teaching assistants working alongside them in the classroom or when they are withdrawn in small groups to work on specific programmes of work. Class teachers and well-trained teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils where English is not their mother tongue. These pupils receive in-class support for work that is planned carefully to meet their needs or are withdrawn for more intensive learning-support sessions. As a result of these strategies, pupils with SEN and those with English as an additional language make very good progress in their learning.
15. The very good behaviour of pupils contributes very well to overall learning. No interruptions to the learning of the majority by individual bad behaviour were seen during the inspection, which is rarely observed in most schools, and the productivity of pupils is good throughout the school, and often very good. This does not happen by accident, and pupils at Old Town are no more naturally angelic than any other children. All staff always insist on very high standards of behaviour and adhere to the “zero-tolerance” behaviour policy of the school, which works very well. The result is a quiet working atmosphere in lessons, where pupils themselves expect to work hard, use each other’s expertise in group work, do not pester adults who are busy dealing with other groups, and just get on with it. They are confident enough to ask inspectors, just met, about things that they are unsure of, and articulate and friendly in their asking of questions and response to replies.
16. The assessment of pupils’ work is good overall. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when assessment was found to be unsatisfactory. The close analysis of test results and other assessments provides teachers with a clear picture of what pupils should achieve, and where support might be needed. Teachers and teaching assistants keep a close track on what pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. They observe and question pupils often and record their findings. The school has clear recording systems and these are used well to help guarantee progression of skills across the school and keeping parents informed.
17. Assessment and record-keeping systems for the Nursery and Reception children are very good. Throughout the school, the thoroughness and constructiveness of assessment is very good in all subjects. However, the use of the information gained from this to track pupils’ progress and guide learning targets is much better developed in English, mathematics, special educational needs and English as an additional language (very good in all these areas) than in other subjects. The school knows this and plans to extend this very good practice, including the use of individual tracking and targets, to include other core subjects in the near future and, eventually, all subjects.

The curriculum

The school provides a sound range of appropriate learning experiences for its pupils. Opportunities for pupils to participate in activities outside the school day are good. The quality of the accommodation is good, and learning resources are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for special educational needs is very good.
- Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good.
- The provision for extra-curricular and enrichment activities is good.
- The match of teachers to the curriculum is good, and the match of support staff is very good.
- Some lessons are too long, especially for Year 1 pupils.

Commentary

18. The curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 to 3 and generally meets the needs of all pupils. The allocation of curriculum time ensures that literacy and numeracy are covered well. However, the timing of some lessons is not as balanced as it might be. Lengthy consecutive morning sessions of English and mathematics and the adherence to the original literacy strategy do not always meet the learning requirements of pupils in Year 1. Consequently, their concentration sometimes wanes after an hour and learning is limited. The school has recognised this problem and a reorganisation of the curriculum is listed in the school improvement plan. In order to provide more suitable end-of-school-day arrangements, the current taught time will be reduced next year, and a more flexible approach to teaching literacy and numeracy across all subjects will be adopted. Staff training days on these aspects of the curriculum are planned for this September. The school makes appropriate provision for religious education, which meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
19. All subjects and areas of learning have appropriate policies and schemes of work, which give good guidance to teachers and support staff. This addresses well an important issue of concern in the last inspection. The regular monitoring of teaching and planning ensures that skills are developed progressively in all areas of the curriculum and there are appropriately-focused tasks to challenge more-able pupils and extend their learning.
20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Class teachers take great care in deciding the targets and programmes of work in pupils' Individual Education Plans and make judgements about whether these have been achieved in order to compile the next steps for their learning. Pupils' needs are assessed very thoroughly and steps needed to overcome specific problems are taken. The school is committed to providing support for all pupils, whether they have learning, emotional or behavioural problems. The work planned for pupils with learning difficulties is very closely matched to their needs and the targets on their Individual Education Plans are clear and precise. This enables teachers and teaching assistants to judge whether the targets have been achieved or not. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The planning of work for these pupils is careful and ensures that pupils receive work and activities that are appropriate for their specific needs at the time. Provision for more-able pupils is good. The school has a register of gifted and talented pupils that extends beyond core subjects to include arts subjects and sports.
21. The school strives to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities, and succeeds very well. Work is appropriately set and the high-quality support from all staff ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have equal and full access to all activities. The PSHCE curriculum is well established and this promotes the school's caring ethos successfully. Personal development is promoted on a day-to-day basis through the good care and attention that all staff pay to all pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss their feelings and problems with teachers and others, and this helps the very good social relationships found across the school.
22. The school organises a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that appeal to the interests of a significant number of pupils. They have good opportunities to participate in sporting, artistic and musical activities. School trips, sporting activity links with local schools, and the contribution of many visitors all enhance the good provision in this area.
23. The match of teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum is good and there is a very good match of teaching assistants to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. The contribution of these well-qualified and experienced teaching assistants, particularly when involved with the less able and pupils with SEN, is significant. The very good progress that these pupils make owes much to their support.
24. Accommodation is good overall, and the whole school is kept in very good order. There is no

playing field, although a small grassed area is used for football and sports days. Other external facilities are quite extensive, with good, secure play areas, an adventure activity area and a wild section. The quality and quantity of learning resources are good, and the attractive displays celebrate pupils' efforts and achievements well.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The induction arrangements for pupils in Nursery and Reception are very good.
- There are very effective procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- All adults know pupils very well and provide very good levels of care.
- There are good systems for monitoring pupils' academic standards and progress.
- Arrangements for monitoring pupils' personal development are very effective.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work is good.

Commentary

25. There are very good arrangements for children when they start the Foundation Stage. The arrangements include offers of home visits and preliminary visits to the school by children and parents, which enable teachers to gather information about the children. As a result, children settle in quickly and make good progress. Pupils who join the school at other times are welcomed informally by other pupils and fit in quickly. Parents at the meeting commented on how well their children had settled into school. Procedures for the transfer of pupils to the next stage of their education are very thorough and include sports tournaments for feeder schools as well as visits from former Year 4 pupils. Throughout the school, pupils with SEN are well supported and make good progress.
26. The school has very good health and safety procedures. Child protection procedures are effective. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection and for pupils in public care. Both she and the governor responsible for child protection have been trained recently. The deputy headteacher and all teaching assistants are to be trained later this year. All other staff receive training as part of their performance management. Staff are very aware of child protection issues and maintain very good logs of concerns. Links with local social services are good. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for monitoring pupils' medical conditions are very good. All support staff have been trained in first aid. Emergency procedures are thorough. Governors carry out risk assessments regularly and the very few recommendations of a recent health and safety audit by the local education authority were put in place immediately. Additional assessments are carried out for trips and visits. Site security is very good.
27. There is a strong bond of trust between pupils and all adults who work in the school. All pupils said in the inspection questionnaire that there was at least one adult to whom they could turn for advice. Adults know the pupils very well and monitor their personal development very effectively through pastoral care records and annual reports. Academic monitoring is used very well to guide pupils' reports and pupils are involved in setting their own targets. Pupils' views are sought consistently through circle time, assemblies and PSHCE. Pupils said in answers to their questionnaire that they felt confident that their views would be heard and acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are very good. Links with the community are good. Links with other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- The school provides parents with very good information.
- The school has very good links with parents through homework books, parent helpers and courses.
- Very good links with the middle school ensure smooth transition.
- The school has good links with the local community.

Commentary

28. In a high percentage return to the questionnaire, parents and carers expressed very positive views on all aspects of the work of the school. The findings of the inspection support these views.
29. Information provided for parents is very good, through annual reports and consultation meetings. Reports provide much good information about pupils' progress against national standards, with additional information about what they have been studying. This information supports details about the work pupils are to cover. Home/school books are used well as a means of dialogue between school and home. Regular, lively newsletters keep parents well informed of events and the headteacher and all teaching staff are always available for informal consultation at the end of the day. The school prospectus is very clearly written, informative and attractively presented. The governors' annual report to parents is clear and informative. The home/school agreement has been given to all parents. Homework is satisfactory and guidelines are given to help parents. The school is involved in the family learning initiative "Keeping up with the Children" with the local Further Education college. It also supports family music and drama weekend events as well as after-school clubs and clubs during the holidays. Consultation meetings in the autumn and spring terms are well attended. Parents have been consulted about the new 'Travel Plan' and about changes to policies. Two parents represent the school on the 'Parents' Voice Forum' run by the local education authority.
30. There are very good links with the local middle school, ensuring a smooth transition for pupils; visits before transition include sports events and open days, to which parents are invited. Year 3 pupils are visited by the Year 4 teachers and the middle school SEN leader. The Year 3 teacher and other school staff liaise with the middle school to ensure continuity of the curriculum and pastoral care. Year 3 pupils visit their new school on several occasions and the Year 3 teacher visits the middle school in the autumn to ensure that the new Year 4 pupils are performing as expected. Staff from the school train jointly with teachers from other local schools and the school is used extensively by secondary school students on work experience. The 'Blue Dragon Club', for 'wraparound' care beyond the school day, was established by the school, but is run as a separate charity in two temporary buildings in the school grounds. This has recently had a good report from Ofsted, and adds well to the school's provision outside the school day.
31. Parents support the school well through the Friends' Association, which runs a good range of social and fund-raising events. It raises money to support trips and visits and buy playground equipment. A goodly number of parents help in school on a regular basis, and more parents give help on trips and visits. The Friends' Association also runs coffee mornings for parents each week, for parents to meet the headteacher or the administrative officer on an informal basis. The purpose of these meetings is to involve parents in the life of the school and value their ideas and contributions.

32. The school has good links with the local community and local industries. Pupils worked recently with local artists to design a Christmas display in the local shopping centre. A local supermarket has been very supportive of school fundraising events and curricular activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are both very good. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent.
- There is a very close partnership between the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Between them, they have an excellent clarity of vision and sense of purpose, and very high aspirations for the school and the pupils.
- Of the 22 subsidiary judgements used by the inspection team to determine the effectiveness of leadership and management, none are less than good, and most are very good.

Commentary

33. The headteacher has the admirable philosophy that “good” is not good enough, for her staff, her pupils, or herself. The highly competent deputy headteacher adds much to their partnership and, between them, they enthuse and inspire pupils, staff and governors, creating a very effective team that ensures pupils’ very good achievement.
34. Governance is good. Governors are committed and hard working, and have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and what it needs to do to improve. They challenge and support senior managers well, and ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties. They are financially aware, sharp and prudent, and financial management helps the school reach its educational priorities well by applying the principles of best value – competition, challenge, comparison and consultation.
35. The school improvement plan is very good. It is comprehensive, well written, easy to follow and sensible, containing sections for each subject, including those in the Foundation Stage and personal, social, health and citizenship education. It also includes a very good four-page summary for people without the terrier-like persistence of Ofsted inspectors.
36. Governors and staff are highly committed to educational inclusion. The new facilities for the physically disabled, including a lavatory, lift and ramps, were tested thoroughly by the lead inspector, who had broken his right foot two days before the inspection, and thought that it might have to be postponed. The school responded (on the Sunday) by arranging for him to have a wheelchair with a raised element for the right leg. All facilities for the physically disabled work very well.
37. The support of pupils with SEN is managed very well by the co-ordinator. There are well-developed systems in place to assess pupils and for planning the measures needed to provide effective support for them. Screening tests are used to identify pupils who have specific needs if the school is concerned. Steps are sometimes taken to support pupils even before they are admitted to the school. Parents are always invited to meet the class teacher and SEN co-ordinator when a pupil’s Individual Education Plan is reviewed each term. This involves parents closely in their child’s education and has a beneficial effect on their progress.
38. The management of work associated with pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is very good. The school has arranged for two teaching assistants to be fully trained, through the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant, to support pupils with their learning. Their progress is tracked very rigorously and any resulting problems are tackled immediately.

39. The school evaluates its performance very well, with a rigorous analysis of all data, which feeds the school improvement plan. The analysis includes the performance of pupils with SEN and EAL, those from ethnic minorities, and any differences between girls and boys. The school improvement plan is also supported very well by the headteacher's performance management. All staff are appraised annually, and the school expects the award of 'Investor in People' in the very near future. Appraisal is tied very well to the continuing professional development of all staff as well as to the school improvement plan. Teaching assistants reported very positively about their place in performance management, the support they have from the school in advancing their careers and the overall ethos of working as part of a very effective team.
40. The headteacher leads the curriculum and teaching very well. Subject management is good, although subject managers do not all observe how their subjects are taught on a regular basis, and this is an area for improvement, already identified by the school.
41. New staff are inducted well, with well-established mentors to give them advice and support. Newly qualified teachers take advantage of the induction arrangements supplied by the local education authority. The school supports initial teacher training well, providing practical experience for students from King Alfred's University College in Winchester.
42. The school has very good procedures for the recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of staff. Next year, the timetable is being revised to cut 25 minutes from the end of the school day in order to redress the present imbalance in staff home-school lifestyle. This will still leave teaching time well above the government-recommended minimum, as the time spent teaching is too high at present. It will give parents with children at the middle school time to get there to pick them up. It will also allow teachers more time for mutual planning and meetings and, coupled with the school's plans to re-organise the curriculum by shortening sessions in English and mathematics and teaching more literacy and numeracy in other subjects, it is a very good step forward.
43. Caretaking, lunchtime supervision and the day-to-day running of the school office are all very efficient, with tireless devotion and persistent good humour from administrative and auxiliary staff, who are all assets to the school. The administrative officer is also a governor, chair of the Friends' Association and chair of the wrap-around childcare club. She jokes that she volunteers too readily, but she is very important to the school's success. This is a good example of the very good teamwork that gives the school its very good ethos, enabling pupils to grow and blossom in a very friendly and caring 'family' atmosphere. This is all, ultimately, a result of the excellent leadership of the headteacher.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	457,593.71	Balance from previous year	55,918.25
Total expenditure	465,804.28	Balance carried forward to the next	47,707.68
Expenditure per pupil	3,387.67		

44. The expenditure per pupil is slightly above average. There is a ten per cent carry-forward on the school's annual budget, but this is sensible in the light of future possible budget cuts, and has been allocated wisely should these happen. The school is very effective, so it provides good value for money. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good, both in the Nursery and Reception classes. Pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve very well because they are effectively supported as individuals.

As well as work planned for the whole class, Nursery children are provided with a wide range of activities from which they can choose. The teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistants carefully adapt these to meet the learning needs of different children to extend their skills. The teams of adults are led and managed very effectively to facilitate this. As a result, the Nursery children make good progress. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes also enjoy good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. They are challenged and extended well and a significant number attain above the levels expected nationally. Teachers have high aspirations for them and have a clear vision of what should be done to improve the provision even further as a result of thorough self-evaluations. Every adult involved in the two classes is well motivated and clear about the part they should play to enable all children, whether highly able or with difficulties in learning, to reach their potential. Very good assessment procedures play a very large part in the good progress made by children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships and high expectations of behaviour by all staff mean that most children behave well, work hard and enjoy learning.
- Good teaching and learning in both classes mean that children achieve well and are on course to reach the expected levels for their age by the end of the Reception Year.
- Adults give children plenty of help but encourage them to be independent and also to share, take turns and work together.

Commentary

45. Members of staff create a secure environment with well-established routines so that children know what they have to do and what is expected of them. For example, Nursery children learn that they have to sit quietly when the teacher is saying the names on the class register. All adults in the classroom have very high expectations of behaviour and so children behave well. In addition, adults treat children with respect and provide very good role models of how to behave with others and this has a very positive effect on the children's own behaviour. The children learn to listen carefully, follow instructions and join in enthusiastically and safely during lessons. Effective reminders and good use of praise encourage children to help one another.
46. Children in the Reception class also make good progress and improve their social skills further. They develop closer relationships involving a play scenario such as treating sick animals in a vet's surgery and making decisions through discussion about whether to bandage a toy snake. The development of children's self-esteem is also continued further by good use of praise and by allowing children to make their own decisions about, for example, how many counters to use when practising subtractions. Good quality teaching, through setting good examples of how to treat others, by careful planning of opportunities for children to interact with others and by encouraging independence, has enabled children to reach the expected level of personal, social and emotional development by the time they transfer to Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision enables children to reach levels in line with national expectations.
- Good teaching and learning mean that children achieve well: most children will reach the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year and some will exceed them.
- Teachers and other adults provide good opportunities for children to listen and talk to other children and adults, so children talk clearly and listen attentively.
- Good attention to letter sounds means that children achieve well in reading and writing.

Commentary

47. Adults explain very clearly what children have to do and encourage children to talk about their experiences through the effective use of questions and prompts. For example, when a child is choosing which legs to attach to her octopus, the teacher asks "Do you want longer or shorter legs?" Adults listen respectfully to what children have to say, so children listen to each other and adults. Children take turns when answering questions in a class session and listen to each other in imaginative play situations. For instance, when two children were sitting on chairs underneath a parasol outside the class 'beach hut', one child said to the other "Do you like my baby's sun glasses?" After a moment's reflection the other child replied "No, they're too big for its face."
48. The teaching of reading and writing is particularly successful in the Foundation Stage and enables children to reach the levels required nationally by the time they are ready to join the Year 1 class.
49. There is a good emphasis on teaching basic skills and many children use their knowledge of sounds when they read and write. There is just the right balance between teaching the skills needed for writing, and encouraging children to experiment with writing so that they become confident writers. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to write independently. They encourage them to use sounds when writing and older children do this successfully. Nursery children learn successfully the initial sounds of words whilst children in the Reception class learn to choose and write appropriate adjectives when writing sentences.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning in both classes mean that children achieve well: most children will reach the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year and some will exceed them.
- The more-able children are on course to exceed the goals expected for them at the end of the Reception Year.
- Children make good progress in developing their mathematical skills because adults take every opportunity to count and talk about numbers.
- Adults provide good opportunities for children to learn and use mathematical language.

Commentary

50. In whole-class sessions in the Nursery and Reception classes, children practise accurate counting skills. Nursery children learn the sequence of numbers up to 20 by saying them together and practise counting small numbers of objects with the support of adults. Reception class children learn to count backwards and forwards by singing number rhymes, such as 'Five Little Frogs'. The teacher very ably familiarises children with mathematical ideas such as odd and even numbers by counting out objects in pairs to see if there is a single one left over. More-able younger children can count and recognise symbols reliably to at least 20 and accurately subtract small numbers from these by counting out and removing the required number. Most of the children in the Reception class can say which number is one more or one less than a number up to 10 and some can say one more or less than a number up to 20.
51. Nursery children are beginning to use mathematical language correctly because adults use this language when they talk to the children about their work. Older children recognise squares, triangles and circles and younger children can say which are the longer and shorter lengths of paper. Nursery children are provided with good opportunities to develop mathematical ideas when, for example, they sort shells, stones or coloured glass beads into a range of sets each with different attributes. Reception children are familiar with terminology such as 'multiples' and are challenged daily to answer questions involving the class number square. By the time children reach the age of five, their mathematical development has reached the nationally expected level.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of first-hand opportunities successfully extends children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Commentary

52. Children have good opportunities to use a range of materials such as gardening tools to experiment with digging, hole punches to make movable joints in the cardboard animals they have made, binoculars to magnify distant objects and computers to find out about everyday technology. They find out how plants grow by planting broad beans and sunflower seeds and identify the roots, stem and leaves after they have grown. The children have easy access to computers and use programs that develop most areas of learning. For example, they use the mouse confidently when they move letters to join with appropriate groups of letters to make words, attach the right size shoes on to different sized monsters or count objects on the screen accurately to obtain a desired outcome. Children reach the expected level in understanding.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's physical development is good because the teachers plan a good range of activities in the classroom and secure outdoor area.
- Because of good teaching and learning in both classes, most children will reach the expected levels for their age by the end of the Reception Year.

Commentary

53. There are good opportunities for children to develop skills such as cutting, manipulating materials and using tools such as paintbrushes, pencils, scissors and gardening tools. For example, Nursery children showed good dexterity when they rolled and moulded dough to make models of party cakes, as did Reception children when they made cardboard dogs by cutting out the parts and joining them with split pins. Many Reception children hold pencils correctly and form recognisable letters. Children are provided with regular sessions when they use equipment such as pedalled vehicles on the playground. They control these vehicles with confidence and steer them with well-practised skill. During the period of the inspection children had continuous access to a secure area outside of the classrooms and this enabled further opportunities for physical development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**. Children reach the expected levels for their age by the end of the Reception Year and achieve well because of the good teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children reach the expected levels for their age by the end of the Reception Year and achieve well because of the good teaching.
- Adults provide good opportunities for role play.
- The activities teachers give children for art are varied and linked with other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

54. The role play areas in both the Nursery and Reception classes successfully stimulate children's imagination and provide good opportunities for them to develop their language skills. For example, Nursery children used the props provided to create a realistic scene in and around a beach hut and leisure area in the outside area and created scenarios through which they could act out similar experiences. Reception children created a veterinary surgery in a corner of the classroom and successfully took on the roles of vet, nurse and pet owners. Children sang tunefully with a good sense of rhythm and joined in with the words of number rhyme songs. By doing so they consolidated their knowledge and understanding of numbers. They created good flower collages using a wide range of materials, wools and sequins and used their fingers to paint water lilies over a wash of blue and green colours, which they produced after discussing a well-known painting by Monet. They drew representations of growing plants and whilst they were doing this they learned the names of the different parts of a plant such as roots, leaves, stem and shoot.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** in Key Stage 1 and in Year 3. The very good teaching in Year 2 has enabled pupils to achieve very well and for standards to be well above average in reading and writing. Teaching is also good in Year 3, where standards are above average, and this has enabled pupils to achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of English teaching is good, enabling pupils to achieve very well and to attain very high standards in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1.

- Very good assessment procedures and the effective way the outcomes are used contribute much to pupils' good achievements.
- The subject is led and managed well.

Commentary

55. The reading standards of seven-year-old pupils are high. Most read fluently and can self-correct if they make a mistake when reading aloud by using the meaning of the sentence they are reading. Reading standards in 2003 were close to the average and are well above average in the present Year 2. They have been taught well and, as a result, understand clearly what they are reading. Higher-attaining readers can express opinions about the book they are reading and make reference to the text to substantiate their views. Most pupils know how to locate specific information from the collection of books in the school's library and have been taught how to use the list of contents and index to find information quickly and efficiently. Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading and the best readers demonstrate their pleasure by providing different voices for each character in the story when reading aloud. The school's strategy of involving parents with their children's reading is very successful. Reading diaries provide a good means of communication between parents and the class teacher and enable successful joint support for individual pupils. Pupils' reading standards in Year 3 are average for their age. They do not use punctuation cues in the text to help with understanding the meaning of what they are reading as well as pupils in Year 2. Group reading methods to help pupils with inferences in the meaning of the text are not used as efficiently as they could be to help improve their comprehension.
56. Year 2 pupils are also extended in their writing skills, resulting in standards that are well above average. Teaching encourages average and above average pupils consistently to write more complex and longer sentences using connective words. Such good strategies enable pupils to reach higher levels of writing attainment. Lower-attaining pupils are supported very well in writing by skilful classroom assistants either in the classroom or when they are withdrawn from literacy lessons for more individual attention. This has enabled almost all pupils to develop good standards in spelling and punctuation. Higher-attaining pupils have mastered the use of speech marks in their writing together with a skilful use of words such as adverbs. For example, one seven-year-old pupil wrote in one of her very good stories 'She lovingly hugged her mum because she loved her so much.' The standard of Year 3 pupils' writing is well above average and pupils are helped to progress by written advice on how to improve the content. The best writers have a good fluent style. For instance, in one very good story the pupil wrote 'She often took Sarah on a tour of her gallery, telling her amazing stories of the people she knew and the fashion shows she had seen.' However, even some of the most able pupils made careless mistakes in their punctuation, sometimes omitting full stops and capital letters. Generally, in both key stages, pupils' handwriting is not neat enough and some pupils are not joining letters within words. This is below the standard required and does not match the good quality of the content.
57. The school's assessment procedures in English are very good and the information gained is used effectively to help all pupils improve. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding regularly through marking their work, questioning and observing them at work in the classroom or elsewhere. They act on their findings and respond quickly by providing advice to pupils about ways in which they can improve. Pupils are keen to do better and are sufficiently motivated to carry out teachers' recommendations enthusiastically. Teachers also provide written targets, arising from these formative assessments, for pupils to achieve every half term as stepping-stones towards improving their attainments. These are attached to the tabletop where individual pupils sit so that they form a focus and parents are also given a copy so that they are fully aware of what their child should be aiming at. Pupils strive to meet the individual targets and prove to the teacher that they have been accomplished. This practice accelerates pupils' acquisition of skills and speeds up their learning. When pupils are given an individual writing task teachers always provide them with a grid indicating the main aspects they will be expecting to find in that specific piece of writing. These criteria for success are

matched to pupils' levels of attainment so that each person can be challenged individually. This also provides a very useful vehicle to accelerate learning because the teacher ensures that her aspirations for the pupils are high. Pupils often mark their partners' writing according to whether they have met the teacher's criteria for the work. In this way pupils have further understanding of how they can improve. In addition to these assessments teachers carry out careful checks on pupils' writing every half term. Judgements are made on the attainment levels of pupils' writing so that teachers can compare these with the previous levels to keep track of pupils' progress. This process is used to make sure that a pupil's rate of progress does not slow.

58. The school's high standards in English are a direct result of the very good leadership and management of the co-ordinator. There is a clear sense of leadership and direction for the subject because every year there is a rigorous evaluation of what needs to be done to improve pupils' achievements. All members of staff become committed to the resulting action plan and work together to ensure that it is achieved. There is an ethos of teamwork within the school, where not only are all teachers and teaching assistants valued for their commitment and hard work in teaching English but also all pupils, whatever their difficulties or strengths, are included in the process of improving achievements. This is how the school manages to improve pupils' attainments from a level that is below average when they are admitted to the school to a level that is well above average by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1. The progress of the initiatives on the action plan is regularly checked by the subject leader, who monitors lessons and oversees the processes of target setting and assessment of pupils to ensure that these are carried out. All findings are shared with the staff to make sure that everyone is informed fully and steps are taken to bring initiatives back on track should they be necessary.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. Pupils are given varied opportunities to use their reading and writing skills in subjects across the curriculum. For example, Year 3 pupils wrote interesting poems about smugglers as a result of a short series of history lessons about Isaac Gulliver, a local eighteenth century organiser of smuggling operations. They write stories and explanations linked with what they have learned in geography and religious education lessons. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise directly the skills they have learned during literacy lessons in different subjects. The relevance of the skills they have been learning is thus diminished because they do not use them in a range of different contexts. There are no consistent procedures whereby teachers can identify opportunities in other subjects to practise newly acquired literacy skills. A move in this direction is part of the school improvement plan.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well overall.
- Standards in Year 2 are well above average.
- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

60. Standards in Year 3 are above average. There is a good emphasis on mathematical investigation and problem solving, and pupils report that they enjoy the practical nature of the subject. They find that number work is made easier by constant reference to number lines, which give them visual clues and methods of solution. Standards in Year 2 are well above average. Year 2 pupils are more mathematically able than those in Year 3. An analysis of their work confirms the national test results, which show that all pupils are reaching the expected Level 2B of the National Curriculum, even in data handling, which is not officially part of the Year 1 and Year 2 curriculum. It also shows that their standards were above average at the

beginning of the year. There is a good emphasis throughout the school on mental strategies to make calculation easier. This has a positive effect, not only on standards of mental arithmetic but also on written methods.

61. There is clearly good progress in every year, and very good progress in Year 2. Since children enter the school with standards that are below average, and leave with standards that are above average, they achieve very well overall.
62. Teaching and learning are good in every year and very good in Year 2. Work is planned very carefully to ensure progression and good account is taken of pupils' individual needs. Work is marked well and often very well, with suggestions for improvement. Pupils are given individual targets, which are updated regularly, and tracked meticulously in every area, so the suggestions for improvement are always helpful. Teaching assistants are used very well in very effective teamwork, usually, but not always, to support pupils with special educational needs. All staff always insist on very high standards of behaviour, and this leads to a quiet and productive atmosphere where pupils work hard. In groups they help each other without interrupting adults who are working with others.
63. Leadership and management are good. The enthusiastic subject manager checks teachers' planning and pupils' progress. The Challenge Club is used to challenge more-able mathematicians. Resources are good and used well. At the time of that last inspection, teaching, learning, leadership and management were all satisfactory. All these aspects are now better, leading to standards and achievement that are much better.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Although there is evidence that mathematics is used satisfactorily in science, design and technology and geography, the school has started to redesign the curriculum in order to spread mathematics even further into other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The curriculum is well structured and well planned.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Information and communication technology is used well in some lessons.

Commentary

65. The good quality science curriculum is taught well and this results in very good achievement by all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Standards are above national expectations in Year 3, and well above average in Year 2. Pupils make very good progress from a below-average start over their time in the school. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with those attained nationally. During the inspection no difference was found between the standards of attainment of boys and girls.
66. Two science lessons were seen during the inspection. One was good and the other very good. Further evidence was obtained from scrutiny of planning and pupils' recorded work. Overall, teaching and learning in science are good. Teachers develop good attitudes to the subject amongst pupils through their own enthusiasm for science and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' academic and social achievements. Teachers take advantage of these

positive attitudes by providing a wide range of tasks and investigations, maintaining pupils' interest for long periods in lessons. This was evident amongst Year 2 pupils, who showed excellent levels of concentration and effort as they tackled a variety of activities related to recognising plants and animals in the local environment. However, when lessons extend beyond an hour, activities are not always well matched to the learning needs of all pupils and some lower-attaining pupils do not make the progress that they are capable of.

67. Teachers' planning and organisation are very good. There is a strong emphasis on practical work and pupils are given clear explanations and instructions, which help them settle and learn well. Where the strongest learning takes place, teachers have very good subject knowledge and challenge pupils very well to think for themselves, such as to work out ways of carrying out their own investigations. Very good use is made of the school's splendid nature areas where small groups of pupils investigate the wildlife and practise "being scientists". With the help of this good resource, they are able to make decisions and choices and find things out for themselves. Currently, displays are underused to further children's understanding and encourage learning.
68. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has a very strong vision for the subject, and has made a very effective start to her role. Assessment procedures provide a good range of information, which the subject leader analyses effectively to identify areas for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic and confident.
- Standards in word processing are above expectations in Year 3.
- At the time of the inspection, Year 3 pupils had not used a digital camera or the Internet at school.

Commentary

69. Standards in all years are in line with national expectations, except in word processing, where in Year 3 standards are above those found in most schools. Pupils are confident and competent in changing font, size, style and colour, incorporating icons and creating borders. They use ICT as it should be used, as an interesting resource to help learning and communication, rather than just an isolated subject. They are confident in using art programs by the time they leave Reception. They have also begun to program a floor robot to make a sequence of moves. By the time they leave the school, they are using a music composition program to compose quite extensive pieces, and use databases and data handling programs. They use investigative programs such as "Granny's Garden". However, although younger pupils have used a digital camera, Year 3 pupils have not. In getting the classrooms connected to the Internet, there were installation problems, which are only just being overcome. In the past, pupils have used an e-mail simulator because they had no access to the real thing, and they have had no chance to use the world-wide web, although this is planned before the end of term.
70. No dedicated ICT lessons were seen in Years 1, 2 or 3. However, computers are used as part of other lessons, and it can be concluded from this and from standards that teaching and learning are satisfactory. One way in which ICT is used in nearly every lesson is in the involvement of interactive whiteboards, where pupils display confidence in their use.
71. At the time of the last inspection, the subject had no scheme of work. Since then, the school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme, along with its assessment procedures. There are plans to extend this assessment method to include the complete tracking and target

setting that are so successful in English and mathematics. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

72. The enthusiastic subject leader is newly appointed, but is already doing a good job, particularly in working with staff and technicians to install the interactive whiteboards successfully. Resources are good and used well.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. At the time of the last inspection, because of a lack of computers, ICT was not being used well enough to support other subjects. It is now used widely in virtually all areas of the curriculum. Literacy and numeracy, particularly writing and data handling, are supported well. Interactive whiteboards are used extensively. Now that classrooms are being equipped with access to the Internet, the school plans to use the world-wide web to support investigational work in the humanities and creative subjects.

HUMANITIES

74. One lesson was seen in both religious education and geography, and none in history. Consequently, it was not possible to make an overall judgement in any of the humanities subjects.
75. In **geography**, a scrutiny of a sample of pupils' past work indicates that the National Curriculum requirements are covered in both Key Stage 1 and in Year 3. A discussion with a group of pupils showed clearly that they had a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject. The one geography lesson observed, in Year 3, was innovative and enabled pupils to make good progress in their learning.
76. An examination of pupils' work and a discussion with a group of older pupils showed that the school meets the National Curriculum requirements in **history**. The history curriculum is enriched by a number of very useful educational visits for pupils. These involve a local museum where pupils are invited to participate in a number of activities that were common in times past. Pupils wear Victorian clothes and are required to perform typical tasks commonly undertaken by maids and servants in that period. They scrub steps, bake bread and prepare food for cooking. Such experiences bring history to life for the pupils and greatly enhance their knowledge and understanding.
77. An analysis of teachers' lesson and curriculum planning, and pupils' work, shows that pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of **religious education** in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils develop a positive respect for beliefs other than their own. There are good links with other subjects such as English, art and music, and there are good local cultural links, such as visits to the local church, visitors from the Sikh community, and an annual nativity concert.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. No lessons were observed in art and design, music or physical education, and only one in design and technology. As a result, no secure judgement can be made on provision or standards in these subjects. An examination of planning, photographic and written records and discussions with staff and pupils showed that the school provides a full range of activities covering the National Curriculum, and that skills are taught systematically.
79. In **art and design**, pupils keep a sketchbook, which they take from year to year. These show some good experimentation with pastel colour use and, in Year 3, planning and evaluation of sculptures as well as careful evaluations of portraits. ICT is involved well, and a painting program is used creatively from the Foundation Stage onwards. Various media are used, including collage and paper weaving. Pupils work with local artists; for example, in a competition to design Christmas tree hoardings. The school has expressive arts days and a

Christmas art week, supported well by parental help. These generate enthusiasm and support learning well. An art and design club, led by a teaching assistant, is planned to start in September, in order to support learning and challenge talented pupils.

80. In talking to pupils it became apparent that, by the time they leave the school, they have a good knowledge and understanding of the essential plan-do-review nature of **design and technology**. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when pupils had little idea of the design process. The school now uses the nationally-recommended scheme of work and its attendant assessment procedures, again a good improvement since the last the inspection, when there was no scheme in place. All designing and making aspects of the subject are now covered well. The food technology aspect of the subject is tied well to healthy eating, and pupils sample and judge exotic fruits as well as designing and making sandwiches, where they refine their designs both before and after the 'making' session. The one observed lesson, on puppet making in Year 2, was good, and included clear instruction on the use of a template and the importance of even, constant work when making a running stitch. Pupils were fascinated.
81. It is clear from teachers' planning and the diary of events that the **musical** activities undertaken are varied and interesting. Pupils experience visits to the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra family concerts, sing in the choir, have recorder teaching and enjoy multi-cultural music with visiting Indian musicians and dancers.
82. The **physical education** programme fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is enriched by a good number of extra-curricular coaching opportunities such as tennis, golf, soccer and tag rugby. The school has recently had notice that it is about to receive the 'Activemark' award.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHCE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PSHCE forms an integral part of the caring ethos of the school.
- The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to explore sensitive issues and to share their feelings and concerns with each other and adults.
- The very good provision for social and moral education supports, and is supported by, this area well.
- The school has worked well to achieve the Healthy School Standard qualification.
- The PSHCE curriculum provides very good opportunities for visitors to contribute to pupils' education and to extend their experiences.

Commentary

83. PSHCE is a valuable extension to the school's curriculum and enhances pupils' awareness of the school's very high expectations for their behaviour and attitudes. Pupils achieve well because personal and social education is part and parcel of their everyday learning in school. The health education programme is successfully woven into the curriculum and staff deal effectively with any particular issues as they arise. The school's very good commitment to inclusion positively guides pupils' social development. Staff provide good role models in the way that they value the opinions and contributions of all pupils during lessons and discussions. Pupils appreciate how important it is to work together, and readily celebrate and value each other's achievements in and outside lessons. The school places strong emphasis on independence and responsibility, which promotes self-esteem and encourages pupils to develop strategies to overcome problems and achieve success.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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