

INSPECTION REPORT

BROCKHURST INFANT SCHOOL

Gosport

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116177

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Eyres

Lead inspector: Marianne Harris

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th March 2004

Inspection number: 260606

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	177
School address:	Avery Lane Gosport Hampshire
Postcode:	PO12 4SR
Telephone number:	023 9258 0471
Fax number:	023 9252 3857
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Stuart Spicer
Date of previous inspection:	26 th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Brockhurst is an average size infant school adjacent to Portsmouth. It serves the local area and a significant proportion of children come from families with a naval connection. This contributes to the high mobility as some children move on when families are posted elsewhere. There are a high number of pupils with special educational needs, these are mainly for learning difficulties, although some have speech and language delay. Children's ability overall is generally below what is expected when they start in the reception classes. There are no children at an early stage of learning English and most come from a white British background. Overall, pupils are from generally disadvantaged social circumstances.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23288	Marianne Harris	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, science, information and communication technology, special educational needs, English as an additional language
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17078	Martin North	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Brockhurst Infants is a **very good** school that provides a very good standard of education. Standards are in line with those expected and pupils achieve very well as they enter school with lower than expected ability. Teaching and learning are very good, and so are leadership and management. Parents know that the school is doing a good job and pupils are very keen to learn. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management are very good and this has enabled the school to develop exciting approaches that involve the pupils in planning their learning and assessing what they have learnt.
- Teaching and learning are very good and as a result pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils are very positive about learning and behave very well.
- The school has developed effective links with parents so that they can support their children's learning at home.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, and, as a result all pupils are included extremely well.
- The school takes good care of the children,
- Although the school provides very good information about what children will learn, reports do not tell parents how much progress their children have made over the year.

There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. The strengths that were identified, such as strong leadership and the good progress that the pupils make, have been maintained and improved. There were no key issues identified in the last report and the school has continued to develop and look for innovative ways in which to provide very well for all of its pupils. This includes involving pupils in planning their own learning and in linking subjects very effectively.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school, as well as how they do in lessons. Pupils' overall **achievement is very good**. Children are generally of below average ability when they join the school. Many are on course to reach most of the expected goals for children at the end of the Reception year, in all areas of learning, some will exceed them, although a small minority is not. Results from the Year 2 tests in reading, writing and mathematics, show a trend in improvement that is broadly in line with that seen nationally. These results reflect similar standards seen in work during the inspection, although the standard of writing was average. However, because children come into school generally of below average attainment, and because a high proportion of pupils have specific special educational needs, pupils achieve very well for their capability, especially in their personal development. In subjects other than English and mathematics pupils achieve very well, particularly in art and design and technology, where standards are above those expected. Standards in science are also above average and pupils achieve very well in this subject. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve very well because they receive very

good support in lessons. Pupils who are more able achieve very well because they have work that is well planned to challenge them appropriately. Pupils who join the school, other than at the normal time, also achieve very well because teachers take the time to assess what they know and plan suitable work for them, although the disruption to their education impacts on the standards they reach in national tests.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good. The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and, as a result, pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes to learning. They arrive at school on time and settle to work quickly. Relationships throughout the school are very good and all pupils get on well together. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is satisfactory and many absences are for illness or medical appointments.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are **very good** across the school, because lessons are interesting and fun, so that all pupils are very keen to learn. Work is very well matched to the needs of individual pupils and teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and what each child will achieve. Pupils work very well together and enjoy finding things out for themselves. Resources are used very well to keep pupils interested in lessons and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well so that they are fully included. Assessment is good and pupils know what they have to do to improve their work. The curriculum is very good, with a particular strength in encouraging pupils to plan some of their own learning and then assessing what they have learnt. Provision for all pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school is a bright and stimulating place to learn because displays celebrate the work of the pupils and the available space is used well. The school takes good care of its pupils, and, through effective monitoring of progress and personal development, gives good guidance to pupils on how to reach higher standards. There are good links with local pre-schools and this helps children settle into school quickly. The links with the local junior school, to which most pupils transfer, are well established and pupils are well prepared for moving to it when they reach the end of Year 2.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are very good. The headteacher leads the school very well and, with the very effective support of subject managers, has found many ways to make learning interesting and fun for all the pupils. The governors are very experienced and know the school very well. They do a very good job and fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. The whole school commitment to including all pupils, whatever their background or ability, is excellent. The whole staff team is very effective and this has resulted in the school providing very well for all pupils and in making very good improvement since the last inspection.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has developed effective links with parents so that they can support their children's learning at school and at home. Parents have positive views and are confident that the school is doing a good job. They are well informed about what is happening in school and about the work their children have covered. However, the end of year reports do not give them enough information about how much progress their children have made over the year. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school. The school actively seeks their views during group discussions and pupils are confident that their suggestions will be listened to and acted upon, and that there is an adult to whom they can turn if they have a problem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school needs to improve is:

- The quality of reports to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils reach standards in most subjects that are in line with those expected. Achievement is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in science, art and design and design technology.
- All pupils achieve very well because work is well matched to their ability.
- Results in reading fell significantly last year, but have improved and in line with those expected for pupils in Year 2.

Commentary

1. Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school as well as how well they do in lessons. When children join the Reception classes they are, overall, of below average ability, although there are some who are more able. They make very good progress during their Reception year, so that, by the time they enter Year 1 most are on course to achieve nearly all of the expected goals for children's learning, and some will exceed them. A small minority are not on course to reach the expected level, however, these children make very good progress because they have specific special educational needs. Most pupils exceed expectations in their personal development because much emphasis is put on helping them become very keen to learn. Children are involved in planning some of their own work and this makes them very independent and mature in their attitude to learning.

2. The table below shows the average points scores attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 in the 2003 national tests. In this table each point represents roughly one term's progress, so the table shows, for example, that overall, pupils kept pace with other pupils nationally. It shows that the results in the reading test fell significantly last year. This was due to the cohort of pupils having a high number with special educational needs and particularly those who were experiencing difficulty with reading. The school identified this as an issue and put effective strategies in place so that standards seen during the inspection are in line with those expected nationally. Standards in writing have improved and are now similar to those expected nationally. The standards in mathematics are the same as those in the national tests for pupils in Year 2. Standards in science are above average and higher than the teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 last year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.7 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.3 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (16.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 74 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. When compared to schools that have a similar number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, the performance of pupils in Year 2 was average, except in writing where it was below average. The trend in improvement is similar to that seen nationally. However, the high number of pupils who join the school, other than at the beginning of the Reception year, affects the overall test scores. These pupils often have special educational needs and take a time to settle into school.

Their ability is thoroughly assessed and work is very well planned to meet their needs. The progress of all pupils is tracked very well so that teachers can be sure that all are making as much progress as they are able. As a result, pupils who join the school mid-way through their infant years achieve as much as they are able, but do not always attain high test results. This has a significant impact on the school's overall performance. Pupils who complete their education in the school achieve higher standards overall.

4. Where it was possible to make judgements in other subjects, standards are generally above average. In design and technology, aspects of history and art and design standards are above average in Year 2. In information and communication technology standards have kept up with the changing expectations of new technology and remain in line with those expected. It was not possible to make judgements about standards in geography, religious education, music or physical education as there were too few lessons seen.

5. Pupils' achievement is very good. During their time in school they make good progress in all subjects, and very good progress in subjects where standards are judged to be above average. Pupils also make very good progress in their personal development so that they are very keen to learn and are enthusiastic about their lessons. This makes a significant contribution to their achievement. Pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress and achieve very well because work is very well matched to their ability. Similarly those pupils who are more able achieve very well because work is challenging and stimulating.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show a very high level of interest in their school, have very positive attitudes to their work and behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults are very good.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of right and wrong and show a high level of respect for others' feelings and beliefs, because the school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils arrive at school punctually.

Commentary

6. Pupils show great enthusiasm and a very high level of interest and curiosity in lessons. They are supported well by adults and this ensures they remain attentive and concentrate very well on their work. They are eager to participate in all aspects of school life. Children in the Reception classes are very keen to learn and become very excited about planning their own learning in "Plan/Do/Review" sessions. Behaviour is very good throughout the school, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils all know the school rules and what happens if those rules are broken. Their moral development is very good; pupils show respect for property and their environment. The pre-inspection questionnaire shows that the vast majority of parents are happy that their children are free from harassment. Pupils spoken to were very clear that there was always someone they could go to should they ever need support.

7. Pupils have opportunities to take on additional responsibility. Every day a child in each class becomes the 'child of the day'. This helps to build up their self esteem, and also gives them additional responsibilities, not only for small jobs around the school, but to show others how they should behave, for example, when they are at the front of a line to go into assembly, or out to lunch. Pupils are proud of their role and respond well to the responsibilities given to them. The school gives pupils the opportunity to contribute their views on how the school is run through circle time. Pupils

spoken to were happy that their views are taken into account; they are happy in school and feel secure and well cared for.

8. Pupils' social and moral developments are very good, relationships between pupils and with all the staff are very good, pupils get on very well and are able to work and play together collaboratively. Teachers have high expectations regarding appropriate behaviour in the classroom and pupils' respond well to these expectations. Pupils' are encouraged to think of others by raising money for a range of charities each year as well as raising funds for a Romanian Orphanage and for a Romanian family, whom they sponsor. Pupils' spiritual development is good. They show a good level of respect for the feelings and values of others and are given many opportunities to reflect and express these feelings in class when using their 'thinking hats'.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

9. Attendance at the school is in line with the national average and is therefore satisfactory. Unauthorised absence is slightly higher than the national median, but this is because the school is diligent when looking at the reasons for absence. Punctuality to school is good. Parents work with the school to ensure that their children come to school, and that they arrive on time; this ensures that lessons begin promptly. Attendance is recorded electronically and this allows staff to monitor attendance very closely and work with parents if concerns are identified. There were no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching and learning are very good and there are many opportunities for pupils to learn outside of lessons, with many exciting developments in the curriculum overall. Pupils are well cared for and the partnership with parents is good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good. Marking and assessment are good and help pupils to understand how they can improve their work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are made fun so that pupils enjoy learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of achievement and behaviour.
- Lessons are very well planned to include all pupils.
- Teaching assistants are used very well to support pupils with special educational needs.
- Marking is good.

Commentary

10. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school, and are consistent across different subjects. Children in the Reception classes make very good progress because lessons are very well planned. This very effective planning continues into Years 1 and 2, so that activities are relevant and pupils enjoy learning. Consequently they settle quickly, are keen to work together and complete their tasks. Learning is fun because teachers ensure that activities are relevant to the pupils. For example, work seen on the topic of 'Castles' captured the pupils' imaginations because it

involved designing their own castles after researching the topic on the internet. Pupils were keen to write about their work and discuss their findings with an adult.

11. Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations that all pupils will achieve as well as they can. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported so that they are fully included in lessons. When a child has a specific need then expert help and guidance is sought so that programmes can be put into place to help that child settle into school routines. Pupils who are more able have work that is challenging and so they make very good progress during their time in school. These high expectations extend to behaviour, so that all pupils can learn in an ordered environment where everyone’s contribution is valued. Pupils who join the school part-way through their education are given good support so that they too can settle quickly and make good progress.

12. Pupils sometimes take responsibility for planning their own learning. “Plan/Do/Review” sessions are particularly effective in helping pupils become independent and able to pursue activities that interest them. Teachers’ planning takes into account the interests of the pupils and this has a significant impact on learning.

13. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils’ learning opportunities. Specialist programmes, such as social speaking skills, help pupils to become confident when speaking in class, and give them the necessary encouragement to try things for themselves. This programme supports pupils in small groups so that they can extend their vocabulary and learn to speak confidently in a small group. The pupils who join in with this group make very good progress in their speaking skills and join in confidently when in class. Teaching assistants who support pupils with specific needs know their pupils very well so that they can anticipate when a child may have difficulty and put effective strategies in place to ensure that the child remains happy and settled. This also contributes to the calm atmosphere around the school.

14. Teachers mark work well so that pupils know what they must do to improve. Much of this is done in discussion with the pupils, either individually, or in small groups. Pupils are confident that teachers give them help when it is needed. Pupils progress is tracked effectively to make sure that they make the progress of which they are capable.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	14	5	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school offers a very good curriculum with many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and make mature decisions. Opportunities for enrichment, accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum development, including innovation, is excellent.
- Support assistants ensure all children are included whatever their needs.
- The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum.
- The school hall is small and this limits opportunities for physical education.

Commentary

15. The school provides an imaginative and innovative curriculum of very high quality. The staff have given considerable thought to encouraging pupils’ independence and ability to learn. This has led to revision of the curriculum and the introduction of new ideas, including “golden time” and

“Plan/Do/Review”. Here pupils take more responsibility for their own learning within a structured framework. Topic work includes aspects of literacy and numeracy, and this results in pupils using their skills effectively in subjects other than English and mathematics. The curriculum is further developed through themed weeks such as Easter Arts Week and Around the World Week. The result is a curriculum that is dynamic and exciting, teachers who are invigorated and energetic, and pupils who love coming to school to learn.

16. Children in the Reception classes experience very good activities that cover all areas of learning. They, too, take responsibility for planning some of their own learning and this has a significant impact on their personal development as they become excited about learning.

17. All pupils are valued and their potential harnessed, whatever their abilities. Children with considerable special needs are well integrated into the life of the school. This success is due in no small part to the dedicated and effective team of support staff, who work closely with the teachers to successfully support pupils with a range of needs.

18. The curriculum is enriched through visits to places linked to topic work, such as Portchester Castle at the end of a history topic on castles. Visitors are also welcomed into the school, and there are close links with the emergency services and the Royal Navy. The school has a flourishing choir and takes part in a cluster vocal festival each year. Professional artists run workshops. The quality and variety of artwork and modelling is above average, and the school is bursting with colourful and attractive displays of children’s work.

19. The school is well resourced. Care is taken in making resources accessible for staff and pupils. The school is spacious and provides an effective learning environment. It is also kept scrupulously clean and shining. However, the school hall is too small and is not suitable for teaching many physical education skills. It has a low ceiling and is sunken with a few steps leading down to it. It is an inadequate facility for teaching games’ skills.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of all pupils is good. The monitoring of pupils personal development is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The induction arrangements for pupils when they enter the school are good.
- There are good procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- Adults know pupils well and provide good levels of care for all their needs.
- Pupils feel well supported by all staff in the school.
- The involvement of pupils in the school’s work and development is good.

Commentary

20. The school has good health and safety procedures in place. Governors and staff make regular health and safety checks, the outcomes of which are regularly reported to the governing body. Regular checks are made to grounds, buildings and equipment. The headteacher is the nominated officer for child protection procedures and has received appropriate training. The policy is discussed at the beginning of each academic year with all staff to ensure that all are aware of the procedures and of the need to inform the headteacher should they have concerns at any time. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for the care of children who are unwell, or who have specific medical needs, are good and this helps pupils to feel safe and secure at school.

21. The school has good informal systems to monitor pupils’ personal development. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. They know their pupils

well, are aware of all their individual needs and requirements and provide good role models for behaviour. Pupils spoken to were happy that staff were available at all times to talk to should they have any concerns, and that any issues raised were always dealt with. There are good procedures for the school to take account of pupils' views through circle time, pupils spoken to were also clear that they would be able to speak to the headteacher if they wanted to discuss anything in particular.

22. There are good induction arrangements for pupils, both when they enter the school in the Reception class, as well as later on in the school, when pupils join part-way through their education. Procedures are well set out and ensure that pupils feel welcome in the school, settle well and have a good start to their school life. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents overwhelmingly said that they were happy with the procedures.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and with other schools are good. The school's links with the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make positive views of the school.
- Parents make a good contribution to pupils learning at home and at school.
- The school provides a good range of information for parents, including regular information about the curriculum.
- Written reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory; they inform parents what their children know, understand and can do but do not show how much progress each child has made during the year.

Commentary

23. Parents and carers have positive views of the school; the school works well with parents, who feel well informed and welcome in the school. Their views are sought on a range of issues so they feel valued. Parents are supportive of the school and give their help in fundraising activities and helping their children with homework.

24. Staff provide a good range of information for parents about what is happening in school and in particular a good range of information about the curriculum, including workshop sessions for parents, and information about how parents can help their children at home.

25. There are opportunities for parents to meet staff formally and informally to discuss their children's progress. The pre-inspection parents questionnaire showed that some parents do not feel they are given sufficient information about their children's progress. The inspection found that written annual reports for parents are satisfactory. Although they cover all subjects and do give some areas for development, they are not personal to the children. Reports do not say how well children are doing against what is expected nationally, or how much progress pupils have made over time.

26. The school takes children from a wide range of pre-school provision, and works closely with three of the groups. There are also well-established links with the local junior school, to which most pupils transfer. These links enable pupils to adjust to changes readily. In addition the school is a member of a cluster group of schools, which get together on a regular basis to promote and discuss provision in each school.

27. The school has sound links with the local community. A number of visitors come into school to talk to the children, such as the Community Policeman and the fire brigade. In addition the school has links with two local churches, which pupils visit. The minister of one church comes in and takes assembly regularly. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning in religious education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership, management and governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- There is very effective leadership by the curriculum leaders.
- Governors know the school well and act as constructive critical friends of the school managers.
- There is effective self-review and this has resulted in an innovative curriculum and identified weaknesses have been tackled effectively.
- Performance management is established well and has resulted in the quality of teaching across the school being consistent.

Commentary

28. The headteacher is a very good, thoughtful and principled leader with strategic vision. She has built a very effective staff team. All staff work well together so that all pupils can be fully included in lessons and activities. The reviews that have been carried out to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school are thorough and used very well to set the priorities for further improvement. This detailed analysis has led to the exciting curriculum that is offered to pupils and in improvements in standards.

29. The curriculum and other staff with responsibility, have developed good review practice so they are very clear of the curriculum strengths and know what needs improvement. They have established very effective improvement strategies to bring about required developments. A good example of this is the strategy to improve reading and writing. The individual spellings set for each child has improved the standards across the school in the short time they have been in place.

30. Very good management procedures are in place that ensure the highly efficient day to day running of the school so the maximum energy is focussed on improving the pupils' progress and not diverted elsewhere.

31. The school succeeds in having long serving teachers and although is currently without a deputy headteacher, effective procedures are in place to compensate until it is possible to make a suitable appointment. Care is taken in managing the individual professional development of the members of staff through performance management that ensures very effective deployment of staff according to their strengths. This deployment is also supported by effective financial management and control, linked closely with the school's improvement plan. This results in pupils with special educational needs, for example, having high quality support to meet their individual needs. There are sound procedures in place for ensuring best value principles are applied that follow the local education authority's guidance.

32. The governors provide very good leadership through their broad knowledge of the school's context, its strengths and of those aspects that need further strategic development. Governors make themselves available for parents to bring issues to their attention. Through their appropriate committees and other meetings, they act as very effective critical friends of the school; they do not just rubber stamp decisions made by senior management. Their views help to formulate the very well constructed and relevant school improvement plan; the implementation of the plan succeeds in creating a very purposeful place where high quality learning takes place.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	562,639
Total expenditure	554,273
Expenditure per pupil	3,131.48

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39,792
Balance carried forward to the next	48,158

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Reception classes is **very good**. When children join the school, from a variety of pre-schools and nurseries in the local area, their skills and knowledge are generally below average overall. They make very good progress, and achieve very well, in the year they spend in the reception class, so that most will reach the expected learning goals for children before they enter Year 1. A small minority will not reach all of the goals but some will exceed them. Teaching and learning are very good overall, and children are very keen to experience the wealth of activities available to them. All staff work very well together to plan interesting and relevant activities for the children. They have very high expectations for children behaving well and settling quickly to work so that all spend their time productively. Children with special educational needs, and those who are more able, have work planned that is carefully matched to their needs and abilities, and are supported very well so that they can make very good progress. Staff assess the children's work carefully and these assessments are used to plan the work and activities that the children will experience. Provision for children in the Reception classes is very well managed and there has been good improvement since the time of the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to plan some of their own learning very effectively.
- Staff encourage children to make very good relationships with each other.
- The induction process is very well established and results in children settling quickly into school routines.
- Children behave very well.

Commentary

33. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because they are encouraged to become independent and keen to learn. The classes operate a 'Plan/Do/Review' system for some of the school day and this is very effective in promoting independence. Children choose which activities they want to pursue and staff give them time to investigate their chosen activity. At the end of the session the children report back to the rest of the class on what they have learnt and what activities they have enjoyed. This means that children are excited and keen to participate. They work together very well, and are able to develop their speaking and listening skills when discussing their work with the rest of the class. They experience relevant activities that are interesting and fun. Children form very good relationships with each other and all of the adults in the Reception classes. Their behaviour is very good and staff have very high expectations of children working co-operatively together. The good induction procedure, whereby children visit the school on several occasions so that they become used to the surroundings, helps them to settle quickly and happily into school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All aspects of this area of learning are taught very well.
- Children become confident readers and writers.

- Opportunities for role-play are very well planned.
- Children begin to speak confidently and listen attentively.

Commentary

34. Teaching is very good in this area of learning and children make very good progress in all aspects of communication, language and literacy. The children are encouraged to talk confidently and listen to each other attentively during large groups times. Big books are used very well so that children learn early reading skills and they take books home so that they learn to read confidently. Teachers promote early writing skills very well and many children write simple words, using their knowledge of sounds to spell these correctly. The role play areas, such as the home corner, are well organised and used frequently by the children, so that they are able to make up their own stories and act out their experiences. Teachers have high expectations of children using their thinking skills. During 'Plan/Do/Review' sessions children think about and explain their choices and then discuss maturely what they have learnt. Communication, language and literacy lessons are made interesting for the children and they concentrate well, talking enthusiastically about what they are doing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn to count confidently and record numbers correctly.
- They use a wide variety of mathematical language.
- Activities are well planned so that all children have work that is matched to their level of ability.

Commentary

35. Mathematical sessions are well planned so that all children are included and make very good progress. Children with special educational needs are very well supported so that they can join in with the activities offered. Children learn to count everyday objects confidently and accurately, and more able children learn to write numbers correctly. The children begin to learn to add up and subtract small sets of objects and record their findings. The use of mathematical language is promoted well and children know the names of the basic two-dimensional shapes and are beginning to become confident naming a wide range of three-dimensional shapes. Sessions are interesting and fun because they are well planned, use a variety of relevant resources and are based on play activities that interest all of the children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many interesting activities are planned so that children can make very good progress.
- Children become very confident when using the computer

Commentary

36. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because activities are interesting and hold the attention of the children. Many of the activities offered are chosen by the children, and this has a significant impact on their personal, social and emotional development. They build complex models using a wide variety of construction resources and eagerly talk about their models. They learn about the local environment and about recent events in their lives. The children have investigated old and new toys and can explain some of the differences they have found. The outside

area is used very well so that the children can grow seeds and plant and tend them as they grow. The children use the computer very confidently, accessing relevant programs and explaining what they are doing as they work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outside area is used very well to promote the development of physical skills.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils achieving well.

Commentary

37. Children make very good progress in this area of learning and achieve very well because teachers have high expectations and plan interesting activities that include all of the children. The outside area is used very well so that the children learn to become more coordinated as they ride a variety of wheeled toys and use small equipment such as bats and balls confidently. The hall is used so that music can be explored and children dance imaginatively. Pupils achieve very well because teachers ensure they learn the skills necessary to develop control. Children use scissors and other tools safely and with increasing control, and they use a wide range of pencils, brushes and glue sticks confidently. Personal hygiene is promoted well so that children learn the importance of keeping healthy through washing hands and avoiding germs.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide variety of well-planned opportunities for children to explore creative activities.
- Displays celebrate children's work very well.

Commentary

38. Children make very good progress in this area of learning because there is a wide range of opportunities offered and children enjoy them. Imaginative play is well planned so that children act out their own experiences in the role-play area and use play equipment, such as cars and dolls, to make up their own stories. There are many resources to support children when they create their own pictures and collages, and their work is displayed very well for all to celebrate. Children participate enthusiastically in making models out of dough and in cutting and sticking activities to make their own models. Children explore music and have planned opportunities to dance and sing.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Good use is made of paired learning to develop pupils' understanding and use of language.
- There is good use of marking and short term target setting to raise standards.
- Good curriculum leadership has recognised the areas for development and taken suitable actions to improve standards.
- Tracking of pupils' progress to set expectations for their achievement has been developed well.

Commentary

39. Results in national tests have fluctuated since the time of the last inspection, and reading results fell significantly last year. However the school has placed much emphasis on improving reading as well as writing and standards of work seen during the inspection are now in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement as pupils come into school with generally below average attainment.

40. Pupils with special educational needs are supported particularly well through carefully planned programmes of work and consistently good teaching. This is aided by very good use of support staff and the effective use of well-chosen resources matched to pupils' needs and good use of displays and reference materials.

41. Standards in speaking and listening improve as children progress through the school from below average as they enter school to close to average by the age of seven. Most pupils speak confidently and with suitable expression. The school's initiative on developing paired working is having a positive impact in raising standards of speaking and listening.

42. Most pupils read confidently by the age of seven and achieve well as they develop their knowledge of different types of books. This is because of the well-managed teaching of literacy using a good range of resources including an increased range of non-fiction books for boys. Each class has a well-organised reading and listening area to encourage reading.

43. Standards in writing are in line with those expected. Pupils know the main features of the different types of writing needed for different purposes. By the age of seven most pupils draft accounts, instructions, stories and poems using sentence structure appropriate to the expectations for their age. Most use punctuation correctly. Their spelling, although variable, shows understanding of the spelling rules. Pupils follow individualised spelling programmes and this is having a very positive effect in improving standards in spelling.

44. The quality of teaching in English is a consistent strength throughout the school and is good overall. Lessons are fun and maintain the pupils' interest and they are given good quality opportunities to learn collaboratively. Teachers provide pupils with high quality guidance on how to write. Teachers ensure their written comments in the pupils' books provide a good example of the school's handwriting style for the pupils to achieve. High expectation for pupils' behaviour and performance is a consistent feature of all teaching and this contributes to the very good attitudes and good achievement seen in lessons. An example of this in one session is when pupils were invited to respond to a poem about a slip in historical time; a challenging concept for seven year olds. They responded well, using inventive words in different settings to that expected. One child described a time slip as a "portal" into another time and place, remarking he knew that word from his computer-based toy.

45. The subject is well led and managed. Weaknesses have been identified and tackled effectively. This has led to improved standards in reading and writing. There is good quality guidance for all staff on how to raise standards and bring about improvement. There has been good improvement, overall, since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects. Some good work was seen in history particularly on the work on castles and also in the “Plan/Do/ Review” work. Effective use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils’ work in literacy across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make activities exciting and fun for pupils.
- There is an emphasis on mathematical thinking and problem solving.
- Effective assessment leads to appropriate action being taken.
- Marking does not tend to show pupils how they can improve.

Commentary

47. National test results, and standards seen during the inspection, are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2. Pupils enter the school with below average abilities, overall, so this represents good achievement. Pupils achieve well because teaching is consistently good with high expectations from teachers and work that is well matched to pupils’ abilities. More able pupils in particular are given suitably challenging work to do. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class so that they can make good progress and achieve well. As part of its assessment procedures the school noticed that higher attaining girls were performing less well than the boys, and took measures to address this weakness. Teachers gave specialist tuition to the girls they identified, and made sure that boys did not dominate group discussions. In this way these girls made good progress so they did as well as they could in the tests.

48. Pupils are enthusiastic and work hard. They are given interesting and practical tasks to do. For example Year 2 pupils used real money to “buy” sweets. Others counted gold coins in the castle role-play area. Teachers have thought carefully about the kind of lessons offered, and have focused on developing pupils’ thinking skills. This means questioning is of a high quality and pupils are expected to justify their answers. Many lessons feature investigations and problem solving. Good use is made of the computers. All children have individual targets they are working towards, and know what they are. “Washing lines” in classrooms literally hang up the things children have learnt to remind them and to inform parents about what their children can do. This novel idea has proved extremely popular and successful.

49. The subject is well led and managed. Work is regularly monitored and support given to staff so that all pupils can achieve well. Pupils’ progress is tracked effectively, and strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum identified. Improvements are followed-up to ensure that they are having an effect on children’s learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in other subjects, and these links are especially effective in science, design and technology and history. When designing and making purses pupils

had to measure accurately and estimate the amount of material they would need. Computers are regularly used to support learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach standards that are above those expected for pupils in Year 2, and all pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching is very good and ensures that all pupils are interested in science.
- The subject is very well led and managed and this has ensured consistency across the school.

Commentary

51. Teachers assess the standards that pupils achieve at the end of Year 2. These assessments show pupils reach standards, overall, that are in line with those expected. More able pupils reach higher standards. However, in work seen during the inspection many pupils are working at a high level and all are achieving very well. Much emphasis has been put on pupils using their investigative skills when learning scientific knowledge and this has had a significant impact on achievement. The result is that pupils are very confident when carrying out experiments and can explain their findings and how they arrived at them. So, for example, when a class was investigating forces, each group was able to explain how a car could be made to move faster, and how it could be slowed down.

52. Teaching overall is very good because teachers have very good subject knowledge and have high expectations of pupils learning a lot in lessons and behaving well. Pupils respond positively in lessons because activities are interesting and capture their imagination. Teachers plan lessons so that all pupils are included, and those with special educational needs are very well supported in class. All pupils see themselves as scientists and present their work neatly, using a variety of tables to record their findings.

53. Science is very well led in the school and this has resulted in the improved standards. Weaknesses have been identified and tackled very effectively, so that pupils are now carrying out many more investigations and reaching higher standards. The science week that has recently happened in the school has had a significant impact on standards, as pupils know that science is fun and interesting. There has been very good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Standards have risen and the quality of teaching and learning has improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 2 pupils reach standards that are in line with those expected.
- Teachers are very knowledgeable about ICT and use the resources very well.
- ICT is promoted very well across other subjects.

Commentary

54. Year 2 pupils reach standards that are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils are confident when using computers and independently access a variety of relevant programs. They word process some of their work and use the internet to research work for other subjects. Pupils talk

enthusiastically about their learning and are interested in the activities, working together collaboratively on the computers.

55. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils becoming increasingly independent in their research, and pupils respond positively. For example, some pupils in Year 2 independently accessed a relevant mathematics program and worked together very well to explore addition and subtraction. Sessions are well planned and pupils with special educational needs, and those who are more able, have good support so that they have work that is challenging, but not unachievable. Consequently all pupils achieve well.

56. Information and communication technology is led and managed well. Teachers have had relevant training and the computers are used very well in all subjects. There has been good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Expectations have changed over the years and the school has kept pace with these expectations.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. Information and communication technology is promoted very well across the curriculum. Pupils are very confident when using the internet to research topics such as “Castles” and this has a significant impact on their work in history and design and technology. They use bar charts in science to record their findings and sort information to produce good quality graphs.

HUMANITIES

58. Insufficient evidence was available to make judgements about standards or the quality of provision in **geography, history** or **religious education**. Comments are therefore based on scrutiny of planning, discussions with pupils and observation of previous work. Suitable ranges of activities and adequate time allowances are provided to enable pupils to meet the National Curriculum expectations for geography and history and to reflect the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

59. There is good use of local resources in geography and, through visits, pupils develop good understanding of their environment. They know about key features of the locality and draw simple maps and are familiar with symbols for directions and keys to objects on a map.

60. Some of the work of seven year olds in history is beyond that expected for their age. In their preparation work for a visit to Portchester Castle pupils are challenged to place themselves in the role of either an attacker or defender of the castle. They show impressive understanding of the considerations that face both groups. They had researched castles well, making very effective use of related web-sites on the Internet. Their work on castles extends into use of maps, reference books and making excellent models of castles out of boxes and cartons.

61. In religious education pupils are learning about some world faiths. There are stimulating displays around the school which engage and inform pupils about major religious events across world faiths.

62. Discussions with pupils revealed a strong interest in humanities and by the age of seven they talk with ease about geographical features in their locality and have developed notions of distance and place. They show awareness of historical periods and the differences between recent and past events in history. They display knowledge of places of historical interest they have visited. Pupils talk readily about their recent work in religious education, and of some of the stories arising from their latest work about Christianity.

63. There are good resources for all humanities subjects including a good selection of books in the school library and suitable access to information and control technology to support their learning. Leadership and management of these subjects is good.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

64. Art and design, music and physical education were not a focus of the inspection. Enough evidence was gained to make a judgement on standards in art and design, but not in music or physical education. In **art and design** standards remain above average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve very well because they enter the school with skills that are below average. They study the work of famous artists such as Van Gogh and Kandinsky and work independently. Enrichment is provided by visiting artists. A training day was also held for staff by an artist focused on developing teachers own creativity in using particular art skills. The quality of the work on display suggests that skills are well taught. For example, close observational drawings of flints show superior control of line and tone. Work is celebrated in vibrant displays. For example, at the time of the inspection every child in the school had produced a careful painting of their mother and had written a sentence about why they loved her underneath. There are strong links to other subjects such as history and science.

65. In **music** one good lesson was observed. It had a lively pace and pupils were fully involved. The teacher taped them performing with untuned percussion instruments and played it back to them for their evaluation. Resources are good, with a wide variety of multi-cultural instruments elegantly displayed in the hall. The coordinator has written a very effective scheme of work and gives demonstration lessons to build teachers' subject knowledge. There is an active school choir and visits by professional musicians, including a percussion workshop. In **physical education** the greatest barrier to learning is the school hall, which is too small and ill-suited to the teaching of games skills, although it is large enough for dance and gymnastics.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well.
- Projects focus on the development of skills.
- Links across the curriculum are good.

Commentary

66. Standards are above average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The difference is that since the last inspection pupils enter the school with below average skills, so that achievement is very good. This is due to very good teaching with an emphasis on the learning of specific skills and techniques.

67. Teachers have good subject knowledge and give all pupils confidence regardless of their ability. Pupils are encouraged to work independently, and do so with sustained concentration. They plan projects carefully. Year 2 pupils were challenged to design a purse to hold gold coins as part of a topic on castles. Their attention to detail resulted in a range of imaginative and practical examples. They evaluate their work constructively, and apply the skills they have learnt to new projects. For example, papier-mache skills developed in creating a giant class dragon were then put to good use when making model castles. These had working drawbridges.

68. Pupils are ably supported by learning assistants, whose own subject knowledge ensures very good progress. Year 1 pupils made pinch pots first out of play dough and then out of clay. They produced pots of high quality, inscribed with patterns by a range of tools. Pupils have also designed posters demonstrating safe practice in the food technology area. Links with other aspects of the curriculum are strong. Literacy and numeracy skills are used in designing and evaluating projects. Portfolios of work and photographic records reveal a diverse and stimulating curriculum.

69. The subject is led and managed well. The subject leader brings expertise and enthusiasm, and a wealth of ideas. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and recorded. Resources are good and easily accessible.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

70. No personal, social and health education lessons were observed, but through well planned sessions pupils in each class frequently discuss relevant issues, such as family relationships, addressing stereotypes and becoming better learners. For example in one session pupils gave reasons for times of day they like and dislike. The teacher sensitively asked them to volunteer to become a "play partner" for a child who disliked playtimes. Extra support is provided for those pupils who have problems relating to others. The pupils think of people less fortunate than themselves by supporting a number of charities. The school has also "adopted" a family in Romania. Policies for learning about drugs misuse and sex education are in place. Sex education is taught through the science and the health curriculum. A police officer helps with drugs education. There is no school council to provide pupils with a formal opportunity to communicate their views.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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