

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN'S INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116103

Headteacher: Mrs M Good

Reporting inspector: Mr G Bassett
21500

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th July 2003

Inspection number: 259863

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and nursery school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Castle way
Southampton
Hampshire

Postcode: SO14 2AU

Telephone number: 023 8022 6545

Fax number: n/a

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Stephenson

Date of previous inspection: June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21500	Mr G Bassett	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art and Design Design and technology Music Information and communication technology Equal opportunities Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school managed? What should the school do to improve?
9999	Mrs R Orme	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
32136	Mrs L Brookes	Team inspector	Science Geography History Foundation Stage English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21992	Mrs J Newing	Team inspector	English Religious education Physical education Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John's Infant and Nursery school is situated by the ferry terminal to the Isle of Wight in Southampton. It serves the surrounding inner city area which is mainly rented accommodation, although some children travel from further distances across the city. The school building is based on an older building with extensions that were built in the 1970s. At present there are 60 pupils on roll in the reception to Year 2 age range and 39 children attend the nursery part time. However, there has been a significant drop in numbers since January 2003 because of the parents' needs to secure places in local primary schools during the time their children are in the school and especially in Year 2. About a third of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school's assessments show that attainment on entry to the nursery class is generally well below the expected level for children of this age. The number of pupils with special educational needs in the school is 23 and one pupil has a statement. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is 23 and there are seven home languages spoken by the pupils. The standard of English on entry to the school of these pupils is generally very low.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is an extremely effective infant school. The quality of the leadership and management of the headteacher is outstanding and provides the very good stimulus for the dedicated staff to raise standards and to provide a purposeful environment in which all the children learn effectively. The standards throughout the school have been improved as a result of the good quality of teaching. The pupils' standards are now broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing and above in mathematics and science. When compared with schools of a similar type the standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. From the time the children enter the school they achieve well and make good progress. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of leadership and management of the headteacher is outstanding.
- The governing body makes a major contribution to the leadership of the school.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall and often very good.
- The pupils' standards in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, history, geography, ICT and music are above average and their progress is good.
- The pupils' attitudes towards the school are very good and their behaviour is good.
- The provision made for the pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those with English as an additional language (EAL) is very good.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and for their cultural development it is excellent.
- The school's procedures for recording and making use of the ongoing assessments are excellent.

What could be improved

- There are no significant improvements that the school needs to undertake.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1998. It has made very good progress in dealing with the key issues from the last inspection. The pupils' standards in English and religious education (RE), which were below the expected levels, have improved dramatically and are now average. The standards in history and information and communication technology (ICT), which were also below average, have also

improved significantly and are now above average. The higher-attaining pupils now exceed the expected levels for their age in mathematics. The behaviour of the pupils is now good and the staff manage the pupils very well, showing care and support for those who have personal difficulties. The teaching has improved significantly and is now good overall and often very good. Other improvements are evident in the standards of the pupils' work in all other subjects. The school is now very well placed to continue the substantial improvements that have been made since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2, based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
reading	E	C	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
writing	E*	C	E	D	
mathematics	E	E	E*	E	

Over the past few years, the trend in the pupils' standards has shown the school's performance at the end of Year 2 to be below average overall. In the national tests in 2002 the performance was well below average in all three areas. In mathematics the very low performance placed the school in the lowest 5 per cent of all schools nationally. When comparisons are made with similar schools then the performance is below average in reading and writing and well below the average in mathematics.

However, the picture is changing and the school has improved the pupils' standards substantially since the appointment of the present headteacher. There is no significant difference in the standards reached by the boys and girls. The results of the most recent national tests in 2003 and the work seen in the pupils' books show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level 2 or above in reading, writing and mathematics has increased dramatically this year. From the results of these tests it is clear that the performance is above the national average for last year in mathematics, and broadly in line in reading and writing. The proportion exceeding the expected level 2 has also improved significantly in all three subjects. When comparisons are made with similar schools then it is evident that the unconfirmed results for 2003 show that the pupils' standards are now well above the average in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils' standards in religious education are broadly in line with the expected levels in the locally agreed syllabus and in physical education the standards are broadly average. In all the other subjects the standards are above the expected levels by the end of Year 2. This is a marked improvement and all the pupils have made at least good progress. The pupils with SEN and EAL make very good progress from the time they enter the school. The school has difficulty fulfilling target figures for a whole year group as many pupils leave before the national tests are taken, to take up places in local primary schools.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils enjoy school and join in everything with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour in the classrooms and around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	The relationships at all levels are very good. The pupils' personal development is good.
Attendance	The pupils' attendance is very low and well below the national average even though the school does all it can to reduce the high level of absences caused mainly by a few families.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is rarely less than good. There were two lessons where the teaching was excellent and a high proportion where the teaching was very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Of the 34 lessons observed, half of them were good and nearly half were very good or better. There were no instances of unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching literacy and numeracy is very good and the teachers make very good links between other subjects to improve the pupils' use of English and mathematics. The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 was good; this is a substantial improvement since the last inspection, when some lessons were unsatisfactory. The improvements in teaching throughout the school have been brought by better planning strategies and the excellent process of recording ongoing assessments to show what each pupil has achieved in each subject. The teachers are fully aware of the different ways in which the pupils learn, and this has a marked impact upon all the pupils' progress and achievements. The provision made for the pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language is very good. Consequently their progress is very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is well planned and is broad, balanced and relevant to all the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for the pupils with English as an additional language is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	The provision made for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and for their cultural development it is excellent.

development	
Aspect	Comment
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school looks after the pupils extremely well.

The school has an effective partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and the management of the headteacher are outstanding. She provides an excellent educational direction to the work of the school. All the staff members make a very good contribution to the developments throughout the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body makes a major contribution to the leadership of the school. It is extremely knowledgeable about its responsibilities and fulfils all its statutory duties very effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The governing body holds the school accountable for what it does. The headteacher and staff monitor effectively the developments the school makes and evaluates how best it can improve further.
The strategic use of resources	The resources made available to the school are used prudently with purposeful savings carried forward for future developments. It has very good procedures in place to ensure that it gets best value for money. The accommodation is very good and spacious. It is clean and well maintained and decorated. The staffing level is good and all support staff give the pupils and the teachers very good support.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school. • The children make good progress. • The pupils' behaviour is good. • The teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team supports the wide range of parents' positive views. They also judge that the school provides a very good range of out of lesson activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The pupils enter the school with standards that are well below average in many cases. Over the past few years the pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 have been well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the national tests in 2002 the results were well below average in all three areas and in mathematics the very low performance placed the school in the lowest 5 per cent of all schools nationally. When comparisons are made with similar schools, the performance in 2002 was below average in reading and writing and well below the average in mathematics.
2. However, the picture is changing and the school has improved the pupils' standards substantially since the appointment of the present headteacher. There is a very good direction for the work of the school and this has had a remarkable impact upon raising standards.
3. The results of the most recent national tests in 2003 show a substantial improvement. There is no significant difference in the standards reached by the boys and girls. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level 2 or above in reading, writing and mathematics has increased dramatically this year. Although direct comparisons cannot yet be made with the national average for 2003 it is clear that the school's performance is above the national average for 2002 in mathematics and broadly in line with the national average in reading and writing. The proportion exceeding the expected level 2 has also improved significantly in these three areas and is now above last year's national average in writing and mathematics and close to the average in reading. The unconfirmed comparisons indicate that the pupils' standards in 2003 are well above the average achieved by similar schools in 2002 in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a marked improvement and the pupils make at least good progress. Those with special educational needs SEN and English as an additional language EAL, make very good progress from the time they enter the school. This is due to the care and very good support they receive from the teachers and the teaching assistants in each class.
4. The trend over the past years shows the standards have been well below average but the school has now broken out of that category and standards are rising effectively.
5. It is clear from the inspection evidence that these results are reflected in the pupils' current work. The pupils are reaching levels in reading, writing that are broadly in line with the expected levels for pupils at the end of Year 2. This is a good achievement for the pupils who entered school well below average in most instances. In mathematics and science the pupils reach standards that are above the expected levels for pupils at the end of Year 2. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection with all the pupils at the end of Year 2 now making significant progress.
6. In religious education (RE) and physical education the standards of the pupils' work is broadly in line with the expected levels at the end of Year 2. In all other subjects the standards are above the expected levels. These current standards are a marked improvement in all subjects since the last inspection. The very best improvements are seen in history, information and communication technology (ICT), and religious education. The quality of the pupils' work in these subjects at the time of the last inspection was below the expected levels by the end of Year 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils enjoy school and join in everything with enthusiasm. They talk with delight about the different visits they have made and about the wide range of visitors who come into school. Some pupils in Year 2 were still thrilled by their visit to the zoo to observe and sketch animals and to a local supermarket to learn how to scan goods at a checkout. They are highly motivated and work hard in lessons. They are keen to take part in extra-curricular activities, and they clearly enjoy being part of the school community. Most parents report that their children like school.
8. The pupils' behaviour is good overall and often very good. They behave well in lessons and around the school, even when they are not directly supervised. They behave well in break and lunch-times, and they speak of the 'dinner ladies' with affection. The pupils are courteous and offer to look after visitors. There was no evidence of graffiti or damage to the school's property. Indeed the pupils delight in the different displays round the school, such as the imaginative English garden created in the entrance hall. Almost all parents consider that behaviour is good.
9. The pupils' personal development is very good. They are encouraged to be independent from the nursery upwards and most are mature for their age. They enjoy taking responsibility. Some pupils in Year 2 talked with pride about their achievement, as elected members of the School Council, in persuading the school to provide small bicycles for use at play-times. The relationships are very good at all levels. The pupils talk to visitors and staff with confidence. They perform in public, and speak in assemblies or in front of the class with equal confidence. Nearly all the parents report that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. They have a good understanding of the effect of their behaviour on other people. They have great respect for all cultures. One girl in Year 2 described the different Indian clothes and artefacts displayed in the entrance hall and then went on to explain the difference between Hindi and English bridal costumes.
10. The levels of attendance are poor. They have improved slightly in response to the school's strenuous efforts to improve attendance but they remain well below the national average. A few families cause most of the absences, but few pupils have consistently high levels of attendance. Poor punctuality also remains a problem, as many children are not brought in good time for the beginning of morning school. The school has excellent registration procedures but even so the amount of unauthorised absence is well above the national average. **(This is an area for further consideration.)**

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is rarely less than good. There were two lessons where the teaching was excellent and a high proportion where the teaching was very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when, although the quality of teaching was good overall, one in ten lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory. Most of these unsatisfactory lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. The picture has now changed and the quality of teaching is much better.
12. Of the 34 lessons observed during the present inspection, half of them were good and nearly half very good or better. There were no instances of unsatisfactory teaching. The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 was very good and this is a substantial improvement since the last inspection. The improvements to the quality of the teaching throughout the school have been made because the teachers' planning is more

detailed and structured and the process of recording ongoing assessments to show what each pupil has achieved in each subject, is now excellent.

13. From the moment the children enter the school in the nursery they are immersed in an atmosphere and culture of high expectations. They experience love and care and the staff foster a feeling of 'I can do' for each one. The teachers throughout the school are knowledgeable about the curriculum. The tasks they set are extremely well planned so that every pupil can make good progress. The classrooms are very well organised and this establishes routines, which makes the pupils feel secure. Consequently, they settle quickly into purposeful work each day. On occasions some pupils enter school showing anxiety and the staff gently coax and encourage these pupils to sustain concentration and to show a fresh interest in the work. This is a most successful strategy and the pupils develop very good relationships with all the adults in the school.
14. The teaching is most effective when the teachers are skilled at planning tasks that identify how the pupils learn best. They all take good account of the ways that individual children learn, whether it be by looking, listening or taking part in practical activities. In the very best lessons the teachers successfully link the pupils' learning of literacy and numeracy skills with other subjects they teach. All the teachers have high expectations and they raise the quality of the pupils' work through encouraging them to analyse how well they have learned what has been taught. For example, one teacher encourages the pupils to use the thumbs up or down sign to show their self-assessments. This works very well and gives the teacher an immediate feedback which sometimes leads to the topic or skills being taught again to ensure full understanding. The teachers and all staff take great care to ensure that they involve all the pupils in everything that is done.
15. The development of the assessment procedures has gained pace since the last inspection and the teachers now carry out excellent and very reliable assessments to ascertain what skills, knowledge and understanding each pupil has acquired. These assessments are recorded for every subject and this development is providing excellent indicators that show which pupils need extra help or need extension tasks. The teachers respond effectively to these needs.
16. The quality of teaching for the pupils with SEN and EAL is very good. The tasks are very well matched to the pupils' interests and build successfully upon what they have learned before. This raises the pupils' self esteem and improves the quality of their work. The teaching assistants also give these pupils very good support. They assist the teachers very well and where possible record what some pupils have achieved during a lesson.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

17. The quality and range of the curriculum is good throughout the school. This is similar to the findings at the last inspection. Its main strengths lie in the extra-curricular opportunities and in spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. The curriculum is sufficiently broad to include a balance of academic and creative opportunities that are relevant to the pupils' needs. The teachers use the width of the curriculum well to challenge the more able pupils. This is evident in the high quality use of assessment and tracking in planning the curriculum. The displays around the school reflect the wide variety of activities in the curriculum and this enables the pupils to learn from one another.

18. There is considerable enrichment of the curriculum through visits and visitors to the school, through trips and through extra-curricular clubs and other activities. Themed days, such as a recent India Day, further help to broaden pupils' educational experience as they have the chance to work together, often with pupils of different ages. Extra-curricular provision is very good. There is a wider range of clubs than is often seen in other schools, and the range is particularly wide when account is taken of the fact that the school is an infant school and smaller than the average. The majority of clubs cater for those in Years 1 and 2 because certain skills are necessary before the pupils can benefit. Good examples of this are the football and tennis clubs where the children's co-ordination needs to be developed to the extent where they are capable of controlling a ball. All the clubs are well supported and this is equally true of the tennis club where parents pay for the sessions led by a professional coach.
19. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the provision overall was good. These aspects of personal development are considered in planning across the curriculum.
20. The provision for the pupils' spiritual awareness is very good. Moments of reflection are used very effectively in assemblies and when the pupils are listening to music. This fosters their interests and thoughtfulness. For example, the nursery pupils were observed thinking about how they could help another person during their circle time. An assembly for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 had labels displayed to remind the pupils of themes and the appropriate attitude and atmosphere, such as 'Assembly times are for thinking'. The scrutiny of photographs and lesson observations showed many expressions of joy and wonder, such as squeezing their own orange juice in the nursery and welcoming a 'Victorian' visitor in Year 1. Opportunities for raising the pupils' awareness and emotional feelings are promoted through involvement in a variety of activities in dance, drama and work in literacy, geography, history, music and science. However, these instances often occur instinctively rather than being specifically planned for. The pupils' written work shows a thoughtful appreciation of their lives and the contribution made to daily life by heroines such as Florence Nightingale.
21. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. The pupils are expected to behave well and are encouraged to help each other. The children with SEN and EAL, for example, are supported strongly in school. The themes in assemblies, circle discussion time or personal and social education often deal with moral development. The school has made sure that these discussion times are firmly in the timetable. The pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They have a strong sense of moral duty and regularly raise money for charitable causes such as Red Nose Day. In general they are given good guidance to help them to become aware of environmental issues in the world.
22. The provision made by the school for the pupils' social development is very good. The children work and play together in harmony as a rule and they co-operate in team games. Any pupils with low self-esteem and lack of confidence are encouraged to participate in all group activities and with sensitive support they are given every chance to succeed. The children are given opportunities to take responsibility in everyday tasks in the classroom, in assembly and around the school. All pupils are involved in the school's musical and drama productions and enjoy working together on these occasions. The school council, whose members are chosen by their peers, makes an important contribution to the spirit of citizenship. The members consider their responsibilities to the school community and have thought about what they can

contribute to the school. The pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language integrate well throughout the school.

23. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is excellent and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was judged as satisfactory. Attention is now given to the inclusion of cultural aspects across the curriculum. For example, the school ensures that the content of creative activities, such as dance, drama, music, and art contain many links with multi-cultural themes. Connections within the community have included visitors who share Indian and Asian cookery, multi-cultural songs, and the writing of labels and menus in the different home languages spoken by the pupils in the school. A visit by an African drummer was recalled with great enthusiasm and excitement by a number of the children. The music resources include a selection of multi-cultural instruments and recorded music from other countries, which is used in assemblies. The religious education lessons develop work about other religions successfully and cover festivals celebrated by other faiths such as Islam and Sikhism. In the geography lessons the pupils compare countries, people and customs across the world and in history lessons they deal with western historical events, traditions and changes. There is good understanding of the wide cultural heritage in our own country. The school has involved pupils in all aspects of national interest, such as the Queen's Golden Jubilee, and local events such as attending the city's Mayor-making ceremony and taking part in maypole dancing at a local dance festival.
24. The provision and support for children with EAL is very good. Due to the high quality support they receive within school, they make very good progress and quickly become quite fluent English speakers. The school promotes their self-esteem well by giving due respect to their home languages and has, for example, purchased a number of favourite stories in other languages in books and on tape. The staff spoke of the joy on a pupil's face when he was able to listen to 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' in Bengali.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. The school cares for its pupils very well at all times. There are very good policies and procedures for ensuring safety and well being. All health and safety and child protection requirements are fully understood and met. The risk assessment procedures are carried out effectively.
26. The school makes exceptional efforts to encourage the regular attendance of its pupils. The school monitors the late arrival of any pupils, and then contacts the education welfare service about any non-arrivals for whom there has been no message. The school has developed very close liaison with the education welfare service. The children are awarded points for good attendance which can be saved up for individual prizes. There is a weekly attendance cup presented to the class with the highest attendance. as well as counting towards the school's weekly attendance cup for the class with the highest level of attendance. Frequent reminders to parents have improved attendance slightly. There is nothing more that the school can do to encourage parents to bring their children to school regularly and on time. The school's procedures for promoting attendance are exemplary but there is still an intractable minority who are absent too often.
27. The school promotes good behaviour consistently and fairly and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Members of staff use strategies effectively for managing the behaviour of individual pupils in each lesson's plan where necessary, and act on them.

This ensures that all pupils have full access to each lesson. The school has effective systems to discourage bullying and to follow up any incidents of harassment.

28. All the staff know all the pupils and their families well, so that their individual needs are carefully met. Members of staff monitor the pupils' behaviour, personal development and progress effectively and consequently these areas are considered a very important part of each pupil's development. The school maintains excellent records to show what each pupil has achieved in all subjects. These records are used very effectively to plan and to monitor what each pupil needs to do next. Predictions are made for each pupil that forecast what standards they are expected to reach by the end of Years 1 and 2 as well as twice during the reception year. These are used very well to track the progress made by the pupils as they move from one class to the next and to alert the teachers about pupils who might be having difficulty or who need extra tasks to raise their standards.
29. All the members of staff recognise the importance of raising the self-esteem of the pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. They do this conscientiously and consistently. Some pupils with SEN are given specific responsibilities which they take very seriously. A good example of this was seen each day, when the school administrative officer helped a pupil to put food on the bird table.
30. The school has achieved a "Healthy Schools Award" and its principles are put into practice. For example pupils are encouraged to drink water regularly by the slogan 'Drink 2 Think.' The school liaises well with outside agencies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

31. The parents have good views of the school. They feel comfortable approaching the staff with questions or problems and they feel the school works closely with parents. A number of parents express concern that their children cannot continue their primary education at St John's after Year 2 and would very much like the school to develop a junior department. At present a number of parents feel coerced into having to move their children from St John's during Years 1 and 2 to ensure a place at the junior school of their choice. In practice this means that younger children are also withdrawn from St John's as it is not practicable for parents to take different children to different schools. The early removal of pupils means that the school suffers financial instability because of the uncertainty of the number of pupils on roll. For example, since January 2003 the school roll has dropped significantly because children have been forced to move early to a primary school.
32. The school promotes very effective links with the parents. The school provides a wide range of easy-to-read information, which covers everything from the importance of good attendance and how to approach the school for assistance, to what will be taught in each class in each half term. There are bright display boards to inform parents of events and colourful displays of welcome that reflect some of the different ethnic minority groups who use the school. The school has a genuine 'open-door' policy and makes good use of home visits as part of the induction and care process. Parents are invited to borrow story sacks to encourage them to read with their children. They are also encouraged to attend workshops so they can find out about the school's literacy and numeracy schemes. The school uses a questionnaire frequently to find out the parents' views about the school.

33. The school provides good information to parents on their child's progress. Reports are clear and straightforward so that parents can easily see what their child can do. The school gives parents plenty of opportunities to discuss their child's work and progress.
34. The parents are keen to support school events. A number of parents attended the singing and storytelling performance that took place during the inspection – and joined in the 4-part singing! Only a few parents provide help in classes. Some parents encourage their children to complete homework, but the school considers that there is a need to develop more help from parents in supporting their children with reading, writing and mathematics. Many parents do not give high enough priority to getting their children to school regularly and on time. This lack of support undermines the school's efforts to raise the pupils' achievements. .

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. The quality of leadership and management of the headteacher is outstanding. Since her appointment in January 2001 she has inspired the school to raise the expectations for the pupils. She is the driving force behind all the improvements that have happened in the school over the past two years. She has an extremely clear vision of the future needs of the school and communicates these very well to the governing body staff and parents. She has excellent skills of communication and she delegates responsibilities very successfully. This fosters a dedicated and hard working staff that has a shared commitment to high expectations and to raising standards. She has created a happy, cohesive and conscientious team. The headteacher provides an excellent role model for all and it is very apparent that she is dedicated to ensuring the highest possible standards in all that the school undertakes. She has formed good links with the parents and this builds upon the partnership that was developing at the time of the last inspection.
36. The governing body makes a major contribution to the leadership of the school. It has outlined very clear targets for the future developments of the school. A significant part of their drive forward is seen in the thorough way they are exploring the extension of the age range of the school to provide for pupils up to Year 6. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements very well and is a vital strategic part of the formulation and planning of the school's policies. The committees work very closely with the headteacher and through the actions of these committees, the full governing body gains a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Many governors frequently visit the classrooms, discuss the developments with the subject managers and take part in events such as assemblies and the recent music workshop. The school's performance management procedures are very effective and are monitored very well by the governors.
37. Through the actions of the headteacher, the school undertakes rigorous self-evaluation. At regular meetings of the staff, the curriculum and the development of whole school issues are monitored thoroughly. As a result of continuous improvements through staff discussion and training, the quality of the teachers' planning is very good and the process of recording ongoing assessments is excellent. This has raised the quality of teaching throughout the school. The headteacher and all the staff have a keen understanding of the needs of all the pupils and provide a caring and purposeful environment for all the pupils.
38. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator (Senco) has a great deal of knowledge, expertise and experience. She

initiates, leads training and manages the well-qualified teaching assistants very well to enable them to support the pupils effectively. They are highly valued members of the school team. She liaises with a wide range of outside agencies – speech therapists, physiotherapists, occupational health therapist, teacher for the hearing impaired and educational psychologist. The school's excellent assessment procedures are used very effectively to track the progress of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

39. The management of the financial resources allocated to the school is very good. The school has built up a considerable carry forward to next year to enable it to purchase climbing and play equipment for the playground. It has also put aside money to meet the further funding if the school is allowed to extend the age range. The grants made available to the school have been used very effectively to promote higher standards in teaching and in the coverage of the curriculum. For example, all the staff have recently completed the training to improve their skills in the use of ICT to support and enhance their teaching in other subjects. This has been most successful and was an inspiration for all staff. The good impact of the use of ICT was evident in all the lessons seen during the inspection.
40. The level of staffing is good and all staff play a vital role in the educational and personal development of the children. All the members of staff use their talents and skills well for the benefit of all the pupils. The very good organisation of staff enables the school to provide additional help for the pupils with SEN and those with EAL. The members of staff also give each other very good support and throughout the school there is a genuine feeling of belonging to a stimulating team.
41. The accommodation is spacious and decorated well. The classrooms are a very good size and are equipped well. The whole site is kept very clean and tidy. The nursery room and adjacent outdoor area are very good and are used very effectively by the teachers and the teaching assistants. However, there is no similar provision made for the reception pupils. **(This is an issue for further consideration)**. They do use an area outside their classroom but it is not securely fenced and with strangers accessing the youth headquarters in the heart of the school playground, this is a potential hazard. The governing body has been advised about this concern. **(This is an issue for further consideration)**.
42. The learning resources are good. The equipment is used to promote good quality teaching and learning in all classrooms. The teaching assistants give good value and they give the teachers and the pupils very good support and help. Some who work alongside a specific child with special educational needs enhance their learning extremely well.
43. As a result of the outstanding leadership and management of the school the school has raised the standards of the pupils' work through improving the quality of the teachers' planning and teaching. Although the school has established excellent strategies to encourage the pupils to attend regularly there is still an intractable minority who are absent too often. This inhibits their progress and slows down their achievements.

44. The day-to-day administration of the school is very good. All duties are carried out with precision and in a conscientious manner. The school has developed very good systems to ensure that it gets best value for money and the administrative officer achieves good savings when purchasing goods and services. The school has succeeded in raising the quality of the teaching and the pupils' work because of the inspirational leadership and management of the school by the headteacher. The school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45. There are no significant areas for the school to undertake as key issues but the headteacher, staff and governing body need to give further consideration to the: -

- (a) continuation of the rigorous procedures already well established to ensure that the parents abide by the school's demands to improve the pupils' attendance (Paragraph 10);
- (b) establishment of a secure outdoor area for the use of the reception children, (Paragraph 41);
- (c) particular issues notified to them by the inspection team regarding the problems that arise because of the shared site. (Paragraph 41)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	13	16	3	0	0	0
Percentage	6	38	47	9	0	0	0

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	60
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	33

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	23

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	23

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.6
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Standards seen in SATs tests 2002.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	13	11	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	7	9
	Girls	6	8	5
	Total	14	15	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	58 (80)	63 (87)	58 (73)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	9	9
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	12	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	50 (80)	63 (73)	63 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
35	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
2	0	0
5	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	453,487
Total expenditure	408,912
Expenditure per pupil	5,176
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,394
Balance carried forward to next year	83,969

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	79
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	15	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	32	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	28	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	31	7	0	7
The teaching is good.	79	18	1	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	36	4	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	22	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	18	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	63	31	3	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	71	18	5	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	19	4	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	31	5	2	17

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

46. Due to the quality of the teaching, the children make good progress during their time in the nursery and reception classes and receive a good start to their education. This presents a similar picture to the findings at the previous inspection. The teaching is good overall and some examples of very good and excellent practice were observed. High quality planning and assessment systems contribute to the effectiveness of the early years' education and the raising of standards. The nursery benefits from its own dedicated outdoor area but there is no similar provision for the reception class.
47. There is very good liaison between nursery and reception and this year the majority of the children in the nursery will progress to the school's reception class. The nursery pupils enter in the term following their third birthday. Older pupils enter the reception class in September, with staggered entry according to the term in which they will be five years old. All the children initially attend part-time and, by the October half-term, all of them attend full-time. This structure ensures that most of the children settle into school with a minimum of fuss. Good links with the parents and carers have been developed and many support their children's learning at home and in school. For example, they share books with them at the start of each school day, and visit the school to support specific topics. They are welcomed into classrooms and there are good opportunities to share with the staff any concerns they may have. The parents of the nursery children receive a handbook at the time of the home visit, and all the parents have details of the planned curriculum for each term
48. The standards on entry to the nursery are assessed as being clustered around well below average, particularly in speaking and listening skills, but all children make good progress during their early years in the school and attain standards in line with national expectations by the time they move into Year 1. A significant proportion of the pupils currently in the reception class will achieve the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. A good proportion is already working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Very good support from the teaching assistants helps the children with SEN and with EAL to make very good progress.
49. The quality of teaching is good overall. A very good knowledge of the curriculum, and the experience of the teachers ensure that the planning of the children's learning is matched to the national guidelines for this age range of children. The staff have a thorough understanding of the needs of young children and choose activities that will extend and challenge them. There is a good relationship and liaison between the teachers, and this extends to the teaching assistants who work alongside the children. This ensures that all the adults have an understanding of what the children are to learn, and how this may best be achieved. The resources are of good quality and well organised, and hold the children's interest well. The management of the children is good and adult relationships with the children are supportive, perceptive and purposeful. This ensures that they settle quickly into the day-to-day routines of the school and become aware of what is expected of them. The teachers and other adults make effective use of the regular assessments that are made of the children as they progress through their early years in school. The assessments are used effectively to group pupils and to plan their learning. Day-to-day assessments are effective, and the information gained is evaluated carefully to gauge what skills the children have acquired and what modifications to teaching and the planned programme are necessary in order for them to improve further.

Personal, social and emotional development

50. By the time the children transfer to Year 1, most are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development. The children are confident in their work and play and have established good relationships with one another, the class teachers and the teaching assistants. As a result of the staff's expectations, the children generally behave well and are learning to be considerate of others when moving around the classroom and school, or playing with resources and equipment. The children co-operate well when part of a group and some can concentrate effectively when they are asked to work independently. They are generally polite and are learning that they need to wait patiently if the teacher is working with other children. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement and this is effective in building up their esteem and personal confidence. In all subject areas, the staff are sensitive to those who need a little more time to think about what they want to say, and this helps to boost the children's confidence in knowing that their ideas are appreciated and valued.

Communication, language and literacy

51. By the time they transfer to Year 1, most of the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals and some have already exceeded them. They make good progress in their understanding and use of literacy during their first years at school. The teaching is good, and sometimes very good, and a good variation of opportunities is provided for the children to develop their skills. Many opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills, for example by describing what they plan to do during their session in the nursery. They enjoy listening to stories, poems and nursery rhymes and in discussions about books, some are able to express their ideas and suggest developments in a story line. Nearly all have some reading ability, ranging from those who are in the very early stages to those who are beginning to read simple books with some fluency. The classrooms have a good range of books, which are accessible to the children and they have opportunities to look at and share books. They are able to listen to story tapes to enhance their enjoyment, and support for children with EAL has been enhanced with the provision of favourite tales in their home languages. For example, 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' is available on a Bengali story tape, with a bilingual book to look at. Virtually all the children can write their names unaided and letter formation is usually correct. The work of those of higher ability contains examples of unaided writing, such as simple stories. Good use is made of the classroom computers to support the children's early reading and writing skills.

Mathematical development

52. By the time they complete their year in the reception class, most of the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area and some are working well within the early stages of the National Curriculum. They make good progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure. Many are beginning to handle simple calculations with numbers to five, ten and more. Many can count on and back and are able to write numbers in the correct order. The children talk about various simple mathematical shapes, and about the number of sides and corners, as well as name them. Some excellent quality work on measurement such as 'area' was observed with the children creating 'fields' for a farmer using blocks, construction straws and three-dimensional structures according to ability. A number of the children made perceptive comments: for example when asked to create a 3-D field, a child asked 'but what about a gate for moving the animals in and out?' For the children who are less confident with number, teaching is well organised by providing them with a wide variety of games and

puzzles specifically designed to support their early understanding of number. The staff are careful to demonstrate the correct use of mathematical vocabulary and the children showed, for example, that they understood the term 'perimeter'. As a result, children make good gains in their understanding and use of mathematical language.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

53. The children make good progress in this area of learning because they have good opportunities to experience a wide range of activities. They show a lively curiosity and interest in all activities presented to them, and make suitable gains in their learning. From an early age they learn to use computers and show good control of the mouse. Children learn more about their world by handling and discussing a variety of objects and by good use of the school's environmental areas. For example, in the nursery the children were observed showing great excitement at the results of squeezing their own fresh orange juice. The children in the reception class went on a 'mini-beast' hunt, using the garden and pond areas in the grounds. They were excited that they might see the frogs they released into the pond earlier in the year and a child was heard to observe that 'they might have turned into frog spawn' bringing a new focus to the idea of life cycles! Such activities are used well to extend the children's vocabulary as they describe what they see and experience. Their knowledge and experience were further promoted through a recent visit to a farm. They recognise changes that happen as they grow older, and learn about different cultures and religions by celebrating festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. The adults use questioning well to develop the children's vocabulary and use of language to explain their thoughts and ideas, and to encourage the children to think about their world and appreciate the wonder of it.

Physical development

54. Most children will attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year because the teaching and learning are good. The children in the nursery have direct, and almost continuous, access to a fenced outdoor area adjacent to their classroom, which is well equipped. However, the children in the reception classes have no direct access to a dedicated area, although they use the part of the playground adjacent to their classroom for activities when the weather is suitable. The children experience playing regularly with both large and small equipment in the school hall, and they make good progress in their gymnastics and dance sessions. In the summer months there is a focus on developing their ball skills and the children are taken outside as often as possible to give them space to run and skip. The children in the nursery ride wheeled toys with confidence and skill. All the children are given good opportunities to use a range of small equipment and this improves their dexterity well. Fine motor movements are developed with the use of pencils, brushes, scissors, and small construction apparatus. For example, the children were observed using scissor and gluing skills to make flower collages, using a wide range of materials that included feathers, lace and crepe and tissue paper.

Creative development

55. The children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their creativity, and it is likely that most will attain the expected standard by the end of the reception year. The teaching and learning are good. The children use a variety of pencils, paints and collage effectively to create images. Examples of printing, three-dimensional modelling and collage work are displayed prominently and samples of work in both nursery and reception include patterns created on the computer using the program, 'dazzle'. The children use paint and collage effectively in a variety of ways. They handle playdough

and use their imaginations to mould objects well. During music lessons the children learn to use percussion instruments to create music using loud and quiet sounds. They know a number of songs and rhymes by heart, and are given opportunities to listen to music. The reception children were observed taking part in a whole-school storytelling session which incorporated song and dance. They joined in admirably and showed a high level of skills in their talented performance. The children are encouraged to use their imagination during role-play sessions. For example, the nursery children have a 'restaurant' and the reception class has a 'vet's surgery' in which they act out various roles with enjoyment whilst developing their speaking and listening skills.

ENGLISH

56. Since 1999 standards in English have been well below average, but the unconfirmed results in the national tests 2003 show that standards the end of Year 2 in reading and writing have improved substantially and are now average when compared with the national results for last year. The unconfirmed comparisons with similar types of schools show that standards are now well above average. These standards are confirmed by the work seen during the inspection. This represents very good improvement.
57. The standards in the pupils' speaking and listening skills are above the expected level for their age by the end of Year 2. This area is strongly promoted in the Foundation Stage and is built upon well in Years 1 and 2. All the teachers expect the pupils to listen and most respond well. There are many well-planned opportunities for pupils to speak independently, in pairs, small groups, in front of the class and in front of the whole school. The teaching assistants interact with the pupils very effectively in the role-play areas, which help pupils to clarify and sequence their thoughts. Drama, role-play and hot seating regularly take place within the literacy hour and contribute to the good achievement in this area. The teachers identify key vocabulary in their planning and introduce this well during lessons, thus enabling pupils with SEN and those with EAL to make very good progress.
58. Most pupils are reading at the levels expected for their age and some exceed these. The pupils in Year 1 confidently read text on screen and use the worksheet made by the teacher during a PowerPoint presentation on the history of teddy bears. They use a chart they have previously made to write their page of a non-fiction book. Guided reading is taught very effectively and records of the pupils' acquisition of skills are carefully recorded. Most of the pupils in Year 2 can read fluently with expression and understanding. Their level of reading skills allows them full access to the curriculum. The pupils are achieving well in reading.
59. The school has been very successful in developing pupils' confidence in writing. A 'Can Do' culture has been established. 'I can't' has been replaced with 'Please help me to'. All the pupils have targets for reading and writing of which they are fully aware. Writing is very well promoted, for example, in the classrooms in Years 1 and 2, vowel digraphs are attractively displayed to help the pupils with their spelling, time, question and past and present tense words, and ways to start a story are all clearly displayed and this enables all pupils to be successful learners. The school creates interesting purposeful opportunities for writing which motivate pupils so that they make maximum effort, for example, Flower Lunch. The pupils designed and produced posters, wrote invitations, wrote menus, a report of the event, and a letter to thank the visitors for coming. The learning opportunities of this and many other events are fully maximised and cross-curricular links are very good. Information and communication technology (ICT) was used very well in this project.

60. The standard of pupils' handwriting is above the expected standards throughout the school. Most pupils in Year 2 join their letters in a cursive style and a significant proportion is using a pen. Their work is neat, letters are correctly formed and of a uniform size.
61. The pupils' standards of spelling are broadly in line with the expected levels at the end of Year 2. The strategies for learning phonics are taught very effectively through a multi-sensory approach which is enabling pupils, especially those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, to use phonic skills in their writing. The early literacy strategy is used well to support less confident pupils to improve their spelling. The pupils are given spellings to learn at home which are then tested in school. These are very well matched to prior learning, for example, higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 learn "beautifully, thoughtfully, immediately", while those with SEN and those with EAL learn much easier words.
62. The quality of teaching in literacy lessons is consistently very good, and sometimes excellent. The teachers have adapted the strategy so that writing is purposeful and builds on prior learning. The teachers' planning in each class is very detailed and meets the needs of all pupils. The higher-attaining pupils are well challenged. The marking of the pupils' work is very good as it tells the pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Target-setting, assessment and tracking procedures are excellent. All the teachers realise that raising standards is a whole school responsibility and use their ongoing recording of assessments very well to plan what they need to teach next. . The teaching is stimulating, enthusiastic and based on their very good knowledge of teaching the basic skills of literacy. The relationships are very good. A variety of teaching styles is used to maintain the interests and brisk pace of work of all the pupils. The teaching assistants are well informed and prepared and make a very significant impact on the pupils' achievements.
63. The pupils are keen and enthusiastic and work with concentration on the interesting tasks set.
64. The leadership and management of English are very good. The co-ordinator is a leading literacy teacher within the local authority and shares her expertise with other staff very ably. The headteacher shares the role and has undertaken rigorous monitoring of the teaching and learning to drive up standards. All members of staff have consistently high expectations, and this together with effective target-setting and excellent assessment procedures have enabled all the teachers and teaching assistants to play their full part in raising standards. Literacy and ICT are used very well especially in history, geography and science lessons. The philosophy of the school to provide really stimulating learning opportunities is seen clearly for example, in literacy work on the Victorian Fete.

MATHEMATICS

65. Since 2000 the pupils' standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 have been well below average, and last year the school's performance was in the lowest 5 per cent when compared with the national picture. However, the unconfirmed comparisons with schools nationally for the most recent national tests in 2003 show that the standards have improved substantially and are now above average. The unconfirmed comparisons with similar schools show that standards are well above average. From the observations during lessons and from the scrutiny of their books it is evident that the pupils in the current Year 2 are achieving well by reaching standards that are above the

national expected levels for their age. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when the school's performance overall was judged to be broadly average. The proportion of pupils reaching the level 3 has also improved since last year and also since the last inspection and is now above average.

66. There is no significant difference between the attainment of the boys and girls by the end of Year 2. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make very good progress from the time they enter the school in the nursery.
67. Most of the pupils in Year 2 have a good grasp of number and of shape, space and measures. They have completed the work set for pupils in Year 2 competently and many have begun to do the higher level work set for pupils in Year 3. They have successfully completed a very good amount of work this year. Most understand how to create a tally chart and how to convert this data into a block graph, which they interpret accurately. They can carry out the calculations of addition and subtraction with tens and units and most know and can sequence beyond one hundred. Most of them can round numbers to the nearest 100 and know by heart the number pairs up to 20. They know that addition of a series of numbers can be done in any order and that it is easier if they group numbers into tens. They can describe their own methods for adding and subtracting 9 or 11 in their heads. They use ICT effectively to solve problems, including setting data into a spreadsheet and then converting this information into a graph. They have a secure knowledge of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They have also measured quantities such as weighing out ingredients in cooking and measuring lengths, for example, the dimensions of the playground equipment and smaller measurements used in designing a go-kart in design and technology. The lower-attaining pupils are given very good support and this helps them to complete tasks such as adding two numbers up to 10, and being able to read some numbers up to 100. This represents very good progress; previous work shows that at the beginning of the year these pupils were having difficulty putting numbers up to 10 in order and counting in twos with counters.
68. From the evidence of the pupils' work, many pupils in Year 1 started the year having made very good progress in the reception class. They were already working on many tasks and activities set for pupils in Year 1. This year these pupils have completed a significant amount of work and the standards reached are broadly in line with the expected levels for their age. Most can count accurately up to 20 and can count on and back in twos and tens. They understand how to describe numbers that are more than and less than and know by heart all number pairs up to 10.
69. The quality of teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 is very good overall. The teachers are very secure in their knowledge of what they need to teach. The teachers plan their lessons extremely well and plan tasks that give very good opportunities for all the pupils to make very good progress. The activities match the needs of each pupil and group work is designed so that the pupils can all build successfully upon their previous learning. The teachers and the teaching assistants intervene very well to promote the high expectations that are mirrored across the school. The process of recording the ongoing assessment is excellent. These records are maintained very effectively and give the teachers very reliable information about what each pupil has achieved. All members of staff encourage the pupils to explain their methods of calculation and this helps to consolidate the learning. Consequently, the pupils are growing in confidence in the use of their mathematics. The numeracy strategies are deployed very well and the pupils' calculations are seen in action in other subjects such as design and technology and science.

70. The leadership of the subject is good. Good procedures for monitoring the pupils' work and the teachers' planning are having a beneficial impact upon raising the pupils' standards throughout the school. The subject manager keeps the staff fully informed of areas that need more attention. For instance, following the analysis of the results of the national tests in 2002 it was noted that the pupils' problem solving strategies were weak. Feedback to the teachers and the teaching assistants brought about a concentrated effort and the staff have now adjusted their programme to include more real life problems. The coverage of the school picnic was an instance of good use of problem solving and was appreciated by the pupils in Year 2 as a worthwhile and real problem to be solved.
71. The school is now well placed to further the pupils' development in mathematics and to consolidate the quality of teaching throughout the school.

SCIENCE

72. The teachers' assessments for 2002 indicated that the pupils' standards in science were below the national average. However, there has been a significant improvement over the past year and the most recent teachers' assessments for the national tests in 2003 show that the standards are above the national average. This is confirmed in the lessons observed and from the scrutiny of the pupils' work where the current work is above the expected level by the end of Year 2. There has been a substantial improvement in standards over the past few years and the pupils' progress is good, given that many enter the school with well below average skills and knowledge.
73. The work in the books of the pupils from Year 1 shows good understanding of the human life cycle and differences between humans and animals. There is evidence that pupils can correctly sequence pictures of human growth and development. The body parts are correctly spelt and labelled and a number of the children demonstrate that they can produce good work unaided, only needing limited support. They are developing a good scientific vocabulary, which they use with confidence and understanding. The evidence gleaned from the lesson observation and the analysis of work shows that the pupils in Year 2 are currently learning about forces, particularly pulling and pushing. In a very good lesson they were observed conducting experiments on forces. They were seen experimenting to find out how weight influenced the force needed to pull a toy vehicle from the top of a table. They added weights to a box suspended from the vehicle until the toy moved. The lesson was well prepared and resourced and ICT was used particularly effectively by the class teacher to produce attractive sheets with coloured photographs on which to record results. The children were completely absorbed in the activity and eager to share the results. They can talk with confidence about the importance of fair comparisons, and how to introduce consistency in experiments. Work earlier in the year included studies of electrical components and circuits, health and growth, and materials and their properties. Following discussions with them it is evident that they have a sound understanding of the subjects covered throughout the year.
74. The pupils' own interests and ideas for experimentation are supported well by the teachers and the teaching assistants. After the accidental introduction of coloured paper on top of the classroom snails' tank, which the snails ate, the pupils were eager to see whether different colours of paper had an effect on the snails' innards. During the inspection, the Year 2 pupils were always very keen to give an update on the current colour of the snails' "poo"! Frequent reports on their observations of the change from red to blue to orange were the main topic of conversation with the children. As the

inspection ended they were relishing the idea of introducing two different colours at the same time.

75. Although only one lesson was observed it was very good. From the studying of the teachers' plans and the pupils' work it is clear that the quality of teaching and learning is at least good overall. In the observed lesson, the teacher shared her enthusiasm for the subject with the pupils and made learning fun. The teachers use their knowledge and the appropriate scientific words effectively to promote the good use of new vocabulary. A wide range of interesting activities is provided, matched to levels of need, and challenging the pupils to think for themselves. In the practical lesson seen, the quality of work was good and the standard is above the expected levels by the end of Year 2. From the scrutiny of the work the standard of the pupils' written work is in line with the expected levels for their ages.
76. The teachers' planning is good. The work for the pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is set carefully, and these pupils are supported well by the teaching assistants. There are effective links between science and other subjects such as English, mathematics and ICT. The pace of the lesson observed was brisk and this helped to maintain the pupils' interest and increased their work rate. Time is used well. Sufficient time is given to enable the completion of set tasks. The pupils' behaviour is good and the pupils are learning to work co-operatively to achieve set objectives. Most pupils are motivated well and remain focussed on the activity for sustained lengths of time. The marking of the pupils' work is good and includes informative and developmental remarks.
77. The subject manager demonstrates good leadership and management. The resources are good and the organisation of their storage is immaculate, which helps the staff with the planning and organisation of their lessons. The process of ongoing assessment is excellent. It takes place regularly and achievements of each pupil are recorded on charts which give an overview of the progress that each one makes in each topic.

ART AND DESIGN

78. Only one lesson in art and design was observed during the inspection. The judgements about the standards of the pupils' work are made following this lesson and the scrutiny of the work around the school. The quality of the pupils' work in art and design is above the expected standards for the end of Year 2. It is clear that the quality of teaching has a marked impact upon the development of the pupils' skills. The work on display throughout the school is of a high standard. The pupils' work is displayed very effectively in prominent positions. It is evident that the members of staff value the contribution that art can make to the development of the pupils' creativity. It provides a very good stimulus to the pupils and good clear labelling helps all of them to understand what has been achieved.
79. The pupils in Year 1, following a visit to a local zoo, produced bold sketches of the animals. The initial drawings were done at the zoo and then developed in school with strong images in paint. Some pupils used the computer to create graphics of animals and birds. The pupils' self-portraits are examples of work that is excellent for pupils of this age.
80. The pupils in Year 2 produce work that is imaginative and stimulating. Their paintings of the Fire of London show good links with the history theme. The pupils have developed the understanding that black shapes against the brightness of a raging fire can be very effective. Their clay models of animals are created with fine detail and bold shapes. In

their inspiring paintings done to the accompaniment of music,” Entry of the Gladiators and March of the Dead”, the strength of colour seen is very striking. The bright-coloured interpretation for the gladiators and the sombre colours for the dead have obviously captured the pupils’ moods. There is a sophistication in these paintings that is rarely seen in primary school work, even that done by much older children. The observational drawings of local buildings are very good. The development of sketches is also very good as was seen as the pupils transferred their drawings to clay to create pottery tiles with sgraffito images.

81. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and often very good. The teachers and the teaching assistants have a very secure knowledge of the subject and use their own skills very well to foster the pupils’ techniques in the use of a wide range of media. The pupils have a very positive attitude towards their artwork. They take pride in their finished work and are keen to show visitors their particular pieces of art on display. Their experiences are extended in the good work that pupils do in the art club. During the inspection a group of pupils were observed building a magnificent galleon using paper and card.
82. The management of the subject is good. The use of the ongoing assessments is excellent in each class with the teacher identifying the main objectives to record what each pupil has achieved. The resources available ensure that all the pupils have a wide experience in two and three-dimensional work by the time they reach the end of Year 2.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. During the inspection no lessons for design and technology were timetabled. However, it is evident from the displays of pupils’ work, around the school and in photographic albums that the standards of the pupils’ work are above the expected levels by the end of Year 2. The teachers’ planning is very detailed and covers all aspects of the subject very effectively. The teachers also maintain excellent records of what each pupil achieves. From these records it is clear that all the pupils achieve well by acquiring new skills and understanding in the subject.
84. For instance the pupils in Year 1 recently visited a local playground to look at the roundabout, the swings and the seesaw. They made sketches of the equipment, and made notes of what it was made of, how it was constructed, and for what age group it was designed. They now plan to make models and to design a selection of pieces of equipment for use in their own playground. This design work is above the standards expected for this age group.
85. The pupils in Year 2 have used ICT to design a coloured coat for their scarecrows. These scarecrows will be placed in the school gardens. This is good quality work. Other work seen in photographs shows that these pupils have made and experimented with propellers. They prepared a plan and noted the materials they would need. This was followed up by an evaluation to show how they might make improvements. This work is also above the expected standards for pupils of this age group. The school’s administration officer provides some good opportunities by teaching the pupils cooking techniques as part of their design and technology work. During the inspection some pupils in Year 2 were observed estimating and then weighing out ingredients to make a cake.
86. It is evident from the abundance of pupils’ work that the teachers have inspired the pupils with imaginative tasks. This has resulted in all the pupils, including those with

special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieving very well during the year.

87. The management of design and technology is good, ensuring the themes and topics covered are approached with enthusiasm and understanding by all the teachers and the teaching assistants. The teachers' planning is very good and the assessment records are excellent as they plot each pupil's progress.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

88. The evidence gained from the lesson observations, the study of the teachers' planning and the pupils' work, as well as conversations with them, shows that teaching and learning in the subject are good. As the subjects are taught in 'blocks' of study in the current timetable, only one lesson in each subject was observed during the inspection. The pupils with SEN and EAL receive very good support, enabling them to progress very well. As the pupils enter the school with well below average skills and knowledge, the progress made represents good achievement. The pupils' standards in geography are better than those found at the last inspection and are now above the expected levels by the end of Year 2. The pupils' standards in history have improved significantly as they were below the expected level at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' attainment is now above the levels expected and is continuing to improve.
89. The pupils in Year 2 are developing their geographical skills well. They have the ability to ask and answer questions appropriately. For example, they explored why life in a school on the edge of their city is different from their own in a city centre. They also identify similarities. Most of the children are able to make intelligent comparisons between the different schools and have the ability to give reasons for the differences. The skills of making comparisons have been further extended by studying life in Africa and India and comparing these countries with Great Britain, specifically Southampton. This was made very relevant to the children's interest and experience by looking at different schools and clothes. Geography studies begin early in the pupils' life in school as was seen, for example, in the study of the local area and making simple maps of their routes to school. An 'India Day' for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 included role play, wood block printing and chapatti cookery amongst a variety of activities on offer. Many of the parents have made good contributions to such events through their own expertise. A visit to a local supermarket offered opportunities to examine and taste exotic fruits.
90. History studies also begin early with the children in the reception class looking at history through nursery rhymes. They studied illustrations and compared 'then' and 'now' and were able to handle a broad range of items associated with the rhymes. For example they compared kettles heated on a fire in 'Polly put the kettle on' with present-day electric kettles. They examined lanterns, candlesticks, snuffers and wick trimmers for the rhyme 'Jack be nimble'. During the inspection, the pupils in Year 1 enjoyed a visit from a 'Victorian' lady with a doll. The well-planned lesson promoted a good understanding of the differences between 'then and now' and the pupils' interest and involvement were captured well through role-play. A developing strength in classes is seen in the pupils' ability to recognise that their own lives are different from lives of people in the past, and their knowledge and understanding of some important events and people in the past are also developing well. For example, they have studied London at the time of Pepys and found out about the Great Fire of London. A study of Florence Nightingale resulted in a collection of letters from patients and nurses at Scutari hospital, where she was described by one correspondent as 'a horrible tyrant'!

91. In discussions, the pupils in Year 2 showed very good recall of subjects and facts studied in both geography and history. For example, a child was able to explain the significance of the Titanic museum and memorial not far from the school, and could recount the story of its fatal voyage. Present day historical events further contribute to the pupils' expanding knowledge and experience and three children spoke with excitement of their recent visit to the Mayor-making ceremony.
92. Overall, the subjects make a good contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teachers' planning is good and the ongoing assessment records are excellent. The pupils make written reports of their research and observations, and there are some examples of good descriptive writing. Numeracy skills are developed satisfactorily with graphs and map-work. Both subjects make good use of ICT. As a result of some appropriate software they make appropriate use of ICT, for example in the use of CD-ROMs for research. The subjects also make a good contribution to the spiritual and cultural life of the school, as the pupils are encouraged to reflect on a variety of customs and practices from the past, and life in areas and countries other than their own. Cross-curricular links are a developing strength and, for example, the children in Year 1 dramatised and danced an interpretation of the Great Fire of London for the rest of the school. A governor, who works for the museum service, also gives the pupils good support and inspires them with artefacts that help them to understand the historical richness of their local area
93. The subjects also make a good contribution to the social and cultural life of the school. Good use is made of the school's location in an historical part of Southampton. The traffic to the port and ferries, cruise ships and container ships forms an important part of their everyday life and the teachers make good use of these facilities. The close proximity of an ongoing archaeological dig around and often under the school is used extremely well to foster an interest in historical features surrounding the pupils. The subject leadership is effective and both subjects are equipped with good resources. There is an excellent system for recording assessments, which is used intelligently to inform future planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

94. The standards of work in information and communication technology have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were judged to be below the expected level for the end of Year 2 as no use of ICT was seen. The quality of teaching is now good. Following the training undertaken by all the teachers and the teaching assistants, good use is made of ICT to support the teaching and learning in other subjects. This has a marked impact upon the development of the pupils' skills and understanding of the uses of ICT. For example, the pupils in Year 2 have designed a coloured coat for their scarecrows and have combined clipart pictures to illustrate their writing. In both Years 1 and 2 the pupils use computers as an alternative way of recording their thoughts and ideas. In Year 2 the pupils were observed setting up a spreadsheet to graph the number of sandwiches they would need to make for the school's picnic. The pupils in Year 1 gravitated towards the computer to complete number tasks as soon as they entered the school in the morning.
95. The teachers and the teaching assistants are very competent in their own use of ICT to support and enhance their teaching. Excellent examples were seen where the teacher had prepared a series of screens to promote the pupils' understanding of what they were reading. The pupils moved confidently around the screens of information about teddy bears that had been especially written by their teacher. They answered the questions competently after discussing the problems and possible answers with their

partner. The questions set by the teacher directed them very well towards the details in the text and made good use of illustrations to enhance their understanding. The pupils were engrossed in this task and understood what they had to do to activate the screens and to move forwards and backwards through the text.

96. In Year 2 the teacher used the ICT projector effectively to help the pupils to understand how to combine graphics and text. The pupils listened attentively and willingly offered suggestions and gave answers. The projected image gives the pupils a clear understanding of the routines needed to do this task. It is evident from the pupils' answers that by the end of Year 2 they have already acquired above average skills and knowledge. They can describe how to access menus to resize and change the style and colour of fonts as well as resizing and moving clipart pictures. They enjoy demonstrating these skills and are very adept at saving and printing out their work. They are enthusiastic about their work in ICT and use graphics well to sketch animals and designs for use in other lessons.
97. Throughout the school the pupils with SEN and EAL make very good progress. ICT is used well by all the teachers and the teaching assistants to support their learning in other subjects.
98. The subject manager co-ordinates the monitoring and development of ICT very well. School finances have supplemented the funding grants allocated to the school to improve the quality of the resources prudently. There is now a small ICT suite and each classroom has several computers and a printer. There is a good range of software to support the teaching in all subjects. The staff are all very competent with the uses of this ICT equipment and intervene very skilfully to raise the pace of the pupils' work and to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding. This has a significant impact and helps the pupils to produce work that is above the expected levels for their age throughout the school. The process of recording the ongoing assessments is excellent, creating a reliable picture of the developments.

MUSIC

99. No music lessons were seen in Years 1 or 2 during the inspection but videos of concerts and recordings of singing and other musical activities show that the pupils' standards in music are good. Music forms an enjoyable part of the school's life. It is played quietly and regularly as the parents and their children enter school in the morning. This is often continued all day in the entrance hall as this is the main thoroughfare of the school and is a pleasant welcome to all visitors. Music is used effectively to calm the atmosphere as the pupils join together for assemblies and occasionally in classrooms during lessons. This has a positive effect upon all the children. Many of the pupils are beginning to recognise pieces of music and one girl suggested that the music in assembly was 'Summer' from the Four Seasons by Vivaldi.
100. The teachers plan the music curriculum thoroughly, covering all requirements of the National Curriculum well. They include all the pupils in music making and those who expressed a particular interest are being taught to play the recorder. A small group of pupils in Year 2 meet during one lunch-time each week to be taught by a visiting teacher. The pupils enjoy these sessions and are given very good tuition. The activities are stimulating and opportunities are given for them to play their simple sequences to the recorded accompaniment of a band. There are enough percussion instruments for the whole class to use. The teachers identify the need to compose their own rhythms as well as performing them.

101. One highlight for music was experienced during the last day of the inspection when a storyteller visited the school to organise a workshop for the pupils and their parents. The whole school assembled in the hall and were joined by parents, governors and the staff to perform the story of the 'Fire child'. The pupils had met the storyteller on several occasions before and had practised their songs and dance routines. The pupils responded extremely positively to this stimulus. The quality of their singing was well above average and the pupils eventually sang in four parts. This quality of work is very rarely seen in infant schools and is well above the expected levels for their ages. They followed instructions well and presented a very moving story. It is difficult to believe that most of these children are not yet seven years old.
102. The teachers have a flair for music, encouraging the pupils to take an active role in music making. The manager for the subject has prepared a very good planning file and this gives all the staff clear guidelines about styles of teaching and about what the pupils are expected to learn by the end of each year. Clear objectives are identified for each year group and the teachers use these very well to record the achievements of each pupil.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. The provision for physical education is good. The teachers plan their lessons well and also make full use of the well-qualified teaching assistants to support the pupils with SEN and EAL.
104. There are good links with other subjects, for example, history. This was seen to good effect when the pupils in Year 2 made up dances linked to the topics Fire of London and Florence Nightingale. Discussion with pupils revealed that they enjoyed performing these dances; they spoke articulately about the make-up used to represent ash and blood! Opportunities like these make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Extra-curricular activities enhance the curriculum, for example, the football club organised by the school administration officer, tennis lessons after school by a professional coach and teaching assistant. The pupils appreciate the football club and recount details of the match they played in front of the whole school.
105. The standards in the one gymnastic lesson observed were above those expected for pupils of that age, but there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgment on standards across all the strands of the curriculum. The curriculum that is planned in each class is well balanced. The pupils have two half hour lessons a week and during the year spend an appropriate amount of time on gymnastics, dance and games. Year 2 pupils talk enthusiastically about basketball and hockey.
106. The teaching in the one lesson that was seen was good and the teachers' good quality planning and portfolio indicates good teaching overall. Assessment opportunities are clearly identified in the planning so that the teachers are well aware of the pupils' achievement. The teachers have high expectations and never accept 'second best'.
107. The subject is managed effectively. There are good resources. The co-ordinator has attended Top Start courses in dance and gymnastics. All the staff have had training in active outdoor games to use at play-times and lunch-time and there are good links with the local education authority sports development officer. The school governors are now planning to install outdoor climbing and play equipment and have put aside some of the carry forward to finance this project.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

108. The provision for religious education is good and the pupils reach standards in line with those expected in the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus. There has been good improvement since the last inspection when a key issue was to introduce more purposeful structured activities to enable pupils to achieve higher standards.
109. The scheme of work and the teachers' planning indicates a good range of challenging activities for each unit to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special education needs and those with English as an additional language. A variety of teaching styles are used to plan stimulating lessons. Discussion with Year 2 pupils reveals that they have a good knowledge of the most important Christian festivals. They can recall some of the parables Jesus told as well as some of the healing miracles. The pupils show reasonable knowledge of Islam. They explain the god that Muslims worship, their place of worship and their special book. They compare these facts with Christianity. Very good cross-curricular links have been established, for example, art, literacy and ICT and very high quality displays promote the subject well and value pupils' work.
110. The teaching in the one lesson seen was good and planning and analysis of pupils' work indicates that teaching is good overall. This lesson made a good contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils recalled several stories where Jesus had helped people and then began to consider who helps them today and finally reflected on how they could help people. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
111. The subject is managed effectively. At present, there is monitoring of planning and pupils' work and the co-ordinator's action plan shows monitoring of teaching and learning will take place next term. There are sufficient good quality resources, which are easily accessible to enable teachers to prepare lessons to meet the needs of all pupils.