

INSPECTION REPORT

ST BERNADETTE'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Farnborough

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116391

Headteacher: Mrs J Hooper

Lead inspector: Mrs L Woods

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th May 2004

Inspection number: 257604

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: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 306

School address: Tile Barn Close
Cove
Farnborough
Hampshire
Postcode: GU14 8LS

Telephone number: 01252 548 123
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Dr G Dorey

Date of previous inspection: May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is a larger than average school to the west of Farnborough, which is undergoing an extensive building programme to improve its facilities. There are currently 306 boys and girls on roll, with roughly equal numbers of these. Pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, with the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals, 4.6 per cent, being below the national average. Pupil mobility is broadly similar to the national picture, with a turnover of around 10 per cent in any one year. The school welcomes pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, and the percentage of these is rising. There are around 10 per cent of pupils learning English as an additional language, which is higher than found nationally, although few of these are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is average, and just over 13 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is below average. Four pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21079	Mrs L Woods	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage ¹ English as an additional language Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
9614	Mrs C Webb	Lay inspector	
31801	Mrs Y Bacchetta	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Music Personal, social and health education and citizenship
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¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. It has weathered a period of significant turbulence in staffing which resulted in falling standards, and this has been effectively reversed. Standards in English are above average, and are average in mathematics and science. Pupils achieve well, and very well in English, because teaching is good overall and often very good and excellent. Pupils respond well to this and are keen to learn. Current leadership is very good, with excellent vision and direction provided by the headteacher. Management is good overall, because so many staff are new to their roles, but this is rapidly improving. Governors provide very good support for the school and finances are managed very well. The school provides **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher, very good governance and very good leadership by other key staff creates a very good ethos and is enabling the school to improve at a rapid rate.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below expectations for the oldest pupils.
- Relationships are very good, pupils have very good attitudes to school and behave very well.
- Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The teamwork between all who work in the school is very good, and includes very good relationships with parents.
- The use of assessment information to track pupils' achievement and establish trends in the progress of different groups of pupils is not fully developed.

The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues from the previous inspection. Improvement in provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Policies and plans for all subjects are now in place, and implemented fully. Standards in ICT have improved to some extent, but are still below expectations for the oldest pupils, and the range of hardware to support teaching and learning in ICT is below the recommended levels. The school is now making good progress in improving standards and overall provision for its pupils.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Standards across the curriculum are **average**. This represents **good** achievement overall, because of the significant improvement in teaching and learning which are enabling standards to rise.

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Throughout the school, achievement in English is very good. In the 2003 tests for seven-year-olds, standards in reading were above average, and were average in writing, and in the tests for 11-year-olds English standards were well above average. Pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are reaching well above average standards in reading, and at least above average standards in writing. Standards in mathematics were below average in the 2003 tests, and pupils made poor progress during their time in Years 3 to 6. This unsatisfactory picture has been addressed fully. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6, with pupils in Year 6 attaining at least average standards in this subject. Standards in the 2003 Year 2 mathematics tests were average,

and are set to be average again this year. In 2003, standards in science were well below average, with poor progress in Years 3 to 6. The school has improved provision in science, and pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory, with standards being average throughout the school.

Children achieve well during the reception year and make good progress. Standards in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development are above expectations. Provision in ICT remains an issue for the school, but standards have improved and now meet expectations in Years 1 and 2. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school, but lack of sufficient hardware provision means that standards are below expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported, and achieve well. Pupils learning English as an additional language are also well supported and achieve as well as their peers, attaining standards in line with their abilities.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and pupils develop as mature, thoughtful individuals as a result. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is good. Pupils are punctual in the mornings and reluctant to leave school at the end of the day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, and often very good or excellent, and are significant contributing factors to the rising standards and pupils' very good attitudes. Teachers plan well together to ensure pupils of the same age in parallel classes receive similar experiences, and work hard to make learning relevant, interesting and fun. Relationships are very good, and pupils work hard to please their teachers and complete their work, demonstrating a good level of independence and motivation. The school provides a good curriculum, with very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils' personal, social and health education, including citizenship. There is a good range of activities outside lessons. Links with parents are very good. Links with other schools and with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent**, and her vision and determination have enabled the school to overcome the problems created by turbulence in staffing and past disruption. The leadership of other key staff is **very good**, and all who work in the school share an equal determination to see standards and provision improved. Governors provide **very good** support for the school and are closely involved in shaping its direction. Management is **good** overall. Many managers are very new to their roles, but they have a clear picture of what they need to do in order to improve their areas of responsibility.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are fully supportive of the school, and greatly appreciate the efforts of the headteacher and staff to provide a warm, caring and supportive ethos in which their children thrive. Pupils are proud of their school. They feel valued and well supported, and fully involved in making decisions about its development.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in ICT, especially in Years 3 to 6.
- Make full use of assessment data to monitor the progress of different groups of pupils and establish trends.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good** throughout the school. Standards are **above expectations** in the reception classes, and **average** by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good, and standards are above average in English throughout the school.
- Children in the reception classes receive a good start to their education and achieve well.
- The school is working hard to improve standards in ICT, but these are below expectations by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of effective support.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers.

Commentary

1. Standards, although still average overall, are rising. This represents good achievement for pupils because previous staffing problems impacted badly and caused standards to fall. Current good teaching and learning are reversing this picture, and enabling pupils to make good progress from relatively low starting points. Children join the school in reception with average levels of attainment, and receive a flying start to their education, achieving well and making good progress. Standards are above expectations in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development by the end of the reception year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.4 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.0 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.6 (15.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In the 2003 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards were above average in reading, and average in writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools, based on free school meals statistics, standards were below average in all three tested areas. Teacher assessment of standards in science was average against the national picture, but below average compared with similar schools. Standards in writing and mathematics have fluctuated over the past four years, reflecting the difficulties in staff recruitment the school has experienced. The hard work and dedication of current staff is enabling all pupils to achieve well, particularly in English, where achievement is very good. Standards for current Year 2 pupils are well above average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.7 (28.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.0 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.4 (27.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In the 2003 tests for 11-year-olds, standards in English were well above average compared with the national picture and above average compared with similar schools. Pupils had made sound progress since the tests taken in 2000 at the age of seven. In mathematics, however, standards were below the national average, well below similar schools and progress between Year 2 and Year 6 was very low. A similar picture was seen in science. The school met its targets in English, but not in mathematics. As at Key Stage 1, this was a reflection of the considerable disruption experienced by the school, as teachers came and went. Again, the efforts of current teachers to improve standards are being rewarded, and pupils are achieving very well in English and mathematics. Standards are at least above average in English and average in mathematics for current Year 6 pupils, and the school is well on course to meet, and possibly exceed its targets. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in science, and standards are on course to be average by the end of Year 6.
4. To improve standards in ICT was a key issue in the previous inspection report. Efforts to implement this have been hampered by staff turnover, but the current manager is doing sterling work in the short time she has been in the school. Her impact has led to good achievement in Years 1 and 2, so that standards meet expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in older classes, but standards remain below expectations by the end of Year 6.
5. The special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants make a vital contribution to implementing specific intervention programmes matched to pupils' stages of development which contribute effectively to pupils' progress. As a result of excellent additional support in literacy and effective teaching, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.
6. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well throughout the school as a result of effective support. Most of these pupils do not have any difficulty with English, and attain standards in line with their abilities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **good**. The school has **very good** procedures to monitor absence.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal values reflect excellent respect and understanding of the school and wider community.
- Trusting relationships with each other and the adults with whom they work increase pupils' desire to achieve well.
- Pupils with behavioural difficulties respond very well to school strategies.
- Pupils are eager to take on responsibilities and are interested in school life.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about school and arrive on or before time in the morning.

Commentary

7. The school creates a secure, caring and calm environment. It has maintained the strengths from the previous inspection and improved provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
8. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Good teaching engages pupils' interest in class and in small withdrawal sessions. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and seeks to make learning creative, so that even in lessons where a teacher has very high expectations, pupils comment on how much they enjoy learning. They concentrate and listen well, eager to 'have a

go' and contribute ideas. They value the support they receive from teachers and learning support assistants and make a very good effort to achieve as much as they can.

9. Very good relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, exist as a result of the caring ethos in the school. Consistently applied behaviour strategies such as 'Anger Rules' and the involvement of pupils in constructing class rules has helped pupils become responsible members of the school community. Behaviour at play times and in lessons is very good and in assemblies it is exemplary. Pupils with challenging behaviour have their own small group 'Circle Time²' to reflect and express how they manage their emotions. Most pupils know how to respond to school rules and understand the consequences of right or wrong decisions. No bullying was seen and pupils are confident that any incidents will be promptly and fairly dealt with. Pupils are very polite and display good manners at meal times, and are respectful to lunchtime supervisors and to visitors.
10. As part of its mission, the school creates a prayerful and reflective environment. Holy Mass and assemblies fully include all pupils, who are reverent and self assuredly take part. Pupils delight in explaining the traditions of other cultures. Following a Nepalese Assembly and in discussion about an African display pupils remark how much they enjoy finding out about different faiths, 'ways of speaking', music and dancing. Pupils from other countries are confident learners because they are so well integrated into school life.
11. Provision for developing pupils' personal qualities and for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils value themselves and know they are valued as individuals, since the school creates very good opportunities for pupils to express their thoughts and opinions, which are listened to and commented on. For example, during class discussions, pupils identify what makes them happy, what makes their class a happy place, or they reflect on the feelings and practical needs of neighbours or children who may be orphaned as a result of war. Pupils with emotional problems recognise that they feel better within themselves when they are kind to others.
12. Many pupils regularly attend weekly clubs and some, such as the gardening club, have a waiting list. Those on the school council volunteer to take on tasks that contribute to decisions, such as ways of preventing classes being disturbed during prayer time. The different cultures represented in the school community are warmly celebrated. Pupils from these explain, for example, how their instruments are made, and demonstrate dance and traditions as part of geography or during assembly. Visitors to the school such as visiting artists during art week, additional music tuition and a residential visit enhance pupils' cultural development very well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

13. Pupils' attendance is good. Very few arrive late because of the school's insistence on punctuality, and pupils' eagerness to attend. Pupils enter school happily and are reluctant to leave at the end of the day. Office staff telephone parents if no explanation has been received on pupils' first day of absence, and the education welfare officer is appropriately involved when necessary. There were no exclusions last year.

² During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good**, and the school has **good** assessment systems, which give pupils **good** support and advice. The curriculum is **good**, with **very good** provision for pupils with special educational needs. Links with parents are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of both teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment is **good** overall and **very good** in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The dedication and commitment of the whole teaching team to improve provision and standards is a significant strength of the school.
- Learning support assistants are used very well to support individuals and groups of pupils.
- The use of information from newly established, but good, assessment systems to plot and evaluate trends is at an early stage of development.

Commentary

14. Throughout the school, good and very good teaching predominates. This maintains the position found at the previous inspection, although all teaching staff are new since that time. It generates an enthusiasm for learning in almost all pupils and creates an atmosphere of concentration and hard work, which permeates the school. It is also leading to steadily improving standards across the curriculum, and improving achievement for all groups of pupils. This is a credit to the whole teaching team, with most of the teachers being new to the school in the last two years.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (7.5%)	9 (22.5%)	17 (42.5%)	9 (22.5%)	2 (5%)	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.

15. Teaching in the reception classes was consistently good or better. Almost three-quarters of lessons in Years 1 and 2 were good or better, and nearly half were very good. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was good or better in two-thirds of lessons and very good in over one-fifth. Excellent teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2, and Years 5 and 6. In these lessons, teachers' supreme command of and confidence in their subject matter, and excellent delivery of this, engaged pupils 'on the edge of their seats' in exciting learning and led to very high standards of achievement.
16. Teachers in parallel classes mostly plan together well to ensure pupils receive similar experiences. During lessons they work hard to engage pupils' attention, through talented introductions and effective questioning. Learning support assistants play an invaluable role during these introductory sessions, encouraging all pupils to attend and take an active part in discussion. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and all staff consistently insist on high standards of behaviour. This has a very positive impact on the pace of lessons and quality of learning as pupils work hard to please their teachers and complete their tasks. Work is mostly matched well to pupils' abilities, so that pupils achieve well in these lessons. In some subjects and a minority of lessons, this is not the case. In science, for example, the more able

pupils are not always sufficiently stretched. In the very small number of unsatisfactory lessons, lack of appropriate challenge led to a slower pace of learning.

17. Pupils are keen to learn. They concentrate well in almost all lessons, and show a good degree of independence and motivation. They co-operate well when required to do so and are always willing to help each other. Both teachers and learning support assistants are careful to ensure pupils learning English as an additional language are clear about what they need to do so that these pupils are fully included in lessons. Learning support assistants also work closely with pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that they achieve as well as they can, and behave appropriately. Learning support assistants are responsible for the delivery of an extensive range of support programmes for less able pupils and those with special educational needs and manage these very effectively. Pupils work hard in these sessions, which add a valuable dimension to the quality of learning, and make good progress. On a minority of occasions, withdrawal for this valuable support in English and mathematics affects pupils' access to lessons in other subjects. Teachers, however, work hard to ensure pupils returning to class are 'brought up to speed'.
18. With the invaluable support of the special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers assess pupils with special educational needs carefully and draw up detailed individual educational plans. Almost all lessons in literacy include ways of helping these pupils' reach their targets. Frequent consultation with learning support assistants takes place before planning further work. Teaching staff and learning support assistants have responded very well to the training provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator and are fully involved in matching work to the different academic and behavioural needs of pupils.
19. Assessment is good throughout the school, and very good in the reception classes. Here, teachers carefully assess children's attainment when they start school and continually evaluate and record achievement and progress. As a result, they have a clear and comprehensive understanding of each individual, and standards overall. In Years 1 to 6, teachers gain a good understanding of pupils' achievement and standards through assessment in lessons and a range of tests, including the optional standard assessment tasks in Years 3, 4 and 5. They use the information well to plan activities and groupings in their classes, identifying clearly both pupils with special educational needs and those who are more and most able in different subjects. Analysis of results in standard assessment tests, to track the progress of individual pupils and analyse trends and the performance of different groups of pupils only started this year, so that the picture over time is not yet clear. The school is just beginning to use ICT to assist in assessment, which will enable it to conduct analysis more efficiently.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** overall, and opportunities for enrichment are **good**. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In planning its curriculum, the school is very mindful of the academic and spiritual needs of its pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Planning for the use of ICT resources across the curriculum needs improvement.

Commentary

20. The curriculum meets requirements throughout the school, and provides a broad and relevant range of experiences and opportunities. The breadth of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. In response to a key issue, planned opportunities for pupils to appreciate the richness of the diverse range of cultures are now provided in several subjects, and better opportunities are offered in art, music and dance. The school caters effectively for the

interests, aptitudes and needs of all pupils. The programmes of work provide creative learning and stimulating practical opportunities for all children and pupils.

21. Pupils' personal and social development, based upon Christian principles, is incorporated very well throughout the curriculum. It is promoted very well in lessons in science and other subjects, by healthy choices in the dining room and during planned sessions for pupils to express thoughts on a wide range of issues. A good range of lunchtime and after school clubs, visitors such as the community police officer as part of drugs education, and visits, which include an educational stay in the Isle of Wight, develop pupils' educational, personal and social skills very well.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of Special Educational Need, is of a very high quality. Due regard is paid to the national Code of Practice. The school implements a wide range of specific programmes for these pupils in literacy and mathematics and to address difficulties identified by other agencies. The very high quality of collaboration between all concerned enables the school to meet the needs of these pupils very well. Knowledgeable learning support assistants are very well trained and deployed to provide national intervention programmes for all age groups. Pupils learning English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum.
23. All available space is used very effectively, and the caretaker and cleaning staff keep the whole school immaculately clean. New building work is taking place to extend and improve the quality of the accommodation. The hall, however, is too small for the needs of the school, such as at lunchtimes, and for parents to attend assemblies and school productions. Most teachers use high quality displays to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment, and flowers grown by the gardening club provide colour to the entrance of the school. Current ICT resources are insufficient to enable pupils to meet national expectations by the end of their time in school. Subject managers have not all identified fully the cross-curricular links available in the software provided by the local education authority.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' support, advice and guidance, based on monitoring, are **good**. Consultation with pupils is **good**. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The youngest children are given a very good introduction to the school.
- Very good relationships are evident throughout the school community.
- Arrangements for child protection and for pastoral care are very good.
- Support for pupils with special educational or other needs, and for those who speak English as an additional language, is very good.

Commentary

24. Care for the welfare and well being of all pupils is central to the school's philosophy, and the quality of provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. It takes great care that the current building works should not impinge on pupils' education, or safety, as they go into the playground or onto the field for their physical education lessons. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and security review is on-going. A small number of health and safety issues were shared with the school. Trained personnel administer first aid, and practice is good. The school is aware of the new legislation on child protection, and staff know the procedures to follow. Very good practice on child protection is fully embedded into the school's systems.
25. Induction into reception for the youngest children is very good. The majority of children come into school from their pre-schools to listen to story time one afternoon a week in the term prior to their arrival. As a result, they get to know their teachers and are confident about starting 'big'

school. Staff make visits to pre-schools in the summer term and home visits during the autumn term, which reinforce and extend the school's knowledge of the children very well at the beginning of their school careers.

26. Pupils find targets given for mathematics useful in helping them to improve their work. However, whilst all have been set targets for literacy, these are not equally or consistently shared with pupils. Setting and marking of homework varies, but pupils value the helpful comments made in lessons. Teachers know pupils and their developing maturity very well. As a result of very good relationships and mutual respect, all pupils have an adult to whom they can confide their worries, confident that these concerns will be dealt with swiftly and effectively. The new pupil profile tracking system for their spiritual, moral and social skills, is designed to make the present good informal monitoring of their personal development even more effective.
27. Pupils are pleased that the school consults them on various matters through questionnaires, and that they can give their views through the school council. They feel that the school listens to what they say. Very good support provided for pupils with special education or other needs and those who speak English as an additional language, ensures all are very well integrated with, and helped by their peers.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established **very good** links with all parents. **Good** links with the parish and **good** liaison with other schools within the Catholic cluster have been maintained. The school has **good** links with the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very satisfied with the education and support their children receive.
- The school has very good procedures to seek parents' views.
- Parents receive very good quality information.

Commentary

28. Parents value highly the Christian, family ethos which permeates the school, and the education their children receive. Following a period of significant instability, the very good position found at the previous inspection has been re-established. Parents are very happy with the close links they now enjoy with staff, 'a huge change for the better' was one view expressed at the parents' meeting. Attendance at consultation and other meetings is very good. The enthusiastic 'Friends Association' organise a variety of child-based, fun and fund-raising events, which families, parishioners and neighbours enjoy.
29. Parents are regularly consulted about their views on a variety of matters. Informative, regular newsletters include the Friends' activities as well as curriculum information. The prospectus, governors' annual report and their newsletter every half term plus other letters contain useful data. Parents are clear about the progress their children are making through their annual reports and information given to them throughout the year. Pupils' targets are shared fully with parents. The headteacher and all staff are happy to respond to any concerns, and friendly office staff will always help. Parents of children with special educational or other needs are invited to, and most attend, initial meetings regarding setting and reviewing their child's learning targets and progress. They are provided with very good guidance on how to help their child at home, for example, with structured homework related to these targets. Parents who speak English as an additional language are well supported and informed. News and other letters are regularly translated, so that parents with little English are kept fully informed of events.
30. Links with the parish, with other schools within the Catholic cluster and with the local sixth form college are strong. Pupils lead the parish in the Stations of the Cross, and they, teachers and parents celebrate Education Sunday at the church. Parishioners and parents attend the school Mass, and school news is published in the parish magazine. Curriculum liaison is good, and

English and mathematics transition units contribute to the good arrangements for pupils' transfer to their secondary schools. Good community links include those with the local rugby and tennis clubs, situated across the road from the school. Members of the local community speak to pupils about their recollections of wartime, and pupils participate in sports matches with other local schools and the Hampshire music festival.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent**. Governance is **very good**. Management is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent clarity of vision and commitment of the headteacher is rapidly raising the quality of education.
- The very good leadership provided by the deputy headteacher and other key staff is having a very positive impact on many areas of school life.
- Many managers are new to their roles and need time to develop these more effectively, for example, in managing 'phases' of the school.
- The very good work of the governing body supports, challenges and understands the work of the school very well.

Commentary

31. The school has taken great strides under the leadership of the headteacher in the two years she has been in post, particularly in the current academic year. Prior to this, there was a period of great instability when a number of headteachers took a caretaking role, teaching staff came and left in quick succession, and standards fell. She has comprehensively identified the main priorities for improvement, and her excellent vision has inspired the whole school community to work very hard towards achieving these. Governors, staff, parents and more recently pupils have been closely involved in the creation of this vision and deciding priorities. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive and useful tool to assist the school in its continual striving for improvement.
32. A highly effective senior management team has been formed this year, following a number of key appointments, including the energetic and enthusiastic deputy headteacher. They hold day-long meetings once a term which enable issues to be considered in depth. They are very effective at overseeing all aspects of the school's work and evaluating the success of changes that have been introduced. There is, however, a vacancy for a Key Stage 2 manager and the team needs expertise and representation from this part of the school.
33. Most subject managers are new, both to the school and to their roles, but the deputy headteacher gives them very effective support. The clear guidance managers are given, together with their own expertise, has already enabled them to make measurably good improvements to pupils' learning. They are given valuable time to spend away from their classes, which is used very well to look at pupils' work, pupils' assessments and the teaching and learning in their colleagues' classes. This enables them to identify what needs to be improved and how it is going to be brought about. For example, the science manager analysed pupils' science work and found that there was too little practical and investigative work. In response, her colleagues are now giving their pupils a much better balance, and standards are beginning to rise. In this way, English was a priority last year and this brought about a rise in standards. Mathematics is this year's priority and standards are rising there too.
34. Leadership and management of support for pupils with special educational needs are excellent. The special educational needs co-ordinators overview and involvement in construction and implementation of individual education plans, and her deployment of the team of learning support assistants aided by the leading support assistant are exemplary. Learning

support assistants are inspired by the leading support assistant and encouraged by the school to continue their professional development very well. The governor for special educational needs takes an active role in monitoring the progress of these pupils and reviewing the quality of the school's provision.

35. The headteacher has been careful to keep the pace of change at a steady and sustainable level. The new class structure introduced at the start of the academic year has parallel classes covering pairs of year groups of statutory school age. This organisation into 'phases' has allowed teachers to plan and work together efficiently in many ways. These teams have the capacity to get stronger, when a Key Stage 2 manager is appointed, so that the best ideas and practises shown by individual teachers are shared more consistently. Performance management is very well established, and includes non-teaching as well as teaching staff. Targets set are very closely linked to the school's priorities, and have had a significant impact on the improvements seen in such a short time.
36. The governing body is very effective. It is well organised and uses its extensive expertise very well. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This helps them when identifying priorities, planning ahead and monitoring the work of the school so that they are able to check that improvements are taking place.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	592,000	Balance from previous year	28,000
Total expenditure	514,000	Balance carried forward to the next	106,000
Expenditure per pupil	1,702		

37. The school's finances are managed very prudently. The large surplus, representing 18 per cent of the budget, was accrued during the last financial year largely due to unforeseen changes in staffing. The school is planning to spend the majority of it during the coming year, but recognises that expenditure must be set at a sustainable level. Much of it will be used to resource fully the new building and to improve the school's ICT equipment. Governors demonstrate a clear commitment to providing the very best education for all pupils and understand the importance of good financial management in achieving it.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. Provision is **good** overall in the reception classes, which make up the Foundation Stage. This maintains the position found at the previous inspection. Children's attainment on entry is average overall, and they make good progress and achieve well particularly in developing communication, language and literacy skills and in their mathematical development. Children learning English as an additional language are fully included and integrated, and take a full part in activities. None is at an early stage of learning English. The needs of children with special educational needs are understood very well, and they are sympathetically and very effectively supported and encouraged to achieve as well as they are able. Teaching and learning are good overall and often very good, as a result of all adults, teachers and learning support assistants, having a secure understanding of how these young children learn. Provision is led and managed very well. The manager oversees the work of her team closely and has built a highly effective team amongst the part-time teachers and very experienced learning support assistants. They meet weekly to plan activities, which create an interesting and stimulating curriculum, making good links between different areas of learning and covering these fully. The current focus, on *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, creates an exciting range of activities with an impressive range of teddies gracing both rooms. Assessment is very thorough, involving all adults. As a result, the needs of each individual are clearly and fully understood, and all adults work hard to include all children in developing a love of learning. Accommodation is satisfactory, improving the position found at the previous inspection, and both classrooms are bright and cheerful learning environments. The outside area is well equipped.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are very well prepared to start school.
- All adults share, and consistently reinforce, the same high expectations of behaviour and concentration.

Commentary

39. Children's personal, social and emotional development meets expectations for their age fully. As a result of very good arrangements to introduce children to their new environment, they come happily to school, ready and eager to learn. Children arrive promptly in the morning and settle quietly on the carpet, ready to start the day. They listen closely to their teachers and confidently answer questions and share their own views. Teaching and learning are good, as all adults treat children fairly and ensure that the high expectations of behaviour and hard work are consistently implemented. They model good attitudes and a sense of respect very well, and relationships throughout the two classes are very good as a result. Children know the class routines well, settle happily to their work and are quickly engrossed in their tasks, working with good concentration to complete these. This represents good achievement, because it means children are well prepared for more formal work when they move on to Year 1. They co-operate well as they work and play and are concerned for each other. Most dress and undress independently, although very occasionally shoes get on the wrong feet! In the dining room, children eat sensibly without help, chatting happily as they do so.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well and exceed expectations for their age in this area of learning.

Commentary

40. Standards in communication, language and literacy are on course to exceed expectations by the end of the year, and most children are already working in the first levels of the National Curriculum. Children achieve very well as a result of good and very good teaching which places a very high emphasis on developing skills in this important area of learning. This leads to a good, and often very good quality of learning. Children enjoy listening to stories, encouraged by talented delivery and effective questioning by adults. They join in enthusiastically and are very confident to share their opinions. All children handle books with care and enjoyment, and 80 per cent of children are well launched into reading. They read expressively, confidently recognise key words and have developed good skills in working out unfamiliar ones. This is because of almost daily sessions working on the structure of words, and the effective use of a computer program, which reinforces knowledge of letter sounds. Children enjoy writing. They hold pencils correctly and again 80 per cent are confidently writing using correct letter formation. Their books show good progress from the beginning of the year, from mark-making, tracing and copying to independent writing in the vast majority of cases.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and exceed expectations for their age in this area of learning.

Commentary

41. Standards in children's mathematical development are securely on course to exceed expectations by the end of the year, with 80 per cent of children already meeting or exceeding these. They are achieving well and making good progress in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. This is because of good teaching and learning, which consistently reinforces counting skills and mathematical language across all areas of learning, such as the positional vocabulary and relative sizes of bears during literacy sessions. Children count confidently to ten and beyond and understand the process of subtraction, with more able children using tens and units in their sums. In a very good problem solving session, two groups of children reached different, but equally valid solutions to sharing cakes between the three bears. Highly effective encouragement by the teacher enabled each group to think through the problem very carefully. One group divided the cakes equally, creating fractions. The other group gave more cakes to 'mummy' and 'daddy' bear, 'because they are bigger'!

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular sessions in the hall enable children to develop good co-ordination and control of their movement.
- Sessions in the outdoor area are not always sufficiently focused.

Commentary

42. Children's physical development meets expectations for their age, and their achievement is satisfactory. Provision is good because of the many opportunities children have to develop their co-ordination, both in movement and in handling equipment. Children are well co-ordinated as they move around the classroom, school and hall. Teaching and learning were good in the two hall sessions seen, enabling children to develop their skills in moving over apparatus and in time to music well. Both included good warm-up routines, clearly enjoyed by the children as a regular part of the sessions. Encouraged to feel their hearts beating, one teacher questioned children as to why we exercise; 'to make us thinner' was one reply! Children competently manage tools and equipment. They have regular access to outdoor play, and pedal trikes and use the climbing apparatus with consummate skill. However, because of the level of adult support available in the reception classes, there are not enough people available to ensure the activities in these sessions are always directed and controlled to maximise on the learning opportunities.
43. Insufficient activities in **knowledge and understanding of the world** and **creative development** were seen to judge standards overall, but planning shows these areas of learning to be covered in the same interesting and relevant way as others. In a good session on making, tasting and evaluating porridge, for example, the learning support assistant questioned children effectively and ensured all took an equal part in the activity. Children seen using computers were confident and competent at manipulating the program. Children played with serious concentration in the 'Bears' Cottage' in each classroom, and the walls of each room are enlivened by extensive displays of their artistic efforts. The observational paintings of bears in one classroom are very impressive indeed in their attention to detail.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good and standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils do not always know how to improve their work.
- The subject is well led and pupils' progress is carefully monitored.
- Very good literacy intervention programmes significantly improve the quality of pupils' learning.

Commentary

44. Although standards in English have fluctuated over the past four years, particularly in the national tests for seven-year-olds, overall the position found at the last inspection has been maintained. Inspection findings show current pupils are achieving very well, following a period of instability, and standards are on course to be above average by the end of the year. Because their next steps in learning are updated regularly, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Pupils learning English as an additional language gain in their confidence to speak and also achieve very well.
45. Opportunities for pupils to take part in formal discussions have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' speaking and listening skills and their ability to make links between the spoken and written word on topics that arouse their interest are good. Effective teaching in a Year 1 and 2 class involved pupils in dramatising a story and encouraged pupils very well to empathise with the characters feelings and how they might speak. Pupils' ideas are valued, and following discussions about stories or more formal matters, either as a class or with their

'response partner' they are given time and encouragement to reflect upon what they will write. In two excellent lessons observed (one in Years 1 and 2 and one in Years 5 and 6), pupils were 'bouncing' on the floor or their seats in their eagerness to contribute.

46. Standards in reading are well above average throughout the school. Regular, well-structured reading sessions in all classes ensure reading skills are developed progressively, and pupils read with expression and enjoyment. By the time they leave the school, pupils have developed a love of reading and of poetry, and Year 6 pupils clearly express preferences for authors and recall poems. They identify specific features in text that is typical of a form, such as a Myth, and make thoughtful comparisons between stories. They use the library with a high level of independence, clearly explaining how they use the classification system when undertaking research, and the system for scanning books to monitor borrowing and returning books.
47. Writing standards are above average. More able pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, recognise that they use a new paragraph for a new event. Pupils are taught the skills to write imaginatively well and, by Year 6, include very imaginative figurative language in a wide range of forms of writing. Evocative examples include 'the raging storm hits the ship like a thousand knives' and in a poem 'the sea is a never ending desert of sea and light'. The use of ICT for writing impacts well on pupils' newspaper report writing and research. Pupils are encouraged to identify spelling conventions but there is a lack of the use of computers to accelerate spelling abilities. Pupils with special needs who need daily support with spelling use a computer located in the support room.
48. The school makes effective use of national strategies to support pupils' progress in literacy. Teaching and learning are good overall, and often very good or excellent. Teachers make very effective use of assessment to match tasks to pupils of different abilities in most year groups. This, however, would be even more effective if the targets were shared more consistently with pupils. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs benefit greatly from structured intervention in small withdrawal groups and from in-class support by very well deployed learning support assistants. This makes a very positive contribution to their quality of learning. Most marking of pupils' work is very good since it is directly related to pupils' personal needs, and indicates the next steps for improvement. In a few instances this is less evaluative, so that pupils do not have such a clear idea of how to improve.
49. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The managers are knowledgeable and have a clear vision of how to raise standards even higher. Although current leadership is recent, very effective use is being made of very good initiatives that existed in the school from last year to maintain and increase pupils' achievement this year. The managers are aware of the need to improve consistency in the use of procedures for letting pupils know the 'next steps' in their learning and to increase the use of ICT to enhance the subject.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Strategies for developing pupils' literacy skills through other subjects are very good. In science, music and geography lessons, pupils use specific subject vocabulary and make good progress in their ability to structure reports. Pupils' experience of English is enriched by good use of displays such as the 'African display' in geography and of drama, for example, in history. Pupils read text aloud expressively in choral speaking as part of a history lesson about the Life of Edward Jenner. Pupils who report school events make effective use of computers to organise their writing and pupils regularly undertake research from books and websites.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The focus on mental strategies and manipulation of numbers has improved pupils' confidence and learning very well.
- The introduction of setting in Years 5 and 6 has made a positive contribution to rising standards.
- Some inconsistency in teaching between classes results in uneven achievement.
- The very good leadership of the mathematics manager has begun to improve pupils' learning.

Commentary

51. Overall, standards in mathematics are average at both key stages. Although they are lower now than at the time of the previous inspection, they are rising. This is because the school has shown a strong commitment towards raising standards in mathematics this year. It has introduced some very effective strategies, especially the focus on improving pupils' number skills. In Key Stage 1, standards were average in last year's national tests, and evidence suggests that they will again be average this year. This represents satisfactory achievement. In Key Stage 2, standards have risen from below average last year and are likely to be at least average by the end of Year 6 this year. This represents very good achievement for these pupils, because standards were well below average when they took their Year 2 national tests in 2000. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well. Those with English as an additional language are enabled to take full part in lessons and also achieve well.
52. Both teaching and learning are now good overall throughout the school, and this is contributing positively to the rising standards and improved achievement. Teachers have developed very good ideas for the mental warm-up activity at the start of each lesson, and these sessions are quick and lively. Pupils practise learning important number facts and are taught how to think of good strategies for working things out. Their mathematical vocabulary is practised and extended well. Good work was also seen in other areas of mathematics, such as time, graphs and shapes.
53. Teachers are working very well in their teams to raise standards. In Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 and 4, teachers meet regularly to discuss their lesson plans, to share good ideas and to reflect upon information gathered from assessments of their pupils' progress. Since September, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been grouped into ability sets. This has enabled teachers to match the level of work to the pupils' stages of development very closely. It has been particularly effective in overcoming some of the gaps that existed in pupils' knowledge.
54. In the best lessons, teachers expect a lot of their pupils. The pace is quick and pupils are challenged very well. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher introduced the word 'multiple' in such a way that the pupils were desperate to use and understand it. Some pupils then discussed prime numbers, a very advanced concept for their age. Lessons were less successful when opportunities were missed for key skills and vocabulary to be emphasised, or when pupils were given insufficient opportunity to develop their knowledge and thinking. When teachers were clear about the strategies pupils should develop and had planned activities, which practised skills in an interesting way, pupils learned more in their lessons.
55. In all lessons, learning support assistants are used very effectively to help pupils, such as those with special educational needs, to make good progress. Sometimes this involves using the computer, or other resources such as individual whiteboards, to stimulate their learning. Homework is used well as an additional opportunity for pupils to develop their learning, but less so in a Year 5 set, which disadvantages these pupils.
56. Leadership is very good and the subject is managed well. The recently appointed subject manager has already had a good impact on pupils' learning. A system of frequent, short

assessments of pupils' number skills has been introduced, which has enabled teachers to gauge progress and to adjust their teaching accordingly. 'Target cards' show each pupil what they need to do to improve. On two occasions, half of a school day has been dedicated to exciting problem-solving activities.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Pupils have a satisfactory range of opportunities to use their mathematical skills in different subjects. For example, in science they use thermometers, rulers, stopwatches and weights to make measurements in their investigations. Graphs, charts and tables are frequently used to record information. In a Year 1 and 2 science lesson, pupils measured how far cars rolled down a slope and plotted the results on a graph with the vertical axis in intervals of ten centimetres. In geography pupils learn about maps and scales and how to use six figure grid references. Year 5 and 6 pupils plotted the heights of mountain peaks on a graph to compare their relative height. In history pupils study the dates of significant events that are set out on time lines and subtract to find out how long ago they occurred. These good examples need to be extended so that pupils have more frequent opportunities to use and develop their mathematical skills in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the recently appointed science manager has begun to improve provision well.
- Work is not always well matched to the differing needs of pupils.

Commentary

58. Standards in science are average throughout the school. Teacher assessments in Year 2 showed they were average last year and will remain so this year. In Year 6, standards were well below average in last year's national tests, but inspection evidence indicates that they will rise to be average this year. Achievement is satisfactory at both key stages, but more able pupils are capable of achieving more. Those with special educational needs are given good support to enable them to understand scientific language and concepts so that they achieve well. Those for whom English is an additional language are fully integrated into all lessons and make satisfactory progress.
59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have planned an appropriate curriculum based on a two-year programme of topics so that pupils experience life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes appropriately. Lessons are pitched at an appropriate level so that the majority of pupils are able to reach average standards. In many lessons, however, all pupils are given the same tasks. Whilst less able pupils are well supported to enable them to achieve well, more able pupils are not provided with challenge matched sufficiently to their abilities, and do not achieve as well as they could.
60. There is an improving balance between factual work and investigations, so that pupils have the opportunity to develop their scientific enquiry skills in a practical way. For example, in Years 1 and 2 when considering how far elastic bands would stretch, pupils were required to make a prediction before measuring began to test it out. Pupils are learning how to carry out a fair test and to record their method and results in a structured way. In a very good lesson seen in a Year 5 and 6 class, pupils used sieves, magnets, filtration and evaporation to sort a mixed bag of materials. This very well structured lesson extended pupils' existing knowledge in a practical way. Learning was consolidated by writing up the experiment afterwards.

61. Leadership and management in science are both satisfactory. The science manager has only had this responsibility since November. Already, there has been an improvement in teaching and learning because an analysis of pupils' work throughout both key stages showed that there was too much factual work and not enough investigative work. As a result, pupils in most classes are now given more frequent opportunities to carry out investigations so that standards are rising. This needs to be extended to all classes.
62. Standards are lower now than at the time of the previous inspection when they were reported as being above national averages, because of the disruption caused by staffing problems. The previous report indicated that more able pupils were effectively challenged and that pupils' skills in investigative and experimental work were particularly good. The school is well aware of this decline in standards and has begun to identify and implement the necessary steps in order for them to rise in the immediate future.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**, but is improving at a very rapid rate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below expectations by the end of Year 6, and current hardware provision does not meet the recommended level.
- The very good leadership of the manager is a significant asset for the school.
- Pupils enjoy ICT and have a good appreciation of its value to their learning.

Commentary

63. The school has made some progress in addressing the key issue in the previous inspection report relating to ICT, and now has a full curriculum in place. Improvement, however, only really started with the appointment of the current manager in September 2003. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory overall, and good in Years 1 and 2. Standards by the end of Year 2 now meet expectations, but remain below expectations by the end of Year 6. This is in part because the school does not have sufficient computer systems in place to enable pupils to have regular access to ICT, and also because the training provided for teachers under the New Opportunities Funding has been lost to the school, as staff have moved on. However, current staff are determined to improve standards, under the expert guidance and enthusiastic leadership of the manager.
64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and very good by the manager working in Year 1 and 2, whose enthusiasm, knowledge and expertise inspire pupils and colleagues alike. Pupils in Year 6 confidently report how much better the opportunities to use ICT are, now that she has come to the school. In a very good lesson given by the manager, pupils in a mixed Year 1/2 class were on the edges of their seats as they followed the story of Edward Jenner on the interactive whiteboard, and competently took turns to use the program functions to move through the story. Teachers make the best possible use of the equipment available, for example, by sharing the rooms where interactive whiteboards are available. All pupils in Years 3 and 4 gathered together to learn the next steps in sending emails with attachments. The teachers worked effectively as a team and provided clear, detailed explanations, although the size of the group meant that few pupils were able to take a practical part in the lesson. Boys and girls work hard and have competent skills when they have the opportunity to use computers, and talk knowledgeably about how useful it is to their work. Older pupils, for example, research information for their history topic on the web, and those with access to computers at home make extensive use of these when doing their homework. However, pupils' skills in handling data are less well developed. Pupils with special educational needs use computers regularly to reinforce core literacy skills. Those in Year 6 talked enthusiastically of their experience of using computers during their residential visit to the Isle of Wight, as they demonstrated their 'Power Point' presentations.

65. The manager provides very good leadership and is managing provision well under the current difficult circumstances. With invaluable help from the local education authority adviser, she has made a thorough audit of the current position and has a detailed and comprehensive action plan to develop the subject, including the introduction of an efficient assessment system. Her expertise is much appreciated by her colleagues as she provides demonstration lessons, support and advice. All classes have computers, and a small suite of four systems is in continual use, but much of the hardware is out of date, and the temporary classrooms do not have Internet connection. The extensive building programme, which will be completed in the summer, incorporates a computer suite. Sufficient funds have been reserved to equip this fully and also provide additional stand-alone systems, laptops and more interactive whiteboards. Staff and pupils alike are looking forward with eager anticipation to these improved facilities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Teachers work hard to make the use of ICT relevant, but cross-curricular links are not fully established. These are best in the use of ICT to publish work, for example, in English and history, and in the use of ICT for research. Data handling is used appropriately to present results of science experiments in Years 1 and 2, but work on spreadsheets in Years 5 and 6 was not linked to any topic being studied.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was not inspected because the school has Voluntary Aided status.

67. Work in **geography** and **history** was sampled, so it is not possible to judge provision securely. In both subjects, however, planning shows that requirements are met fully.
68. No **geography** lessons were seen but pupils' work shows that their knowledge of places is developed well. The local area is studied well via work on journeys to school in Years 1 and 2 and using local street maps in Years 3 to 6. Visits to local places, such as the Alice Holt Woodland Park, contribute well to pupils' understanding. Pupils develop a good awareness of environmental issues such as litter and pollution. Particularly good use is being made of the travels of a former teacher. Her journey around South America is displayed near the main hall with her photo, email messages and postcards linked to a large, clear map of the world. Overall, an appropriate amount of curriculum time is given to geography and pupils have a positive attitude towards it.
69. A very good **history** lesson was seen in which Year 1 and 2 pupils learnt about the bravery of Grace Darling. Background sound effects and the teacher's excellent story telling skills sparked their imaginations so that in the second part of the lesson, the pupils were so keen to write the story from their own perspective that the quality of their work was very good. Their understanding was enhanced by two costumes borrowed from a museum service and the school would benefit from building up its own collection of historical artefacts. History is very popular among pupils and their books show that they have learnt from a wide range of sources including reference books, computer programmes, artefacts brought in from home and videos. The curriculum is well planned so that pupils study famous people and periods in history. They also compare and contrast the present with the past to learn how things have changed. Overall, the work seen was good, but there was some inequality within the Year 5 and 6 classes.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. Art and design, design and technology, and music were not a focus of the inspection, and there is insufficient evidence to judge provision, standards and achievement or teaching. Planning, however, shows the curriculum requirements are met in these three subjects.
71. In **art and design**, displays around the school show pupils have appropriate opportunities to work with a range of media in two- and three-dimensions, and all pupils of the same age in different classes have broadly similar experiences. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils are designing and making plates in connection with their project on ancient Greece. Finished plates are well executed and colourful. Pupils' sketchbooks, however, are not used efficiently. Work in those seen was seldom dated and not evaluated, missing a valuable assessment opportunity.
72. In **design and technology**, the oldest pupils have designed and made moving toys. Design briefs are carefully constructed, and the finished toys look interesting, although the display did not include evidence of evaluation. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 enthusiastically designed fruit salads, drawing their designs and then carefully making these from the extensive range of fruit provided. They enjoyed the 'eating' part best of all!
73. In **music**, positive indicators that standards are at least meeting expectations were noted in two lessons and in assemblies, and in peripatetic instrumental teaching. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils made good gains in their understanding of how lyrics can convey mood. Groups of pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class successfully composed layers of sound using a wide range of untuned instruments. When exploring the sounds, pupils showed a good awareness and recognition of different rhythms and volume, and of the combined effect of the different instruments. Available instruments represent a range of different cultures, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. During the celebration of Ascension Day the school orchestra played to a high standard on flutes, clarinets and recorders, accompanied by the piano played by a parent. Pupils sang very well in tune, maintaining a part, which was effective and poignant.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan for a good balance of gymnastics, dance and games.
- Lessons contribute well to pupils' fitness and stamina.

Commentary

74. The school ensures pupils experience a good programme of gymnastics, dance and games every term. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and standards meet expectations throughout Years 1 to 6. This maintains the position found at the previous inspection. Swimming is organised for all pupils in Year 5 and the vast majority of pupils moving on to secondary school are able to swim the required 25 metres.
75. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and often good. Teachers make good use of equipment and resources, with the pupils' health and safety ensured through good preparation, timely reminders of rules and good behaviour management. Pupils and teachers wear appropriate clothing and good use is made of the limited time available by expecting pupils to change quickly. In the best lessons, pupils make good progress because they are given opportunities to observe and suggest improvements to each other's work in a way that still leaves sufficient time to practise and improve their own performance. In all lessons seen, the warm up was vigorous and extended pupils' fitness, although the stretching of muscles was

not taught consistently well. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to work in pairs or small groups to develop their skills of teamwork and co-operation, as well as opportunities to compete, sometimes against their own personal best and at other times against each other.

76. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject manager has begun to impact on standards by helping her colleagues to plan an appropriate programme and has identified some good new resources.
77. Pupils benefit from the extra-curricular sports clubs organised by the school. These include football and netball in the winter, athletics and cricket in the summer, and tennis is organised at the nearby club in liaison with the school. Sporting links with other schools are good, and there are many opportunities for pupils to represent the school in sporting competitions.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision very effectively permeates the whole school curriculum, and is promoted very well in all subjects.
- The planned programme develops pupils understanding, maturity and self-confidence very well.

Commentary

78. The school's extremely caring environment supports pupils' personal development very well. Opportunities are provided in almost all lessons for pupils to develop maturity and build their self-confidence. Strategies, such as 'hot-seating', full involvement of pupils in discussions and the high value placed on their views and ideas result in most pupils being highly articulate and confident to express an opinion. Moments for pupils to discuss and express their feelings and how to deal with them are also planned carefully as part of class or group sessions. Individual talents are frequently celebrated and, for example, several pupils confidently demonstrated their dancing and musical skills during an assembly.
79. Teaching and learning are always at least good and frequently very good. Good, sensitive teaching helps pupils' understanding of relationships and what is acceptable behaviour for children and for adults. Teachers provide clear and accurate information in class discussions to help pupils understand the rights and relationships of children and adults. High emphasis is placed upon leading a healthy lifestyle and sensible decision-making. Sex education and relationships are taught well as a planned programme of development, promoting spiritual, moral, cultural, and physical development. Drugs education assists pupils understanding of how to resist peer pressure and make the right decisions. Pupils learn about democracy effectively, and voted for the pupils who made convincing speeches about why they should be elected as members of the school council. Councillors collaborate well to action decisions made at their meetings.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	3
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	3
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
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).