

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTON PARK INFANT SCHOOL

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116112

Headteacher: Mrs M Preston

Lead inspector: Mrs Alison Cogher

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 November 2003

Inspection number: 260646

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 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	233
School address:	Newtown Road Woolston Southampton
Postcode:	SO19 9HX
Telephone number:	023 8044 8962
Fax number:	023 8043 7825
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs I Oakley
Date of previous inspection:	25 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average size infant school takes pupils from four to seven years old, and is maintained by Southampton Local Education Authority. At the time of the inspection there were 231 full-time pupils in nine classes. Many pupils start school with standards that are well below those usually found. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is also above the national average. Pupils' special educational needs are speech and language, and behaviour related. There are very few pupils from ethnic minorities and none requiring extra support for learning English. The school is involved in a number of local and national initiatives and community provision in support of families in the immediate area.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24805	Alison Cogher	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Music
9756	Kenneth Parsons	Lay inspector	
20007	Trevor Neat	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1	21
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUTION

This is a good and improving school providing good value for money. The good leadership of the headteacher, good management and good teaching ensure all pupils achieve well. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to their work. Pupils are keen to come to school. The school provides a safe and welcoming environment in which pupils learn well. Pupils receive high levels of care, good support and guidance. The school has experienced teacher recruitment difficulties in the recent past. Not all parents are supportive of their children's learning.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are below those expected.
- Provision for the teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory.
- The good leadership of the headteacher and senior management team.
- The good quality of teaching and the good achievement of all pupils.
- The role of subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
- The care, support and guidance provided by the school helps pupils learn well.
- The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils' good behaviour, enthusiasm and involvement in their work.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- The school's involvement in educational support programmes are very productive, and help pupils and their families.
- Assessment information is used well to guide teaching and set targets for pupils.
- Too few opportunities are planned to support pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards in English and mathematics rose for three years between 1999 and 2001. Standards then fell, partly as a result of staffing difficulties that have only recently been resolved. Inspection evidence indicates the fall in standards has now been halted, and they are beginning to rise. The school has made significant improvements to the provision for ICT. However, it has struggled to increase the number of computers to the expected level and standards and provision remain unsatisfactory. Standards in science have improved and are now satisfactory. Recent reorganisation of the curriculum, year group teaching teams and co-ordinator roles, has strengthened the school's provision overall. It is in a good position to improve.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	C	E	E	E
Writing	C	E	E*	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	D

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

Standards in writing were in the bottom five percent of schools nationally – E*.

The attainment of children on entry to the school is low, and often very low in speaking and listening. **Achievement in all year groups is good.** Despite the good progress however, the majority of children in the Foundation Stage do not reach the expected goals in any of the six areas

of learning, by the end of their reception year and standards at the end of Year 2 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. They are average in science.

Pupils' personal development is **good**. Their spiritual and cultural development is **satisfactory**, and their social and moral development is **good**. Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development are often missed because they are not planned for in lessons. Pupils' behaviour is **good** and they have **good** attitudes towards their work and each other. Attendance is **unsatisfactory** and some pupils often arrive after school has started.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting lessons that motivate pupils to learn. This together with pupils' positive attitudes leads to good learning. Assessment procedures are good and teachers use the information they gather well to plan lessons that move pupils learning forwards. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and appropriate emphasis is placed on developing pupils' literacy skills. The curriculum is enhanced by the good enrichment activities. The provision made for pupils' care and welfare is very good. They are given good support and advice. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall. The school works hard to support parents through its involvement in national initiatives such as "Surestart", and Family Literacy and Numeracy programmes. Links with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The good leadership of the headteacher, and good management of the senior management team, have successfully steered the school through a period when recruitment of staff has been difficult. A clear plan for improvement has been implemented. Governance is satisfactory because recruitment of governors has also been difficult and many are new to their role. Many co-ordinators are new to their posts and their roles require development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are supportive of the school overall. However, many do not become actively involved in supporting their children's learning. The inspection team is pleased to support the very positive views expressed by parents but considers they could be given more information and guidance about how they can support their children's learning at home. The school actively seeks and acts on the views of parents. However, not all parents feel able to respond to the current information gathering procedures. Pupils' views of the school are regularly gathered and acted on. Pupils are very happy with their school overall.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Raise standards in, and the provision made for, ICT.
- Develop the roles of co-ordinators.
- Improve the information and guidance given to parents about how they can support their children's learning.
- Identify, and plan for opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Improve the attendance rate of pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement throughout the school is **good**. Standards at the end of Year 2 are **unsatisfactory** in English, mathematics and ICT. They are **satisfactory** in science and religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well because teaching is good and pupils have positive attitudes to their work.
- Standards in science have improved.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress.

Commentary

1. The attainment of the majority of children is well below average when they are admitted into the reception classes. Standards in speaking and listening are poor for many children. Their speech is unclear and they use a very limited vocabulary. Assessment information clearly shows that they make good progress and achieve well compared to their individual starting points. However, most children do not reach the expected goals in any of the six areas of learning.
2. When compared to schools nationally standards at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well below average in reading and mathematics and very low in writing. Compared to similar schools, standards were well below average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. Standards in speaking and listening remain below those expected. However, good teaching ensures pupils become confident communicators and use an increasing range of subject specific vocabulary. When pupils' attainment on entry is taken into account, data shows that they make good progress, overall. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
3. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Good levels of support are provided in lessons from teachers and teaching assistants. Individual targets for these pupils focus well on what they need to learn next. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls of similar ability.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (14.8)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	11.3 (12.6)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.1 (15.5)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 79 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Standards rose in reading and writing for three consecutive years following the last inspection. During 2001 to 2003 the school experienced significant staff recruitment difficulties, including the appointment of a co-ordinator for English. In addition the school's comprehensive assessment and pupil progress data shows that the 2003 Year 2 pupils were of lower ability overall than previous year groups, and some pupils had extreme behaviour difficulties. Collectively these circumstances had a significant effect on the quality of teaching and

learning in the school overall and serve to explain the fall in standards after a period of good improvement. Standards in mathematics are variable from year to year. However, a rising trend has been established in mathematics that mirrors the improving national trend. The school has worked hard to improve the provision made for ICT but has not kept up with the rising expectations. Although pupils receive more teaching of ICT than at the last inspection it is not sufficient to improve standards to those expected. Increased emphasis on the teaching of science through investigation and improved teacher expertise has ensured that standards have risen and are now broadly average.

5. The school has worked hard to reverse the fall in standards in 2002 and 2003 in reading and writing, and to sustain the overall improvements in mathematics and science. Staffing difficulties have been resolved, year group teams of teachers reorganised, co-ordinators appointed, and the curriculum has been fully reviewed. These changes have already had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Inspection evidence indicates that the fall in standards has been halted and they are beginning to improve. The school is now well placed to improve further.
6. Standards are rising because achievement within lessons is good because teaching is good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They respond well to teachers' high expectations of behaviour. Pupils work hard in lessons and receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school has high expectations for behaviour and is effective in helping pupils to meet them. Pupils conduct is usually good. Pupils have a positive attitude to their school and are proud of it.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils have a positive attitude and are proud of their school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The school is effective in promoting good relationships and helping pupils relate well to other people.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is underdeveloped because it is not planned for.
- Attendance by pupils is below the national average for a school of this type, and some pupils arrive late at the start of the school day.

Commentary

7. The school's aims to provide a happy caring family atmosphere in which everybody is valued and people are considerate of each other. Under the committed leadership of the headteacher, these ideals are translated into practice well. Most pupils like their school and are proud to belong to it. They are happy to come to school in the morning and leave their parents without fuss. Many children start school with poor social skills. Staff quickly establish the way children are expected to behave, and help them to develop good relations with adults and each other. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher successfully promoted good learning and social habits, by insisting that 'classroom voices' were used so that all could learn without distraction. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions as they learn that they have choices with consequences. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good role models, valuing the views of all pupils and maintaining very clear expectations of behaviour. When teaching is good and lessons engage their attention, pupils show particularly positive attitudes towards their learning. In a history lesson, for example, they were keen to question the teacher, who was dressed as Guy Fawkes, about the gunpowder plot. Nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, want to learn and to succeed. They are enthusiastic about their work and co-operate well with one

another when they have the opportunity to work together in pairs and groups. Pupils participate enthusiastically in after-school clubs and when they are given responsibilities. For example, they take the responsibility of tidying up after a lesson very seriously. Behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime is generally good and pupils are usually considerate to others, for example, they take turns very sensibly when playing with the ride-on toys. Although mentioned as a concern by a few parents, incidents of bullying or harassment are actually rare, and dealt with well by staff when they do occur. Most pupils develop a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils say that the teachers usually listen to them and take their views seriously. Pupils are clear about what to do and who to speak to if they have problems. Staff show considerable concern for the needs of the pupils in their care. Although two pupils were excluded from the school last year, the situation was handled well and they were successfully reintegrated.

8. Pupils' positive attitudes owe much to the good provision for their social and moral development. Regular use of circle times (times when pupils talk together about a variety of topics) gives pupils a chance to air their views and to develop their view of the world. The Zippy's Friends programme is effective in providing pupils with a weekly opportunity to explore their own emotions and how they relate to others. The school's provision for pupils with problems interacting with others is very good. The school employs a welfare assistant to support pupils who need "time out" from the pressures of the classroom, whilst the Thumbs Up Club provides a more structured environment that helps to teach social skills to those who find breaktime difficult.
9. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies do not consistently provide pupils with opportunities to develop their spirituality. In addition the contribution made through other subjects such as religious education (RE), art and music is limited. Teachers' planning does not identify where pupils' spirituality could be developed and opportunities to do so are often missed. The creativity of teachers' planning ensures that some lessons contain spiritual elements. For example, in a science lesson, pupils watched in amazed wide-eyed wonder as the teacher pulled a carrot from the soil. However, teachers do not pursue such moments sufficiently to promote pupils' developing spirituality. Opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural awareness are provided through subjects such as art and RE. For example, pupils study the paintings of artist Andy Warhol and complete their own paintings in his style. They celebrate Diwali and study the beliefs that underpin the festival; they also created their own madli and Rangoli patterns. Pupils study Jewish culture and there are some contributions in music, design and technology (foreign foods) and dance to their cultural development. However, these opportunities are not fully explored and as a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding of British and world cultures is not as good as it could be.
10. The school is part of a City of Southampton project to improve attendance and has effective procedures in place to do so. The school encourages pupils to come to school regularly. They are awarded stickers and certificates for good attendance. The school telephones parents on the first day a child is absent and there is very effective liaison and support from the education welfare officer when it is needed. The school keeps accurate records of absences and monitors them well; indeed, the efficiency with which lateness is recorded, that is far more accurate than that found in most schools, is one reason why the absence figures are so high. Attendance for 2002/03 was slightly better than 2001/02; nevertheless, attendance by pupils remains below the national norm and the level of unauthorised absence remains high. A significant number of pupils arrive after school has started in the morning. There is a genuinely high rate of pupil illness, which is not unusual in young children. However, despite the school's efforts, there is a significant minority of pupils with poor attendance records; for the year 2002/03, 24 pupils attended for less than 80 per cent of the school year. These pupils experience breaks in their learning, and the progress they make is not as good as that made by other pupils. Some parents' negative attitudes to schooling are believed to be the main reason for pupils' absences and poor punctuality in the majority of these cases.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2001/02 (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	8.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.1
National data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	212	4	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	11	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by senior staff. Good management has successfully guided the school through a period when the recruitment of staff has been difficult. Recent changes include the reorganisation of year group teams, the curriculum and co-ordinator roles. Good teaching ensures pupils learn effectively. The school monitors its work well and has clearly identified areas of strength and those in need of improvement. The ethos of the school is very good. The school provides a very caring and welcoming environment in which all pupils can thrive. Improvement is needed in the development of co-ordinators as leaders of their subjects.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Assessment of pupils' work is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Expectations of what pupils will learn are high in English and mathematics, although on occasions they are too high for some pupils.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Pupils are expected to behave well, and be fully involved in their lessons.
- Teachers use a good range of teaching methods to secure pupils' interest in activities.
- Relationships are good, and pupils receive very good encouragement and support from adults.
- Good use is made of resources and teaching assistants.
- The inclusion of all pupils ensures they achieve well.
- The assessment information collected is used effectively to plan for pupils' next steps in learning.
- Homework could be used more effectively to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

11. Teachers work in year group teams to share their expertise and ideas. Teachers are committed to improving the quality of their teaching and the learning opportunities provided for pupils. They have responded positively to the rigorous monitoring and evaluation of their work by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. This has ensured that teaching in classes containing the same age pupils, and through the school is becoming increasingly consistent. Within each year group team there are significant strengths. The sharing, and adoption of this good practice is supporting further improvements in teaching throughout the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	5 (13%)	17 (42%)	18 (45%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. In response to the school's aim to raise standards, teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve. In English and mathematics pupils are challenged to use what they already know to improve, and activities are generally well matched to pupils' abilities. In the vast majority of lessons this strategy is effective and pupils' learning is good. However, for a small minority of pupils this level of challenge is sometimes too high as insufficient time is allowed for them to practise previously learned skills. Teachers have good subject knowledge overall and plan lessons that have clear learning objectives. They give good demonstrations, use a range of teaching methods and a variety of interesting resources to ensure pupils' interest is maintained. Consequently, in the majority of lessons pupils' learning is good. For example, puppets are used extensively throughout the school to encourage pupils to respond, and practical 'hands on' activities are a feature of many lessons. A particularly good example of this very effective teaching was observed in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, where pupils solved subtraction problems using real carrots to find out how many were left in a farmer's field after a rabbit had eaten some.
13. Teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well and pupils remain focused on the tasks they have been set. Pupils' learning is not as good as it should be when their over enthusiasm is not managed effectively. Relationships between pupils, and adults and pupils are good. Lessons are productive because adults encourage and support pupils to try their best.
14. In the majority of lessons the targeted support from adults ensures pupils of all abilities achieve well. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers. They are skilled and make a significant contribution to the learning of pupils of all ages and abilities.
15. Teachers structure lessons to provide pupils with opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups. They are keen to share their ideas but because of their limited vocabulary they often find it difficult to articulate their thoughts. However, because pupils' efforts are valued they develop the confidence to 'have a go' and not to be concerned if their responses are not correct. This positive approach results in good learning.
16. The school has tried to promote homework as making a valuable contribution to pupils' learning overall. However, parental support for homework is very variable. Parents who are supportive make a significant contribution to their children's learning overall. Schemes such as inviting parents in to share books with their children in the library every week go some way to promoting the importance of parental support in pupils' learning. The school recognises that it needs to continue its efforts in this area, particularly for parents of children in the reception classes who currently receive limited information and guidance.

17. Assessment of reception age children is good. Teachers and teaching assistants make regular notes that record what children can and cannot do. This information is used well to guide planning of future lessons. Procedures for assessing English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 are good. The comprehensive range of information gathered is used well to identify whole-school issues and to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Very challenging whole-school targets are set, and pupils' progress is monitored regularly to identify those pupils who are, or are not, progressing as well as expected. Action is taken as necessary for these pupils by providing additional support or challenge in lessons. The practice of sharing targets with pupils is developing well. Assessment in science is also good. It is satisfactory in ICT and religious education.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for enriching the curriculum through clubs, working with outside agencies, visits and visitors are good and have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The school works hard to enrich the learning environment and it is attractive and welcoming.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school's strategies for teaching English and mathematics are effective.
- Literacy effectively supports learning in other curriculum areas.
- Innovative methods to support curriculum organisation and development have recently been introduced.
- The role of subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
- Use of ICT to support learning across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
- The library is a valuable resource that is underused.
- Opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness are not identified.

Commentary

18. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all aspects of the curriculum. Teaching assistants provide good support for these pupils, and for some pupils with very specific needs this support is often very good. They ensure all pupils with special educational needs have good access to the curriculum in lessons and as a result they make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. The school actively monitors and evaluates the provision carefully in order to identify aspects that could be improved.
19. The curriculum and school timetable has recently been re-organised to ensure all subjects receive sufficient focus. A greater emphasis has been placed on the development of pupils' communication skills, particularly their speaking and listening skills. Literacy lessons are used effectively to support learning in other curriculum areas. Pupils develop their understanding in other subjects by using their skills in spoken language, reading and writing. Mathematics lessons also receive high priority in the school's curriculum planning. It is too early yet to identify the specific impact of these changes; however, indications from lessons are positive as pupils are using their literacy skills widely and their learning is good overall. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory because opportunities are not identified and pupils have limited access to computers in lessons. The library is underused as a resource to encourage pupils to develop a love of books or to develop research skills. Opportunities to support pupils' spiritual and cultural development are not regularly identified in subjects such as art and music, or in assemblies and during religious education lessons. Consequently these aspects of pupils' learning are not as strong as their moral and social development. Careful planning ensures reception age children are well prepared for the National Curriculum when they move into Year 1. Similarly pupils are well prepared for their move to Year 3 when they transfer into the junior school.

20. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and makes an effective contribution to the health and wellbeing of pupils. The school offers a good range of enrichment activities such as football and choir that are very well attended. Visits and visitors provide pupils with additional experiences to support their learning. The support received from outside agencies and involvement in initiatives such as Sure Start, and Family Literacy and Numeracy further enrich the curriculum for many pupils, and help to involve parents in their children's learning.
21. Recent reorganisation has resulted in many co-ordinators being very new to the roles. They have drawn up plans to improve the provision in their subjects. However, few of them have had the opportunity to rigorously monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and standards in their subjects. The school's good accommodation is used well to support the curriculum. Areas outside the classroom are used well for small group work and the school's grounds are regularly used to support science and art activities. Resources for literacy and numeracy are good. Resources for ICT are insufficient to support pupils' expected skills development. Resources in other subjects are adequate. The school has identified the need to improve the quantity and quality of resources to support pupils' learning. The school has effective library areas and for many pupils, this provides their only access to books as they do not use public libraries and have few books of their own at home. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented effectively and particular emphasis is given to raising the communication skills of pupils as many enter school with poor skills.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good** overall. The school provides **good** care, guidance and support for pupils to help them learn effectively in a safe environment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has effective child protection and health and safety procedures in place.
- The provision to support pupils' health and welfare is effective.
- Staff work hard to develop supportive relationships with their pupils.
- There are effective arrangements to help new pupils settle into the school.

Commentary

22. The school has very good formal procedures for health and safety and child protection and these are implemented well. The caretaker ensures that the school buildings provide a safe environment for pupils. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through the school's provision for their personal, social and health education. Teachers and teaching assistants are vigilant in carrying out their child protection responsibilities. The school works well with other relevant agencies, such as the school nurse, educational welfare officer and social services to ensure that pupils, and their parents get additional help when they need it. Good first aid and medical procedures are supportive of pupils' wellbeing in all situations.
23. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and help them develop as individuals. The vast majority of parents believe adults at the school help pupils to become mature and independent, and a positive ethos permeates the school. Inspection evidence supports this belief. Adults genuinely care about pupils and they work well together as a team to share information and responsibility. They respond appropriately if a pupil is having problems. Pupils appreciate this support and the emotional security the school provides helps them to flourish. The 'Thumbs Up' programme provides good support for pupils who need additional assistance to interact constructively in a range of situations. Pupils' personal development is monitored by class teachers, and appropriate records are kept as necessary. The school's personal, social and health education programme addresses a good range of issues relevant to young children in a way they find accessible and informative. Pupils' views are sought and acted on as part of the school improvement planning cycle.

24. Induction arrangements for new pupils are good. The school works effectively with local pre-school groups to ensure that children make a smooth transition into school. Children have six sessions in school before they join and teachers visit children both in their pre-school setting and their homes. Good liaison between the pre-schools and the school on, for example, the teaching of letters ensures consistency of provision for children that supports their learning. Some parents feel more written information could be provided to help them to know how to support their children's learning. The inspection team agree with this view.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents are supportive of the school. The school has **good** links with the community and puts a great deal of effort into providing educational and other opportunities for pupils, their parents and other members of the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the school.
- Links with the local community are productive.
- Despite the school's efforts, a significant number of parents do not get involved with the school or their children's learning.
- Written reports, although very easy to read, do not give parents enough information.

Commentary

25. Parents are supportive of the school and are appreciative of the efforts the headteacher and staff make to work with them for the benefit of their children. The school has the confidence of its parents and it lives up to their expectations. The school is active in seeking parents' views and takes the results seriously. However, the methods used by the school to gather this information are formal and as result not all parents contribute. The school communicates with parents on a regular basis and has a policy of making information easy to understand. A good example of this is the format of the annual reports to parents on their child's progress. The school has developed an innovative format that includes pictures which parents like. However, in emphasising the accessibility of the document, the amount of information provided is limited. The format for reports for reception age children does not sufficiently reflect the learning goals of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus are well written documents that reflect the desire to be accessible to all parents. There are regular newsletters that keep parents informed about the life of the school. Teachers and teaching assistants are available to parents at the door to each classroom to see parents in the morning and afternoon, and the headteacher is regularly in the playground talking to parents.
26. The active Friends Association organises social and fund-raising events that have raised considerable funds for the school. These events are well supported by parents. Support from parents for homework is variable, but generally limited. The school promotes Family Literacy and Numeracy through curriculum meetings, organised in conjunction with City College. These events are less well supported than social events. The school organises a "SHARE" programme to advise parents on ways to help their children learn. Parents who attend these meetings are well supported by the teacher leading the session. They showed considerable interest and skill in finding ways to help their children apply the mathematics concepts learned at school to everyday situations. This support has a positive impact on pupils' learning, but this represents a small minority of the parents overall. The information and guidance given to parents is not sufficient to encourage them to take an active role in supporting their children's learning at home.
27. The school was influential in setting up the local Sure Start programme and its contribution remains important. Although in the early stages of development the upgrading of the school's community room and the planned additional facilities will increase provision on the school site.

Sure Start aims to make life better for young children and their parents through early education, childcare, play, health and family support. This represents a very good support for local families with potentially long-term benefits for children involved in the provision.

28. The school's links with the local community and business, whilst not extensive are productive. Good liaison with the junior school ensures pupils transfer smoothly into Year 3. The school provides placements for students from Itchen College. These students are well supported by the school and in turn provide a significant extra resource to the school, to the benefit of pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. Governance is **satisfactory**. Many governors are new. Some key members of staff are also new to the school or their roles and their leadership is underdeveloped.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's good leadership has brought the school successfully through a difficult period.
 - All staff are involved very closely in school development planning.
 - The role of subject co-ordinator needs further development.
 - Frequent and effective reviews of the school's work help it to move forward.
 - Governors are very supportive, but their work has been affected by recruitment difficulties.
29. The headteacher gives the school clear direction, based on firm principles of meeting the needs of all pupils and serving the community. She has shown much resolution in bringing the school through a difficult period in which the recruitment and retention of teachers has been a significant problem. Her insistence on appointing staff of good quality and building a purposeful team is helping to raise standards. She is ably supported by senior managers, whose talents complement her own. They make a strong team and provide very good role models for other staff.
30. Plans for improvement are based very securely on the school's aims and involve all members of staff very effectively. This helps to ensure that everyone has a shared commitment to move the school forward. The roles of all parties are defined very clearly in the improvement plan, but the arrangements for governors to monitor progress towards the achievement of objectives as the year proceeds are not identified. The full costs of meeting the targets set out in the plan are not always included.
31. Most subject co-ordinators are new to their posts. The school makes very good provision for the induction of teachers and members of the local education authority staff are used well to assist subject co-ordinators to develop understanding of their role. It will take time for the work of the co-ordinators to bring about improvements in standards and provision, but most have a clear idea of what they need to do. The school is aware of the need to continue to guide them and to provide training to ensure they develop the skills necessary to lead and manage their subjects effectively.
32. The school is managed well by the headteacher and senior staff. A strong feature of their work is the rigorous review of the school's effectiveness, carried out each term, leading to appropriate action. The strong link between improvement planning and the good quality management of the performance of staff enhances both processes. Work to improve the effectiveness of teaching is intensive and based on the needs of individuals, ensuring that the time available is used best. This good development of teachers' skills results in better learning by pupils.

33. The governors are very supportive of the school and understand the needs of pupils well. Their commitment to providing the largest number of learning support assistants that funds will allow is evidence of this. They want to ensure that there are as many adults available to help each child as possible. Difficulties in recruiting and retaining governors over recent years have reduced the effectiveness of the governing body and have made considerable demands on the core members, especially the chairperson. At the time of the inspection many governors were new and few had undertaken sufficient training.
34. The funds available to the school are used appropriately to achieve the priorities set out in the plans for improvement. Although the balance carried forward each year appears high it includes funds for specific projects, such as building developments. The governors monitor spending effectively and the office staff work well in financial and everyday administration. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily overall, but not all are understood well. Procedures to consult parents and pupils are well developed. The school gives good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	672,576	Balance from previous year	50,088
Total expenditure	672,090	Balance carried forward to the next	50,554
Expenditure per pupil	2,756		50,574

Aids and barriers to raising achievement

35. The good leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff, and the good quality of teaching are helping to raise standards. The very good ethos for learning and the pupils' good response to this demonstrated by their positive attitudes and sensible behaviour, also help to enhance achievement. The difficulties of recruiting and retaining teachers and governors have detracted significantly from the progress the school has made. The low level of pupils' skills, especially those affecting language, when they begin their education makes learning more difficult. Not all parents support their children's education effectively.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The attainment of children admitted to the school's three reception classes is well below average. Provision for them is **good** in all areas of learning. Despite this good provision the majority of children do not reach the expected goals in all areas of learning by the end of their reception year. Leadership and management of this area of the school's work are good. Although she has been in post for a short time, the co-ordinator has implemented significant changes to improve children's learning. At the time of the inspection the reception class teachers have been working together for less than a term. They plan together to share their expertise and to make sure all children in the three classes receive very similar experiences.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of this age group are good. Teaching is good overall with some very good features. The skilled and knowledgeable teaching assistants work closely with teachers and make a significant contribution to children's learning. Assessment procedures are good and as a result teachers are clear about what children need to learn next. In the best lessons, activities are well matched to children's learning needs and take account of their short concentration spans. Consequently all children, including those with special educational needs learn well and make good progress. Good links with the local playgroups and parents ensures that children settle very quickly into school. Home visits and parents' meetings are supportive of good links between the school and parents. However, parents receive limited information about how they can support their children's learning at home.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults manage children's behaviour well and provide good role models.
- Relationships are very good.
- Children are encouraged to work together and develop positive social skills.
- Children's efforts are valued, and this secures an active learning environment.
- Opportunities to encourage children to play constructively together are sometimes missed.

Commentary

36. When they start school, children's attainment in this area is well below that expected for their age. They are keen to be involved in activities and good teaching ensures that children learn well and their achievement is good. Many children do not have the skills needed to play constructively together. Teachers plan daily activities that bring children together in small and large groups. When supported by adults they learn to co-operate, share, take turns and communicate their needs in a constructive way. Opportunities are sometimes missed to provide more of this support when adults spend too long with one group of children. The consistent approach to the management of children's behaviour by teachers and teaching assistants ensures children learn what is expected of them. Daily routines help children to learn how to take on simple responsibilities. For example, they are expected to place their name cards in the appropriate place to show whether they are having a packed lunch or school dinner. Relationships are very good and adults provide good role models for children. Children's work and good behaviour is praised and valued by adults. This constructive, happy and safe learning environment ensures that children are willing to try, and as a result become increasingly independent.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use a variety of teaching methods that capture children's imagination.
- Children are given many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Teachers assess children regularly and the information is used well to plan activities that take children's learning forward.
- Many opportunities are provided for children to practise their writing skills.
- Children develop positive attitudes to reading.
- Parents receive limited guidance about how they can support their children at home.

Commentary

37. Children's standards are well below those expected. Good teaching ensures that they learn well. Their achievement is good. The speech of many children is poor because it is unclear and they use a very limited vocabulary. They are able to listen for only short periods of time. Teachers plan appropriately short activities that children find interesting, and as a result they learn quickly to focus on the person who is talking and listen attentively. For example, puppets are used very well to capture children's imagination. During whole-class and group activities, teachers and teaching assistants continually engage children in conversation. Adults model speech well, and take every opportunity to broaden the vocabulary used by children. Children become increasingly confident speakers and attentive listeners because adults value, and listen carefully to what children have to say. Many children are unable to hold a pencil correctly or form any identifiable letters when they start school. Well-structured teaching and valuable play activities that encourage children to practise their skills ensure children become confident writers. The use of a structured scheme ensures children learn about the sounds letters make. Reading is promoted well and the children develop positive attitudes towards books. They enjoy listening to stories and are keen to share books with each other and adults. Children take books home every day. However, parents receive little information about how they can help their child with reading at home and the support they provide is very variable.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative teaching methods ensure children learn well.
- The emphasis on practical activities supports children's understanding in mathematics.
- Resources are used well to support children's learning.
- Information provided for parents is limited.

Commentary

38. When they start school the attainment of the majority of children is well below that expected. Although they are aware of numbers many cannot count accurately past five, or recognise numbers when written. They achieve well because teaching is good. Teachers make effective links to stories and use puppets and a wide range of practical activities that appeal to children. This approach results in good learning. For example, children were keen to sort out objects of different sizes for 'The Three Bears' and help 'The Clever Farmer', (a puppet) count his animals. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at asking questions that challenge children to think carefully and are supportive of their learning of mathematical vocabulary. Children learn to recognise simple two-dimensional shapes and use simple mathematical

language such as tall and short. Classroom displays encourage children to explore repeating patterns, to match, count and order objects and become familiar with numbers. Parents receive limited information to help them support their children at home.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to explore their environment.
- Resources are used well to support learning.

Commentary

39. Children start school with very limited general knowledge. Standards are well below those expected. Children achieve well because teaching is good. Effective links are made to their work in the area of communication language and literacy. This ensures children learn well. For example, after reading the story 'Mrs Wishy Washy' children washed clothes to investigate how well different cleaning agents worked and how long it takes for different materials to dry. Good use is made of the outdoor play area to grow plants and study the seasons. Children are encouraged to look carefully at, and handle real objects. Daily access to computers ensures that children begin to develop skills such as controlling the mouse. Computer programmes are used effectively to support learning in mathematics and literacy.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the outdoor play area.
- Activities to support children's control over their bodies are good.

Commentary

40. Overall, standards are below those expected. However, teaching is good and children's achievement is good because resources are used well. Children have unhindered access to the outdoor play area where they develop an awareness of space and others as they control wheeled toys. Their control over their large body movements is satisfactory. Children's control over small objects such as pencils is below that expected. Teachers plan a good range of interesting activities that support children's developing skills that are securely based on a clear knowledge of what children can already do. As a result children work hard and make good progress.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities encourage children to use their imagination.
- Good links are made between areas of learning.

Commentary

41. Children come to school with limited experience in this area of learning and standards are well below those expected. Teaching is good because the planned activities are stimulating and often linked to other areas of learning such as literacy. For example, after reading the story of 'Goldilocks and the three bears' children take on the role of the characters and act out the story in the role-play area and through drama and song. Children achieve well when supported by adults who encourage them to use their imagination, work together and communicate their ideas and feelings. Regular musical opportunities enable children to experiment with instruments and to sing a variety of songs and rhymes.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching methods are effective.
- A high level of encouragement is given to pupils.
- The support given by learning support assistants is good.
- Literacy is effectively used to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Standards are below expectation, but improving.
- Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

Commentary

42. Standards in English are below average at the end of Year 2. Standards have been variable over the past few years because of the overall abilities of particular groups of pupils, and the difficulty the school has experienced in recruiting permanent teachers. Inspection findings suggest that standards are rising because staffing issues have been resolved and the school has focused on improvement in this subject. Pupils make good progress from entry due to the good teaching. All pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
43. Learning support assistants make a very valuable contribution to the good progress by pupils with special educational needs. Teachers plan work for these pupils to meet their individual learning needs, and all adults provide good support and encouragement.
44. Overall standards in speaking and listening are below average. Pupils can make themselves understood, but use a limited vocabulary. Consequently, both their understanding and their ability to communicate effectively are hampered. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to help pupils to extend their vocabulary by:
- repeating and explaining unfamiliar words;
 - encouraging pupils to talk to each other in pairs and small groups;
 - using drama activities to help pupils to communicate confidently.
45. Pupils achieve well in reading. They enjoy books and work hard during structured guided reading sessions to develop their reading skills. However, standards are below average. All pupils are encouraged to read, from their own sentences book, with parents and carers at home. Where this happens it helps and pupils' learning is good. Pupils are taught about the strategies that they need to use to work out how to read words and sentences and some confidently try to work out unfamiliar words. No regular provision is made to give individual support to pupils who need additional practice to ensure they are confident in the use of strategies. In addition, opportunities for sustained reading are not identified and consequently

many pupils do not develop the habit of reading for their own enjoyment. A variety of types of books are used to develop reading skills and to explore information across a range of curriculum areas. Generally book areas in classrooms are well organised. The library is used to borrow books. Pupils are able to use the computerised scanning system independently to sign out new books. Parents and carers are invited to share this opportunity with their children. Many help their children to select a book and then read together. Time in the library is not used consistently by all staff to positively encourage a love and enjoyment of books. Pupils do not have sufficient regular opportunities to access the information books in the library to develop research skills. The school is aware of the need to improve the number and range of books in the library in a number of subject areas.

46. Standards in writing are below average. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Teachers work hard to improve standards in writing by planning interesting and varied writing tasks which also develop pupils' knowledge and understanding within other subject areas. Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, occasionally they do not check that all pupils are confident in their use of what they have already learned before moving them on to more challenging tasks. The current unsystematic approach to teaching spelling results in some pupils' learning in this aspect of English being slowed. The below average standards in spelling affect the standard of pupils' writing overall.
47. Teaching is good overall and this has a direct impact on pupils' learning. It is evident from lessons seen and pupils' work that teaching is consistently good. Teachers emphasise strongly the development of pupils' literacy skills through purposeful and enjoyable activities that enables pupils to achieve well. Pupils who do not attend school regularly miss these valuable experiences, with the result that their learning is not as good as it could be. Expectations are high and pupils respond positively by applying themselves to tasks and working hard. Lessons move at a good pace and the level of challenge is high. All pupils remain fully engaged, even though the concentration spans of many pupils is very short. Good questioning takes account of pupils' below average oral skills. Teachers encourage pupils to use correct subject specific vocabulary. Exciting, and sometimes innovative, methods and organisation capture and sustain pupils' interest and imagination. For example, the use of puppets is a common feature of teaching throughout the school that is effective in holding pupils' attention in lessons. Assessment procedures are good. Effective use is made of test data and the information gathered from pupils' work to keep track of individual pupils' progress. In addition this information is used to identify whole-school issues and set targets for individual and groups of pupils.
48. The leadership and the management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has yet to establish influence over the subject. However, she is enthusiastic and has received good support from members of the senior management team. She has quickly established a very clear view of what further improvements are needed. There has not been time yet for her to monitor work in classrooms, although this is planned.
49. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils continue to make good progress. Staff and curriculum changes have ensured that good teaching has been secured. Raising standards in English remains firmly on the school improvement agenda. The school has clearly identified the next steps that it needs to take in the school improvement plan.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Teachers plan carefully to provide pupils with opportunities to use their language and literacy skills in other subjects. For example, they label diagrams and write instructions in their science work, and talk about how to solve problems in mathematics. However, planning does not take sufficient account of whether or not pupils' skills are secure before the next steps in learning are introduced.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils work at an appropriate level.
- Inconsistent leadership has hampered efforts to raise standards.
- Number skills are not developed effectively through work in other subjects.

Commentary

51. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below average. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in the national tests in 2003 was below average compared with schools nationally. However, taking into account the low levels of attainment of pupils on entry to the school, the majority make good progress, achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. Predictions made by the school indicate that those currently in Year 2 are likely to attain good standards compared with schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Inspection evidence reflects this and shows that most pupils work at the level expected for their age. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Overall, more able pupils are challenged appropriately.
52. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils work well in dealing with mathematical data such as information about the favourite foods of classmates. Some average pupils work above the expected level when answering questions using facts recorded in tables. Pupils' attainment in number work is broadly average as many read, write and order numbers to 100. More able pupils subtract numbers above 100 and recognise how many hundreds, tens and units make up figures such as 918. Most pupils understand that non-standard units such as cardboard 'mice' can be used to measure length. The more able begin to identify the properties of shapes, but their ideas are not always well reasoned, for example, some believe that all two-dimensional shapes have an even number of sides.
53. Since the last inspection, good quality teaching has been re-established, following staffing problems. Good teaching and the resulting good learning are helping to raise standards. Very good teaching was seen in both year groups. Teachers use very good methods and strategies for helping pupils to understand mathematical ideas. As a result, they engage pupils' attention very effectively. In a Year 2 lesson, the introduction of 'Freddy Frog' the puppet who is good at jumping, for example, from 4 to 9 to 15, focussed attention very well, helping pupils to make very good progress. The skilful management and control of classes and the creation of a positive learning environment leads pupils to being active in their learning, asking questions confidently and commenting appropriately. Most develop good attitudes to mathematics lessons, concentrate and behave well.
54. In the strongest teaching there was a buzz of animated discussion as pupils worked together to solve problems. The activities were challenging for all pupils, no matter what their ability. Pupils experienced a real sense of purpose and achievement. "We've solved the puzzle!" was the excited cry heard in a Year 2 lesson about number sequences. Pupils whose attendance is poor often miss these valuable learning experiences with the result that the progress they make is slower than for other pupils.
55. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, but occasionally a little time is lost when teachers do not tell pupils what they expect in terms of settling quickly and quietly to their tasks and the speed at which they should work. A scrutiny of pupils' work showed that teachers of pupils of the

same age do not always set work of similar difficulty or ensure that similar emphasis and time are given to the topics studied.

56. Good arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress help teachers to set appropriate tasks. Well-briefed, skilful teaching assistants are deployed effectively and make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' mathematics education. Leadership has been inconsistent over the last two years and has had a negative effect on standards, but stability has now been re-established. The headteacher's rigorous monitoring of provision has helped to limit the loss of momentum. The new arrangements for sharing responsibility for the subject are not yet fully established. The co-ordinators have a clear vision for developing the subject and show a good awareness of the need to analyse data about pupils' achievements and use the outcomes to adapt planning. Teachers make too little use of computers to develop skills in mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

Some examples of number skills being developed in other subjects were seen. For example, in science, pupils make measurements when they grow tomato plants. However, the development of numeracy is not yet planned effectively across the curriculum. As a result, opportunities to raise standards and increase pupils' confidence in using number skills are lost.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' learning through investigation is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to be involved.
- Good use is made of resources, including the school's grounds to support pupils' learning.
- Effective links are made to other subjects that support pupils' learning overall.
- Time in lessons is lost when pupils are not managed effectively.

Commentary

57. Standards are broadly average in Year 2. A significant number of pupils start school with limited experiences in this subject. Pupils' achievement is good because those of higher ability are challenged through questioning, and those of lower ability are given practical support from teachers and teaching assistants.
58. Evidence, gathered from looking at pupils' work and teachers' plans, show that teaching is good overall. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They plan lessons that enable pupils to learn through investigation using real objects. Lessons are well constructed to provide pupils with many opportunities to work together. Teachers guide pupils through the use of questions to ensure they learn how to structure their investigations. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their work and use the correct vocabulary, for example when naming parts of plants. However, pupil management is not always sufficiently good in these whole-class sessions, which results in some time being lost as pupils interrupt each other, and do not listen carefully. Opportunities to support pupils' spiritual development are missed, for example when observing, and handling for the first time unfamiliar fruits and vegetables. Planning ensures pupils experience all aspects of the science curriculum. Assessment procedures are good and provide teachers with useful information that is used effectively to plan future lessons. Resources are used well. The school's environmental area is used particularly well to support pupils' learning about plants, animals and habitats.
59. Care is taken to support pupils' learning in other subjects through science. For example, pupils' skills in writing are promoted as they label diagrams, write instructions for carrying out

investigations, and reports about what they have found out. Measuring using standard units, and recording results in tables and graphs support pupils' developing mathematical and ICT skills.

60. Pupils' enthusiasm for science is very apparent. They respect each others' views and ideas and are keen to learn about the world around them. However, they do not always listen carefully to each other in whole-class activities. Pupils are able to sort foods into groups and plan a healthy meal. Through their practical work they develop an understanding of simple forces. Pupils of higher ability are able to give simple explanations for the results of their investigations and have a basic understanding of fair testing. They use their knowledge and understanding to make predictions. Pupils produce a good amount of work and present it well. They record their results in a variety of ways. The work they do is marked and corrected, and teachers talk to pupils to support their developing understanding of the subject.
61. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Through the comprehensive monitoring of pupils' work and teachers' plans the co-ordinator has a good understanding of standards, and the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She is committed to improving standards and has a clear vision as to how this can be achieved. She is aware of the need to be vigilant in these activities to ensure that the recent changes made to curriculum planning do not reduce the current good level of provision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not have access to enough computers.
- Substantial improvements have been made over the last few years.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

62. Standards are below those expected as they were at the time of the last inspection. Provision for ICT was also unsatisfactory then. The school has tried to keep pace with the rapidly rising expectations of both provision and standards, but has found it difficult to allocate enough funds to achieve this. Currently, there is one computer for every fifteen pupils and the school understands it needs to double the number of machines to reach the present recommended ratio. As there are too few computers, pupils do not work often enough on them to reach the required level.

Since the last inspection, the following improvements to provision have been made:

- a computer room has been constructed;
- the computers have all been networked;
- a specialist learning support assistant has been employed;
- the range of equipment has been increased to include a digital projector, digital camera and scanner;
- all computers have been provided with access to the Internet;
- the teachers have undertaken training to improve their skills;
- a structured scheme of work has been put into place;
- skills are now taught progressively;
- the quality of teaching has improved considerably;
- teachers now plan appropriate work.

63. Pupils are keen to work on computers, but few have experience of doing so at home. Those seen working in the computer room show satisfactory control of the mouse and know how to log on and access the programs they work with. They learn how to use the tools of art programs to draw and paint on screen. They know how to vary the thickness of the pencil or brush and choose the colour they want to use. Records kept by the school show that by age seven, creating pictures using the computer is a strength of most pupils' work. Giving instructions to control a floor turtle (a form of electronic toy) is a weakness. Records also indicate the impact of poor attendance on pupils' attainment as some pupils regularly miss ICT lessons and therefore do not learn the skills being taught.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is good. At the time of the last inspection it was unsatisfactory. Several teachers were observed during short sessions in which they taught skills to the whole class. These were taught well. In addition the teaching by the specialist teaching assistant was also observed.

The main strengths of the teaching are:

- The confidence and subject knowledge of those teaching ensures that pupils acquire knowledge and understanding effectively.
- Effective, direct teaching of skills supports pupils' progress.
- Teachers are skilled in managing pupils and this ensures pupils behave very well.
- Lessons are often taught at a good pace, making effective use of the time available.

The main areas for development are:

- Pupils are not sufficiently empowered to enable them to become independent learners. This is because the adults tend to instruct too much and do not encourage pupils to think what to do by asking them questions. Also, no written instructions or descriptions of the process being learned are displayed for pupils to refer to, rather than waiting to ask.
- Not enough use is made of classroom computers.

65. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable, conscientious and committed to raising standards. Her work in guiding and supporting colleagues, and promoting their knowledge and confidence is helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She has a clear picture of how the subject should be developed, but has had no opportunities to monitor lessons. Good quality planning with different expectations and tasks identified for pupils of different abilities also impacts well on pupils' achievements. The co-ordinator is aware that further improvements are needed to the recording of pupils' skills and the evaluation of lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that some activities exploit ICT, for example, in science. However, overall, the use of computer skills and their development in other subjects is unsatisfactory.

HUMANITIES

In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography. Two lessons were seen in history, discussions were held with co-ordinators and pupils' work scrutinised. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. Religious education was inspected separately.

Religious education

Provision in the religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are not yet fully encouraged to apply religious education to their everyday lives.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning has not taken place.
- Resources are adequate.

Commentary

67. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection remain in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Much of the work covered in religious education lessons, centres around discussions. However, analysis of the available work and talking to pupils indicate that pupils' achievement is sound throughout the school.
68. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils develop an understanding of Christian festivals, for example Harvest. Effective use of role-play enabled pupils to develop their understanding of this festival. Pupils discussed a selection of objects provided by the teacher to identify what they were and how they had been harvested. Pupils were able to contribute their own individual 'thank-you' to the prayer read by the teacher. However, opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development were not identified or pursued. Good use is made of visitors and places of worship in the immediate locality to support pupils understanding of Christianity. In particular, the local vicar leads some acts of collective worship within school, and pupils visit his church to learn about its main features. Collective worship contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education but does not fully support pupils' developing spirituality. Discussions with pupils show they are aware of the life of Jesus and why He is special. They appreciate that people have different beliefs and can explain some of the ways Hindus express their faith and the symbols they use. They recall stories about Hindu gods. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.
69. The co-ordinator is very new to the role and has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the subject to enable her to have a clear picture of standards across the school. Planning does not yet make effective links with collective worship, and personal, social and health education to enable pupils to link religious teaching with everyday life, such as knowing there are examples of feelings contained in Bible stories. These connections would give pupils opportunities to discover the meaning behind religions as well as facts. Resources, whilst adequate, are not sufficiently varied to fully support pupils' understanding of the similarities and differences between the world's main cultures and religions.
70. In **history** and **geography** the range of visits and visitors play an important part in making the work planned interesting and relevant to pupils. Such opportunities include a visit to Victoria Park when learning about Florence Nightingale. Books and pictures are used well to support pupils' developing awareness of people, events and changes in the past. Literacy lessons are used well to focus upon reading about aspects of history and geography through the use of big books and writing activities. For example, pupils study pictures to identify differences between then and now and complete written accounts as a record of their observations. They write about what they like and dislike about the school environment. From discussions with pupils in Year 2 it is clear many of them enjoy history. They talked enthusiastically about their current topic, 'Guy Fawkes' and could explain the sequence of events that took place prior to his capture and some of the reasons that led up to the Gunpowder Plot.
71. The subject co-ordinator is new to the role but very experienced in teaching both history and geography. The innovative use of literacy lessons to support the teaching of history and geography is relatively new and she is aware of the need to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and the effectiveness of provision. She plans to introduce a new approach to assessment to support pupils to express orally what they know and understand from a selection of pictures. Resources are adequate and improvements are planned.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements on provision in the subjects of art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Two lessons were observed in each of the subjects of art and design, and music. One lesson was observed in each of the subjects of design and technology, and physical education. Discussions were held with co-ordinators and pupils, and documents and pupils' work was studied.
73. The **art and design** co-ordinator is very new to the post. She provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject but her role as subject leader is not fully developed yet. She has yet to establish the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. She has the knowledge and skills to provide good support for other teachers. The lessons seen were carefully planned, well organised and the activities appealed to pupils. Resources were used well and the teacher gave clear demonstrations of the skills pupils were expected to learn. Pupils were encouraged to observe closely and share their observations. The management of pupils in lessons is good and as a result they work well together and behave very well. Displays around the school clearly show that pupils' work is valued and that their skills of observational drawing develop well. Some links to other subjects are made, including science and ICT. However, insufficient use is made of art and design to support pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
74. The **music** co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides good leadership and management of the subject. She is very clear about the strengths of the subject and what needs to be improved. The lessons seen were well planned to build on pupils' previous learning. Management of pupils is good. They are expected to behave well and work together. Pupils enjoy music. They sing well, are enthusiastic composers and perform confidently. Some effective links are made to other subjects. For example, pupils compose and perform 'firework' music to complement their work in dance. Many pupils from Years 1 and 2 belong to the school choir. They perform regularly in school and the community, including large-scale events such as the Southampton Music Festival. Pupils are given the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and have regular access to percussion instruments in lessons. Resources for the subject are good, overall. Opportunities to use of music to support pupils' spiritual and cultural development are not fully pursued.
75. In **design and technology** Year 1 pupils design and make Diwali divas, linking with their work in religious education. They create drawings to show what they intend to make and include details of the patterns they will use to decorate their product. Year 1 pupils were observed learning about a wide range of fruit and vegetables in preparation for creating a salad. Teachers in Year 2 link work in literacy lessons well with design and technology by getting pupils to write and follow instructions for making bread and pizza. Pupils also research designs for books, such as those of different shapes and with parts that can be moved.
76. Since the last inspection the quality of planning in physical education has improved. Good quality outdoor play equipment, provided by the 'Friends of the School' is available for use by the pupils during playtimes, but further equipment is needed to ensure that the newly defined plans can be implemented successfully, especially in dance. Lunchtime supervisors provide structured opportunities for pupils to use outdoor sports equipment. Extra-curricular sports clubs enhance pupils' learning and are oversubscribed. A recent questionnaire shows that some teachers would like more training, especially in teaching dance.
77. In both design and technology and physical education, the role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped. The post holders are keen to move things forward, but their overview of the strengths and areas for development is limited by a lack of systematic monitoring. The absence of agreed procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress makes it difficult for teachers to set appropriately challenging tasks.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

78. Only two lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work and as a result it is well planned into the curriculum. The programme for personal, social and health education is good and includes work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety. This programme helps pupils develop a safe and healthy life style, gain confidence and interact with others. Pupils work co-operatively to resolve issues and within an atmosphere of trust, explore a range of feelings and develop sensitivity and empathy towards each other. Few opportunities to develop pupils' cultural awareness are planned for in these sessions.

Inspection judgement**Grade**

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

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