

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ENGLAND
CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Southampton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116314

Headteacher: Mr S C Morrison

Lead inspector: Mrs L Brackstone

Dates of inspection: 17 - 19 May 2004

Inspection number: 265705

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	319
School address:	Solomons Lane Waltham Chase Southampton
Postcode:	SO32 2LY
Telephone number:	01329 833141
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Huxstep
Date of previous inspection:	1 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St John the Baptist is a large primary school, with a similar numbers of boys and girls. The school serves the three villages of Waltham Chase, Shedfield and Shirrell Heath. The vast majority of pupils are of white UK heritage and no pupils use English as an additional language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, but this is not a true reflection of the socio-economic nature of the intake, which is about average. Approximately 21 per cent of pupils have special educational needs and this is above average. There are five pupils with statements. In addition, there are a number of pupils whom the school recognizes to be at an early intervention stage. Pupil mobility is low. Attainment on entry is very variable. Most have had some form of pre-school experience prior to starting school, but overall attainment on entry is average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21872	Mrs L Brackstone	Lead inspector	Mathematics, art and design, English as an additional language
11575	Mrs C Fish	Lay inspector	
12394	Mrs C May	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage, geography, music, religious education
20230	Mrs J Clayphan	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, history, physical education
18638	Mr C Shaw	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St John's is a **very good school**. This is because leadership and management are of high quality and all staff work very well together as a team; teaching is very good and a very interesting curriculum is planned, which enables all pupils to learn very effectively. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, overall pupils achieve very well. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the end of Year 6 standards in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art are high. However, standards in writing could be better.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Assessment procedures are good overall.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and his senior staff and the governance of the school are very good.
- The curriculum is very well planned and enriched through a very exciting range of activities.
- The school cultivates pupils' personal development to a high standard and, consequently, their attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The school cares very well for its pupils and provides them with high quality support and guidance.
- Links with parents, the local community and other schools are very good.
- The use of the outdoor area for the Reception children is under developed and this impacts on the standards attained in their physical development.

Improvement since the last inspection is good. There were no key issues identified at the last inspection, but the minor weaknesses identified have been remedied.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	B	C
Mathematics	A	A	A	B
Science	A	A	A	A

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average*

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

Overall, pupils' **achievement is very good**. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and talented. There are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Overall attainment, on entry into the Reception class, is judged to be as expected for this age group. They achieve well during their short stay in Reception and attain the goals expected of this age group by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum in all areas of learning, except physical development, which is below the expectations. Pupils' achievement is very good in Years 1 to 6 because the quality of teaching is very good. As a result, by the end of Year 6 they attain well above national standards in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art and design. Standards are above average in speaking, listening, and writing. In Years 1 and 2, pupils also achieve very well and the current Year 2 pupils are reaching above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and well above average standards in science. Standards in religious education are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 6.

Pupils' personal qualities are **very good** overall and their spiritual, moral and social development is very effective. Provision for cultural development is good, but pupils could be better prepared to live and work in a multicultural society. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well in and around school. They are confident and always keen to succeed. All pupils work and play together very happily. Both attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **very good quality of education**. The overall quality of **teaching** and learning **is very good**. Equal opportunities are promoted very well. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage (the Reception class) and very good in Years 1 to 6. Subject knowledge is very good and pupils are taught in a very challenging way. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils who respond very well to this, showing interest and motivation in their learning. Numeracy and information and communication technology skills are taught very well and used to promote learning very successfully across the curriculum. Literacy skills are taught well, but written tasks could be planned further to meet the needs of all pupils. Learning resources are used very effectively. Procedures to check and track pupils' progress are very good and used well to inform future planning. Pupils have a clear understanding about how they can improve. The curriculum is very well balanced and extremely well enriched by a highly effective programme of extra-curricular activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Resources and accommodation are very good and this impacts very well on the pupils' learning. The school cares very well for its pupils and provides very good quality support and guidance. Links with local schools and the community are all very good. Parents work very effectively with the school and support their children in their learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, **leadership and management** are **very good**. The headteacher has a very clear educational vision for the school and he uses his outstanding entrepreneurial approach to obtain the best educational environment for his pupils. Both he and his senior management provide excellent role models for all staff and pupils. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are extremely confident in both their challenge and support of senior management. All statutory requirements are met except for minor details in the annual report to parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' and pupils' views of the school are very good. Parents are particularly pleased with the headteacher, the staff, the progress their children are making and the very good range of learning activities on offer. Pupils feel very supported and know that if they have a problem someone in school will always help them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Improve standards in writing by providing specific tasks for pupils of different abilities and age groups in English lessons.
- Improve standards in children's physical development through developing an outdoor area for the Foundation Stage and ensure that it is used as an integral part of the school day.
- Introduce systematic provision to ensure that pupils have been prepared to live and work in a multi-cultural society.

To meet statutory requirements the governing body should:

- Ensure that the minor details, which are missing from the annual governors' report to parents, are inserted.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards of attainment on entry into school are as expected in all areas of learning. Despite the limited time spent by a significant proportion of children in the Foundation Stage, achievement is good. By the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, overall attainment is as expected for this age group. Pupils achieve very well in Years 1 to 6 and, by the time they leave this school, overall standards are well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art and design are well above national standards for these age groups.
- Overall standards in English are above average. Standards in writing could be improved further if there were more opportunities for challenge.
- Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Overall achievement for all pupils in Years 1 to 6 is very good.
- Reception children achieve well overall. However, achievement in physical development is not as good as in the other areas of learning because insufficient use is made of the outdoor area.

Commentary

1. The children start school with a very varied range of pre-school experiences, but overall attainment on entry is judged to be as expected for this age group. Older children become full-time shortly after starting school, but the younger ones remain on a part-time basis for the first term. In the current Reception year group there are a significant number of children who will not be five until the very end of the academic year. This means that they will have had limited time to experience the full Foundation Stage curriculum. However, they achieve well during their short stay in Reception and, by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, overall they attain the goals children are expected to reach in all areas of learning, except in physical development where standards are below the expected level. This is because the use of the outdoor area for the Reception children is under developed.
2. In the Year 2 national tests of 2003, which are illustrated in the following table, standards were well above the national average in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing were average. In comparison with those schools that have similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were well above average in mathematics, above average in reading, but below average in writing. There are no national tests for science, but in the teacher assessment tests, at the end of Year 2, the number of pupils attaining the expected level was above average. The number of pupils attaining the higher level in science was well above average. Over the period from 1999 to 2003, in relation to the national picture, trends in the results of pupils taking the Year 2 tests were above average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003¹

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.3 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.9 (16.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.3 (18.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In the Year 6 national tests of 2003, which are illustrated in the table below, standards were well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above average in science, above average in mathematics and average in English. Over the period from 1999 to 2003, in relation to the national picture, trends in the results of pupils taking the Year 6 tests were above average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003²

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (28.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.0 (29.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.0 (30.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above national averages in mathematics and science. This means that these high standards have been very well maintained since the results of the most recent national tests of 2003. Since the last inspection, standards in Year 2 in mathematics have remained consistently at a very good level. However, there have been improvements in standards at the end of Year 6. In science, standards have been well maintained at a very good level at the end of Year 6, but have improved at the end of Year 2.
5. Standards in English at the end of Year 2 are above average in reading and average in writing and speaking. Pupils' listening skills are well developed. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average in both reading and writing. Speaking skills are average and pupils' listening skills continue to be good. Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those reached in the National Curriculum tests last year. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
6. Standards in information and communication technology are well above national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Information and communication technology skills were judged to be good at the time of the last inspection, but are now very good. This is as a direct result of the huge investment the school has made in the provision of top quality resources for learning. No judgement was made on standards in art and design at the time of the last inspection, but the high standards noted during this inspection are a direct result of the high quality teaching, which focuses on the progressive development of skills.

¹ All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age seven is 15. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

² All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age eleven is 27. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

7. Standards in religious education exceed the national expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. These good standards have been well maintained since the last inspection. No judgements were made on standards in other subjects because they were not the focus of the inspection.
8. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve very well at this school. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and talented. There are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls. All pupils are provided with a very interesting range of activities that ensure that they work at their own level. Pupils with special educational needs attain below the standards of their classmates, but their attainment is often higher than might be expected. They achieve well because they receive good support in lessons. In addition, short individual sessions with a specialist teacher are successful in clarifying concepts that they find difficult to understand and which are often highlighted as targets on their individual education plans.
9. Pupils are competent users of their language and literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in Years 1 and 2. By Years 3 to 6 they are using their numeracy and information and communication technology skills very well to support their learning across the curriculum. For instance, a group of Year 3/4 pupils were using a computer programme to illustrate the different parts of the digestive system, which they were learning about in their science lesson. Year 5/6 pupils use their numeracy skills very well when they are problem solving. This was evident in an exercise they had been set when they were asked to increase the contents of their grocery products in an imaginary food factory. The pupils were required to work out the different percentages in the weights of these products. They were then required to add the extra amount to the original weight of the food packet. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their language and literacy skills across other areas of the curriculum. For example, they use their literacy skills to write about interesting trips to places of historical interest. However, achievement in writing is not as good as in other core skills. Although there is sufficient challenge provided in Years 1 and 2 for writing tasks, this is not so evident with the older pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils have very good attitudes to school life and to learning. Their behaviour is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted very well. Cultural development is good. The school enjoys very good attendance levels. Pupils' personal development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very eager to come to school every day and so attendance is very good.
- The pupils have very good attitudes and participate with great enthusiasm in everything that goes on in school.
- Very high expectations of behaviour are set from an early stage; as a result, behaviour is very good.
- The school is a busy, but calm place, that promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very well through all it does.
- Although cultural development is good overall, there are insufficient opportunities provided to help prepare pupils to live and work in a multi-cultural society.

Commentary

10. The level of attendance has risen since the last inspection and now it is admirably high. The pupils say how much they like school. The school has few concerns about attendance, although there are a very small number of families with which it works closely to ensure attendance does not drop. Punctuality is very good because the pupils are eager to go to their lessons. Parents support the school very well over attendance and try to take holidays outside school term time.

11. The pupils are very well motivated because what they are asked to do in lessons is interesting and stimulating. The varied teaching methods adopted by the teachers, such as role-play, catch the pupils' imagination. As a result, they are very keen to work hard and to take a pride in all they do. The pupils involve themselves very enthusiastically in school productions, events and the extra-curricular activities available. They show high levels of interest, confidence and involvement. For example, before school they are often found browsing in the library or organising themselves for the day so they are ready to start promptly.

12. Children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage, and by the end of the Reception year, they reach above average standards. From the time the children arrive in Reception, they are expected to behave well. With only very occasional, very well managed exceptions, behaviour is very good. The pupils are so involved and enthusiastic that they see no need to misbehave. The pupils play very well together in the playground and are now welcoming the children from Reception into the main playgrounds as they adjust to being in a bigger environment. Pupils with special educational needs are as enthusiastic and well behaved as other pupils. They bring a serious attitude to their work and have great pride in their achievements. All pupils are very confident that bullying is not an issue; anything that worries them is taken straight to the teachers and problems are sorted out. There have been no exclusions.

13. The pupils' personal development is very well fostered. The pupils are curious about how things work and they enjoy the interactive displays around the school. Collective worship makes a very good contribution to their personal development and fully meets requirements. During the hymn practice, for Years 3 to 6, the pupils showed a great sense of joy in singing songs of praise with sensitivity and understanding. The pupils take on responsibilities willingly and as they grow in maturity they show more and more initiative. They show their high levels of concerns for others in the number of charities they support. The annual residential trips for older pupils provide very good opportunities for them to develop their social skills further, as well as their confidence as they tackle new activities. The pupils study a number of different faiths and cultures around the world. They have good experiences of their own cultures such as visits from drama groups and workshops. However, there are not enough opportunities for them to explore the multicultural nature of British society. The relationships that develop between the pupils and children from across the years help to ensure that the school is a very calm and harmonious, but busy place to be.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8%	School data	0.0%
National data	5.4%	National data	0.4%

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching and learning are very good. Assessment procedures are very thoroughly carried out and used well to inform future planning. The curriculum is very well balanced and enriched by a highly effective programme of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and learning resources are very good. The school cares very well for its pupils; it provides very good support and guidance and listens well to the views of pupils. Links with local schools and the community are very good. The vast majority of parents work very effectively with the school and support their children in their learning.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Assessment is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and very good in Years 1 to 6.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very good so pupils are taught in a very challenging way and they have very high expectations of the pupils.
- Numeracy and information and communication technology skills are taught very well. Literacy is taught well, but more challenge could be offered to older pupils in writing lessons.
- The promotion of equal opportunity is very good.
- Learning resources are used very effectively.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well.
- Procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress are very good and the information gathered is used well to inform planning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1(2%)	24 (57%)	16(38%)	1(2%)	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.

14. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and very good in Years 1 to 6. The quality of teaching is a considerable strength of the school and has remained very good since the last inspection. This is one of the main factors that are responsible for the maintenance of such high pupil achievement, which has resulted in well above average standards at the end of Year 6.
15. The good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables the children to make an effective start and progress well. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together and plan learning opportunities carefully. Relationships between all adults who work in the Reception class and the children are very strong and this has a very positive impact on their learning. This was evident in a very good mathematical development session when the staff were encouraging and this helped the children to concentrate hard and achieve well with their counting skills. Very good use is made of visitors to encourage the acquisition of knowledge and skills. For instance, the local minister was invited in to tell the children about her job and this gave the children a very good overview of the role she plays in the community. However, at times the work planned in the Reception class is based too much on the National Curriculum and does not fully incorporate the Foundation Stage programme of study, which is more appropriate for this age group. Staff do not use the outdoor area sufficiently well as a resource for developing social and physical skills.
16. In Years 1 to 6 the teaching is of very good quality. This is because the very good leadership of the headteacher, his deputy and team leaders ensure that there is a consistency in teaching throughout the three units. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and this ensures that the pupils are acquiring accurate knowledge and skills. Lessons are always well-planned and learning objectives clearly identified. These are frequently referred to at the end of a lesson to ensure that the pupils have made gains in their learning. This was observed in a very good mathematics lesson in a Year 3/4 class where the teacher recapped what they had been learning to measure and calculate the perimeter of rectangles. Thus, she was able to ensure that all pupils understood what they had been doing. In nearly all lessons, teachers ensure that providing tasks at different levels of difficulty challenges all pupils. However, in some English

classes in Years 3 to 6, the teachers do not always plan sufficiently well in these mixed age groups with varying abilities to ensure that writing tasks meet the needs of all the pupils. This means that not all the pupils achieve as well as they might.

17. Pupils are taught in a very challenging and effective way and this maintains their productivity. For example, in a very good English lesson in a Year 3/4 class, the pupils were motivated in their learning because the teacher had chosen a very interesting range of poetry to illustrate the use of '*rhyming couplets*'. In a story session, at the end of the school day in a Year 1/2 class, the pupils kept listening because the teacher read the story very expressively and encouraged her class to join in with the repetitive parts of the text. She also used the story as a starting point for a discussion about one of the characters, and pupils were very eager to join in.
18. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and achievement to be made. This was evident in a Year 3/4 science lesson where the teacher demanded right from the start that all pupils must pay attention. They use encouragement and praise very well to maintain pupils' interest in their learning. For example, house points are used to motivate the pupils. The productivity and pace of lessons is maintained very well through a mixture of individual, group and class sessions. Very good use is made of questioning techniques and pupils' levels of understanding are continually assessed. This was evident in a very good Year 5/6 mathematics lesson where the teacher made very good use of questions to encourage the pupils to develop their numeracy skills. Her use of challenging questioning also maintained the concentration levels of the class. Pupils are managed very well and encouraged to be involved in their learning.
19. Teachers teach numeracy and information and communication technology skills very well and the pupils are given many opportunities to use these skills across the curriculum. Literacy is taught well. The pupils respond very well to the teaching. They persevere with their tasks and take a pride in their finished work. Equality of access is promoted very well. More able pupils benefit from being taught in the mixed age classes and those with special educational needs are supported well by learning support assistants. Homework is used effectively to help pupils in their learning.
20. Learning resources are used very effectively. For example, the electronic interactive white boards are used very well to stimulate learning. This was evident in a very good art and design lesson in a Year 5/6 class. The teacher illustrated the effect of watercolours when making postcards. All pupils were able to have full access to this because differing images were displayed on the whiteboard during the lesson.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Learning support assistants ensure discreetly that pupils understand the main thrust of the lesson and give clear support during tasks. This enables pupils to maintain both confidence and interest and therefore they learn well. Pupils' individual educational plans vary in quality. Some give clear, easily attainable short-term targets, but there is scope to improve others, which at present are too general to give pupils a feeling that they are succeeding in their learning. Regular individual sessions with the specialist teacher are planned with precision so that each pupil works at their own level and a good pace and a variety of tasks ensure that they remain interested and alert.
22. There are very good tracking and monitoring systems in place to ensure that the pupils are making consistent progress. The information gathered is used well by the teachers to ensure that the needs of all pupils are fully met. These are particularly well established in English and mathematics where the marking of books also provides very clear guidance on how the pupils might improve their work. In the Foundation Stage, teachers regularly check to find out what the children know, understand and can do. The information is used well to plan the next steps children need to take in their learning. However, it is not always used as well as it could be to help the children understand what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very wide and fully meets requirements. A very good range of learning opportunities enriches it. Accommodation and resources are very good and support learning very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a stimulating and imaginative learning environment, which includes very high quality resources.
- Information and communication technology is used very well across the curriculum.
- Curricular planning and development has a very high focus.
- The range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors are very good.

Commentary

23. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the school provides very good opportunities for learning. The stimulating environment also makes a significant contribution to the very good achievement by all pupils. The school meets its statutory obligations to teach all aspects of the National Curriculum, including religious education. It provides a daily act of collective worship and a full and effective programme of personal, social and health education. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and has a strong focus on the development of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. It could be very good if planning was more securely based around the other areas of learning within the Foundation Stage curriculum, and the outdoor area was used as an integral part of the school day.
24. From the moment one enters the front door of the school one can sense that here is a place where not only is learning a serious business, but also hugely enjoyable. The school is an inclusive environment where all pupils want to do their best. This is evident from the observations of groups of pupils quietly studying in the library area using computers or books and in the classrooms where pupils interact with electronic whiteboards or fly paper '*spinners*' which they have designed.
25. The core curriculum of English, mathematics and science receive the largest share of the time available. The other subjects have discrete periods on the timetable, but are also cleverly interwoven with the core. Information and communication technology underpins everything. In this way, learning about the insulating properties of fabric in science helps pupils design shoes in design technology. Pupils use scientific methods, mathematics and their knowledge of healthy eating gained in personal, social and health education to investigate muesli. The emphasis on developing drawing skills, in art and design, is evident in the detailed drawings of plants, bicycles and designs for cam-operated toys. Whilst the pupils' skills in using computers, which begins with their mastery of the network filing system in Year 2, open up the world of word processing, databases, desktop publishing and Internet resources to all subjects.
26. It is the school's policy that all innovations in the curriculum and the use of technology are accompanied by appropriate staff training. In this way the investment in interactive electronic whiteboards and laptop computers has been repaid with a quantum leap in the accessibility and repeatability of high quality presentations. Teachers have also learned that electronic interaction means that even less competent pupils can communicate effectively, raising their self-esteem.
27. The curriculum has been planned very well to match the needs of the mixed age group classes. For example, in a very good Year 1/2 music lesson, pupils learned to match sounds to pictures using an intriguing computer program. The more experienced Year 2 pupils were paired with Year 1 pupils. Not only were they entranced by the sounds of '*rain*' and '*wind*' (and electric guitars), they also learned new computer skills. Incidentally, this lesson also illustrated the school's solution to the problem of noise in the open plan computer suite, which was raised by the previous inspection, because each pupil had their own headphones.

28. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs because the good support they receive in class ensures that they are well included in all activities. In addition they are highly valued as individuals by both adults and their classmates and they join fully in all the activities that happen outside the classroom.
29. All teachers are involved in teams and a high proportion of staff is responsible for a particular aspect of the curriculum. The monitoring, review and evaluation of the success, or otherwise, of curricular decisions is very good. The governors are fully involved in this process and have an excellent understanding of the schools needs. Resources are excellent. Careful and judicious financial planning have enabled the school to enrich their teaching and learning with a broad range of tools and equipment, artefacts and books. The enrichment of the curriculum through extra-curricular activities is also very good. Participation is very good in the wide range of sports and musical activities. The school has a large orchestra and often puts on musical plays and concerts. Last year, pupils participated in a local '*Caribbean Carnival*', involving not only music but also the production of masks, costumes and puppets. Visits to museums and study centres, including a residential visit, are also very good.
30. The very well maintained buildings and grounds provide very good accommodation. The play areas, adventure apparatus, quiet areas and sports areas are very good and carefully managed so that, even with the large number of pupils, there is no crowding. Playtimes are very relaxed and pupils return to lessons promptly fully refreshed. Although the classes are quite large, the proportion of staff to pupils is about average and, overall, staffing is good. The very well planned deployment of learning support assistants and voluntary helpers, plus the expert use of information and communication technology, ensure that the teachers work very effectively and efficiently. Another innovative idea that works: teachers break up long classroom sessions with '*Brain Gym*', exercises to keep the brain and body alert.
31. Since the last inspection the school has kept pace with changing demands and the improvement has been good. The curriculum is now very good and all areas for development have been rectified.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures very good provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils. It provides them with very good support and guidance. There are good systems in place to take the pupils' views into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils feel very secure because of the very good relationships that develop with the staff and so their confidence is built very effectively.
- They receive very good quality advice about their work and their personal development because staff know them very well.
- The school is a safe place to be.
- The pupils now have a real voice in what affects them.

Commentary

32. The staff have created an encouraging and interesting atmosphere that stimulates the pupils, but also makes them feel very secure and valued. Because the children and pupils develop confidence in the staff, they are willing to take risks with their learning; they know that their answers and opinions are valued. From the time the children start in Reception, they are encouraged to develop as learners and to work with others. Respect for everyone as an individual underpins the very good relationships that develop.
33. The teachers and staff get to know the pupils very well, so they are able to give them well considered support and guidance about both their personal and academic development. All

staff, and especially the headteacher, are available for the pupils to talk to when the need arises. The assessment information the school has is well used to identify those pupils with special educational needs, as well as to group the pupils in some lessons so that support can be more effectively targeted. The parents speak highly of the support their children receive when there have been unforeseen events in the family. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are updated regularly with appropriate targets. However, it is not always clear to what extent pupils are involved in helping to set their own targets and in ticking them off when attained.

34. The school ensures that everyone works in a safe environment. Regular and rigorous health and safety checks are carried out on the school buildings, appliances and equipment. First aid procedures are very well organised and the staff provide the pupils with calm support if they are feeling unwell. Very good care is taken of the pupils' individual needs. Child protection procedures are very good, with a reminder in every classroom of the person to whom they should report any concerns.
35. The recently revamped school council is now presenting the views of the pupils better, because the children in Years 1 and 2 are now included. Recent requests for the toilets to be '*jazzed up*' have resulted in a number of designs being submitted by the pupils, some of which will be painted on the walls. The pupils report the work of the school council to parents.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are very good. Those with other schools and the community are also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents whole-heartedly support the school; they particularly like the immediacy with which they can talk to staff over concerns.
- The parents are provided with very good quality information both formally and informally.
- Very good links with other schools benefit the pupils.
- The school uses the local community to broaden the experiences of the pupils.

Commentary

36. The parents have a high level of confidence in the school and are very appreciative of the good teaching their children receive. They are very willing to be involved with the school through being school governors, for which there is usually an election, providing help in school and by supporting the Parents and Friends (P.A.Fs). The school is welcoming of parents and many commented positively on the ease with which any immediate problems can be resolved. This is because they can readily talk to teachers briefly at the start or end of the day.
37. Very good information is provided for parents through letters, the prospectus, newsletters, reports and formal and informal meetings. The school, with help from the oldest pupils, is currently working to make its website somewhere where information can be accessed, thus increasing the opportunities for parents to find out what is going on. The reports the parents receive annually on how their child is doing are of very good quality. However, in some cases the targets set in them could be more specific. Whilst there is useful and interesting information provided in the governor's annual report to parents, there are some minor omissions. All parents talk to their child's teacher each term about how their child is doing, because the school contacts any parent who does not attend the formal parents' evening. Attendance at meetings held about educational issues or initiatives, such as one held recently on accelerated learning, is high. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's progress and parents are pleased with the progress that is made.

38. The school has very active and purposeful links with other schools, both within the local cluster group and within the wider context of the local education authority. These links help to spread good practice and to share ideas. Curricular links with the local secondary school have a positive effect within the school and from which the pupils benefit. Most pupils transfer to the local secondary school; this move is very smooth partly because of the very good way in which the schools work together.
39. Links with the local community help to keep the school in its midst as well as giving the pupils a breadth of experiences. The local football and cricket clubs often use its grounds. The school is as helpful as possible to the local pre-school provider and also develops links with it that help the children make a smooth move into the Reception classes. The school uses local organisations to provide very good experiences for the pupils, such as an architectural workshop and dealing with a heart attack. Members of the local community have come into school and given the pupils helpful insights into their jobs, broadening their knowledge of the world of work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The very good leadership and management of the school are central to the school's success. The leadership of the headteacher and his senior management team are very good. Although there is minor non-compliance of statutory requirements, governance is very good. The headteacher, his senior management team and governors share an exceptional vision for the school's improvement and continuing success. They also manage the school very effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The innovative senior management structure has resulted in a team who are outstanding at inspiring and motivating staff and pupils alike.
- Senior management provide excellent role models for the rest of staff and for pupils.
- The school rigorously checks its own performance and pupils' progress and is committed to providing a continually improving quality of education.
- The governors provide excellent support in their role as a critical friend. They contribute to detailed strategic planning which reflects and promotes the school's ambitions and goals.
- Financial management is excellent and clearly focuses on school priorities. Principles of best value are applied in an entrepreneurial way to the benefit of the school.

Commentary

40. The leadership has created a very good team spirit in the school. Pupils and staff work happily together in the knowledge that each individual is highly valued. The innovative use of management teams rather than individual subject co-ordinators means that the senior management team have a broad view of standards and the quality of teaching and learning and, as result, they are able to ensure a consistency of approach to curricular development and lesson planning. Senior management understand their roles clearly and make a very good contribution to the smooth running of the school. They provide excellent role models and provide outstanding motivation and inspiration for staff and pupils alike. The interests of pupils with special educational needs are well led and managed.
41. The governing body is extremely well informed and carries out the vast majority of its statutory duties. They have been involved in drawing up the school's mission statement and an outstanding vision for the development of the school is shared with the headteacher and his senior management. There is a very highly structured governor review programme. Governors produce perceptive reviews that provide a very good basis for setting the school's future targets. Thus, they are well placed to contribute to the detailed and well-focused school development plan. In all things they act as an extremely supportive yet critical friend.

42. The strategic planning is very good; it is very securely based on improving what is provided in order to improve pupils' achievement and results from rigorous self-evaluation. For example, the school is already aware of the current issues identified by the inspection team. Consequently, everyone has a very good idea of what needs to be done. Performance data from the National Curriculum tests and assessment information are carefully analysed. Strengths and weaknesses are rapidly identified and very clear targets are set for improvement. Monitoring procedures are rigorous and are achieved in a wide variety of ways. For example, involving subject leaders, classroom teachers, governors and the headteacher.
43. Performance of the pupils is at the forefront of all school initiatives and school self-evaluation is rigorous. Staff development is very closely linked to school improvement and performance management. Recruitment and retention are managed very well and there are very effective strategies in place to manage workforce reform. Teachers new to the profession are mentored very effectively and feel confident that they are gaining high quality support from all the staff. Other colleagues new to the school also feel that they are looked after well and quickly made to feel at home in this highly professional environment. The school contributes exceptionally well to initial teacher training. An illustration of this is the way they are involved in the government initiative where graduates are trained totally within the school environment. The school also enjoys close links with the teacher-training institute in Winchester who send a wide range of students over the academic year. Not only do they provide very valuable placements for trainees, this link also benefits St John's because they gain access to potential staff for the future.
44. Financial management is excellent and the principles of best value clearly understood. The headteacher has exceptional skills in strategic planning and uses all available resources in the very best way.

Example of outstanding practice

The headteacher and governors have an entrepreneur approach to financial management.
 Excellent use is made of leasing contracts that enable the pupils to have up-to-date resources. For example, the school has been able to restock much of its library by borrowing money over a three-year period. The school also carefully selects the best deal available. This is illustrated in their choice of supplier for their interactive whiteboards. For example, they chose a company who would not only provide good quality resources, but that they would be fitted free if the school could be used as a centre for showing other schools how they worked. This meant that there was a saving of over £6000.

45. Another example of outstanding financial management is the way in which the accommodation has been improved in a cost-effective way. The school compares itself to others that are similar and shares information within the local cluster of schools. They consult parents and pupils on major funding issues and this ensures that the main stakeholders are involved in major purchases. The administration officer, who has well ordered systems and routines, manages day-to-day finances very well.
46. Despite the lack of pre-school experiences for many children and the lack of finances to support initiatives, such as the reform of the workforce, the inspection team feel that the school's ethos, staff commitment, relationships with home, links with other schools and its team approach to leadership and management, provide positive aids for the future of the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	780,302	Balance from previous year	49,682
Total expenditure	808,302	Balance carried forward to the next	21,682

Expenditure per pupil	2,566
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PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Since the previous inspection a new national scheme of work for this age group has been introduced. Also, at the time of the last inspection, attainment on entry was judged to be above average. Therefore, although it is difficult to make comparisons, provision for this age group is good and generally has been well maintained since the last inspection. The children start school with a very varied range of pre-school experiences, but overall attainment on entry is now judged to be as expected for this age group. Older children become full-time shortly after starting school, but the younger ones remain on a part-time basis for the first term. In the current Reception year group there are a significant number of children who have summer birthdays and will not be five until the very end of the academic year. They achieve well during their time in Reception but, because so many are still very young when they complete this year, overall standards are judged to be as expected at the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum.

Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good overall. There is a well thought out curriculum that generally reflects good early education practice. The new national assessment scheme has been implemented well, especially for the areas of communication, language and literacy and for mathematical development. In these areas work is very well matched to the individual needs of children. The more immature children and those with special educational needs are provided with additional adult support. However, the current practice of planning National Curriculum subject based lessons and the way in which the outside play area is not always used do not fully reflect Foundation Stage guidance. Good use is generally made of the space and resources available inside the school. There have been good improvements to the accommodation since the last inspection, but the available space tends to be cramped and overcrowded with furniture. Good efforts have been made to rectify this by staff who work as a team to share space and equipment. However, there is scope for further improvements, including the use of the outdoor area as an integrated part of the school day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of the Reception year.
- Induction processes are good and this helps the children settle quickly.
- Children enjoy school and are keen to learn.
- Relationships between the staff and children and between the children themselves are good.
- Children are able to sit and listen and to concentrate for long periods of time.

Commentary

47. Children achieve well and most children will reach above the early learning goals by the end of their first year in school. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Teachers and their learning support assistants ensure that children quickly learn the correct way to behave. The good induction process, which takes place prior to the children starting school, helps children to settle in; as a result, children enjoy school and are keen to learn. Good relationships between staff and children are quickly established and adults encourage the development of social skills in a variety of ways. Children are constantly encouraged to take turns and share. Those with special educational needs are well integrated and receive good support. All are encouraged to join in, to try new things and to persevere with a task.

48. The lack of sufficient opportunities for independence identified in the previous inspection has been to some extent rectified. Children are given the opportunity to select what they want to do and reflect upon how well they have achieved. They are shown how to work together co-operatively on a task and are provided with independent activities to work on. At the end of these lessons children are proud to show off their finished products.
49. By the end of their time in the Reception class, children are able to sit and listen to the teacher and to visitors for quite long periods without becoming unduly restless. This is because of the very positive relationships that exist and the skill of the teachers who successfully include and involve every one. A very good example of this was seen when the local vicar brought her vestments into school to show the children. They remained interested for about half an hour because the adults ensured that there was sufficient interesting things to see, gave clear explanations and asked the children for their comments and opinions to keep them actively involved in the discussion.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff place high priority on speaking, listening, reading and writing in formally taught lessons.
- Assessment is used very well to match tasks to the individual needs of children and staff are deployed very well in these lessons.
- The book corners are not given a high enough profile.
- Too few opportunities are provided for children to write freely in their play.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning is good overall. Children achieve well in developing their speaking and listening skills because they are given good opportunities to contribute to question and answer sessions when working as a whole class with the teacher and when being taught in small groups.
51. When children start school, standards in reading and writing are below expected levels. However, the development of reading and writing skills is given a high priority. Many lessons include the reinforcement of initial sounds and the reading of simple words. As a result, children make good progress in linking letters and sounds, and the standards they achieve in writing and reading are as expected by the end of the Reception year.
52. Children try hard in their lessons because the individual skills involved in reading and writing are taught well. Assessment is used very effectively to plan tasks exactly suited to the needs of the children. Children then work in small groups with skilled adults who move their learning forward well. As a result, all children including the youngest and those with special educational needs achieve well.
53. Reading scheme books are matched very carefully to the children's abilities and children take these home every day to share with their parents and carers. In addition to reading scheme books, there are some attractive picture books in the classrooms. However, the book areas are in cramped corners, books are not attractively displayed and there is no listening centre readily available to the children to use at '*choosing time*'. During the inspection, the only time children were observed to read was when directed to do so. Writing tables are provided, but these have a limited range of tools and implements and the very small shop play area in the classroom has little space for children to write out '*orders*', '*shopping lists*' or take down '*telephone messages*'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical skills are taught very well.
- Support staff are used well to help move learning forward.

Commentary

54. Teaching is very good because the teaching and learning of mathematics is often set in naturally occurring contexts. For example, the children find the number of children present each day by subtracting the number who are away. The terms '*more than*' and '*less than*' are used regularly and any misunderstandings corrected. Children are set mathematical tasks in small groups using well-designed games and activities that help children to learn in a practical way. These are very well-matched to the children's needs because assessment is used very well. All available adults are deployed very well. They are skilled at questioning the children whilst they are engaged in a variety of activities and are good at getting them to count and recognise numbers, shapes and sizes and to solve simple problems that they pose. As a result, children achieve very well so that, from a below average starting point, they attain the standards expected by the end of the Reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

55. It was not possible to make an overall judgement about this wide-ranging area of learning because too few aspects of it were observed. However, evidence from teachers' planning shows that all aspects of this area of learning are fully covered, but tend to be planned for under National Curriculum headings such as science, information and communication technology and the humanities. From the evidence gained both in the Reception classrooms and from analysing the children's work, standards attained are as expected for this age group.
56. A great deal of this area of learning took place in a lesson planned as '*personal, social and emotional development*'. Both class teachers were actively engaged in working with groups of children. One was helping to promote skills in using computers and the other was teaching science and design and technology using ramps and building blocks. Teaching in both these activities was good, the children achieved well and their skills increased.
57. This area of learning is greatly enhanced by visitors to, and visits out of school as, for example, when studying people who help us, such as lollipop ladies and ministers from the church.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in physical education lessons is good.
- Opportunities to practise and reinforce skills taught are missed because the outdoor play space is not used well enough.

Commentary

58. Teachers use the school hall for more formal lessons and their subject knowledge, class management and organisational skills are very good. Inside the classroom, fine muscle control is developed well through the use of chalks, pencils, crayons, scissors, glue, paint, small toys and construction kits. However, the outdoor play area is not used consistently across the curriculum and opportunities to practise the skills to be learnt in this setting are lost. This means that the children do not achieve as well as they do in other areas: achievement is satisfactory. Consequently, standards are likely to be below those expected by the end of the Reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Insufficient evidence was obtained to make a firm judgement in this area of learning because no lessons were observed. However, from the children's work seen, standards are as expected for this age group. For example, they draw, colour and paint with developing confidence and enjoy singing rhymes.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is interesting and is of good quality.
- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school.
- Pupils with different abilities in Years 3 and 4, and also in Years 5 and 6 frequently all perform the same written task.

Commentary

59. Standards in English, at the end of Year 2, are above average in reading and average in writing and speaking. Pupils' listening skills are well developed. This represents good achievement in writing and very good achievement in reading, because many children left Reception with below the expected levels of attainment in this particular area. Pupils continue to achieve well so that in Year 6, standards are above average in both reading and writing. Speaking skills are average and pupils' listening skills continue to be above average. Standards for the current Years 2 and 6 are similar to those reached in the National Curriculum tests last year. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
60. Pupils listen well and, in a lesson in Year 2, higher attaining pupils were confident to define, explain and discuss synonyms. Regular drama lessons and times for imaginative play are valuable in providing opportunities when pupils have the experience of talking in impromptu situations and becoming confident when speaking to an audience. By Year 6, pupils contribute well to a wide variety of discussions and many explain themselves precisely.
61. Pupils in Year 2 thoroughly enjoy reading. They use phonics confidently to build unfamiliar words and as a result of regular homework they recognize a wide number of words and are used to reading a variety of challenging books. The new library is proving very popular. Most pupils in Year 6 continue to be enthused by literature and they read fluently from their current library books, which they discuss with very good understanding of plot and characters. They are delighted that the reference as well as the fiction library is being expanded and are familiar with the classification system.

62. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are encouraged to use their phonic knowledge when writing and they record their thoughts with confidence and growing accuracy. Many pupils in Year 2 spell simple words correctly and use pleasing joined handwriting when writing for a range of purposes. Arrangements for teaching pupils from Years 1 and 2 in groups for literacy according to their ability is having positive results on standards. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils write using a wide vocabulary and mature phrases to explain or to advance an argument. Less capable pupils in Year 6 write simply but with good understanding, helped by the good quality of the support and encouragement they receive.
63. Overall, teaching and learning are good. In all the lessons seen teaching and learning were good and in two lessons they were very good. Strengths include carefully planned lessons with clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils. This helps them to be alert and interested. Activities were fun as well as widely appropriate so that pupils were keen to learn. Teachers plan a good balance between class activities led by the teacher and individual and group work. Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to use their talking partners to develop ideas. However, there was some variation in the degree of new and rich vocabulary and phrases which pupils were encouraged to use. Teachers use questions well and this helps pupils to think and then explain their thoughts. At the end of lessons, most teachers used good strategies to promote learning. This enables pupils to be aware of how much they have learned during the session. It also acts as a check for teachers to assess how successful their lessons have been.
64. Pupils with special educational needs and less capable pupils achieve well throughout the school because they are well supported by a specialist teacher and well trained learning assistants. Teachers in Years 3/4, and in Years 5/6 plan closely together which ensures that pupils in the same mixed age group all have similar experiences. Pupils in these mixed age classes frequently tackle the same task. For example, in a lesson in Year 3/4 pupils worked on homonyms using tongue twisters they had made up at home and older pupils were expected to complete more work than younger ones. However, there is scope to develop this into work of clearly graduated challenge in order to stimulate and extend pupils of different abilities and different ages more precisely and therefore raise standards further.
65. The two co-ordinators, who are keen and experienced, give good leadership. They have a clear view of standards and work closely with other teachers in their teams. They monitor teaching and see teachers' plans regularly. Assessment is used well to track pupils' progress and to analyse and correct weaknesses in teaching. Marking is usually useful with pointers for improvement. The literacy governor brings valuable expertise to the school as she regularly moderates national tests.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their language and literacy skills across other areas of the curriculum and this contributes significantly to their good achievement. They use the computer suite to undertake independent research and usually write about their findings. Opportunities for pupils to write are well promoted in many subjects. For example, in history, pupils in Years 3 and 4 wrote detailed and lively accounts of their visit to the Roman villa at Fishbourne.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average.
- Teaching is very good.
- Pupils focus very well on their learning during lessons.

Commentary

67. Current standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above national averages. This was a similar picture in the 2003 standardised tests. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Thus, standards have been maintained at a high level in Year 2 and have improved in Year 6. These very impressive standards are a result of the very good quality of the teaching, which interests and enthuses the pupils in their learning. Both boys and girls, those with special educational needs and gifted and talented mathematicians achieve very well.
68. Pupils start in Year 1 with average levels of attainment in mathematics. However, by the end of Year 2 virtually all pupils have achieved the expected level and over 50 per cent have attained the higher level. This represents very good achievement. More capable and average pupils use the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division with numbers up to 100. They confidently tell the time both using the digital and analogue systems. The pupils have a very good understanding of a wide range of shapes, such as hexagon, octagon and oval, and recognise right angles. They use standard measurements to work out the length and weight of a range of objects. Charts and graphs are used well to display their results. For instance, the pupils confidently use pie charts to represent their findings in a survey and this also promotes their use of fractions. Less capable pupils work comfortably within the expected level for their age. They confidently add and subtract up to 50 and recognise odd and even numbers up to 50. The pupils tell the time using the face of an analogue clock and recognise standard measurements when reading a scale on a measuring tape or weighing machine.
69. By Year 6, all pupils have reached the expected level for this age group. Over half work comfortably within the higher than expected level and just over half of these pupils are working two levels above. This shows the high standards that are achieved at the school. Pupils understand how to use percentages and decimals. They calculate the area of different shapes and understand the importance of degrees in relation to everyday life. For example, their knowledge of degrees was reinforced when they related these concepts to shipping directions. This ensured that they grasped the importance of accuracy in the degrees of angles. Pupils confidently work out ratios and solve probability problems. The mathematical skills and knowledge they have gained are used very well to develop the pupils' problem solving techniques. This ensures that they understand what they are learning and how it can be used in everyday life.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in Years 1 to 6. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and this is used to promote high quality learning. Learning objectives are clearly shared with the pupils and revisited at the end to ensure that the pupils have understood what they were required to learn. Lessons move briskly and very good use is made of questioning skills to maintain pupils' interest and motivation. Very good use is made of resources such as the interactive whiteboard and individual wipe-able boards which ensure that all pupils can be fully involved in the lessons. For example, in a very good lesson in a Year 5/6 class, the teacher used the individual wipe-able boards in her introduction to the lesson. The pupils mentally calculated problems and then displayed their answers on the boards. The teacher was able to see how all pupils were achieving and could ensure that all pupils were included in the lesson. Teachers have very good systems to track and monitor pupils' achievement over time and this information is used very well to plan for individual needs, for example, the extension of the more capable. Targets for improvement are clearly set and pupils are fully aware of what they need to do to improve.

71. Subject leadership and management by the two co-ordinators are exemplary. The two teachers, one who teaches Year 1 and 2 and the other who teaches Years 5 and 6, have carefully defined roles that include detailed monitoring of teaching and learning through scrutiny of planning, pupils' work and lesson observations. They analyse test papers and then create action plans to ensure that any areas considered weak are quickly rectified. For instance, a recent focus has been on the use of different strategies for calculations and this has resulted in the publication of a discussion document for staff to consider. All pupils are very carefully tracked and, as a result, subject leaders have a very good understanding of standards through the school. This also means that they can meet the needs of the more capable pupils who may require additional teaching materials. They confidently organise training for the staff and have close links with other local schools and local authority advisors. Teaching resources are very good and the expertise of the local secondary school is used very well for the gifted and talented pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. The school fully understands the use of and importance of mathematical skills throughout the curriculum and promotes this very well. For example, in one lesson pupils made excellent use of the Internet to find out the time zones of different countries. They then used their adding and subtraction skills to work out the differences in time between the different zones. This had a positive impact on their mathematical, information and communication technology and their geographical skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Very good teaching and learning leads to very good achievement.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good within the teams.
- Pupils enjoy learning and the quality of investigation and experiment is very good.
- Some aspects of assessment could be improved to help planning.

Commentary

73. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well above average. Nearly all pupils record their observations of plants, animals and events very thoroughly in words and pictures. The quality of detailed drawing is particularly high. This represents very good achievement taking into account the average knowledge and understanding of the world the pupils have when they come into Year 1 and the rapid progress they are making in lessons. This very good achievement is maintained through Years 3 to 6, so that by the time they leave the school, standards are well above the national average. Pupils are able to devise and test a hypothesis about, say, air resistance, collect and analyse results and draw conclusions. More capable pupils, boys and girls, spot anomalous readings and re-do the test or provide plausible explanations. Pupils with special educational needs achieve equally well, because they are well supported.
74. Teaching and learning are very good. Lessons are fast-paced and challenging and teachers use their expert knowledge to stimulate the pupils. Their use of open-ended questions such as, '*What if . . . ?*' and, '*How do you know?*' create a template for scientific thinking. Coupled with an insistence on accuracy and consistency in measurement and recording, this means that pupils usually discover what the teacher wants them to find out and often much more. The very good use of resources, including electronic whiteboards and a computer network, also serves to broaden the pupils' knowledge of plants and animals, materials and their properties and physical phenomena. Asked to describe the forces acting on a cyclist, Year 5 pupils pointed to

a bicycle leaning against the classroom wall and explained how friction worked for and against forward motion as well as the part that gravity plays in other aspects of our lives. It is clear that both boys and girls enjoy science: all are very well behaved, attentive and enthusiastic about what they have learned.

75. Whilst teachers have a good understanding of the pupils' knowledge and achievements, the recording of assessment and marking is not well standardised. This means that the data cannot conveniently be used when pupils move up to the next class. Nevertheless, assessment is generally accurate because of the very good working relationships, which ensure the continual comparison of pupils' work and the evaluation of the programmes of study.
76. The leadership and management of science are very good. These are characterised by a high level of commitment, enthusiasm and hard work that inspire a dynamic team approach. This process supports new or less experienced teachers and ensures that all teach to the same high standards. The school benefits from having very good quality resources both inside and outside in the grounds. Information and communication technology plays a very important part in all aspects of the science curriculum from planning to research and recording. The school makes very good use of both national and local on-line resources to provide inspiration, ideas for lessons and research material for the pupils. Links with the local secondary school are very good. For example, pupils can join in Year 7 classes, secondary teachers visit, and resources are shared.
77. Since the last inspection, the school has made good improvements in science. Improvements in planning, the use of information and communication technology and the continuous development of the curriculum have all contributed to the raising of standards and achievement for Years 1 and 2 and the maintenance of standards in Years 3 to 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 2 and 6 are well above national expectations.
- Teaching and learning are very good and this results in very good achievement.
- There is excellent leadership and very good management of the subject.
- The resources used in nearly all lessons are outstanding.
- Some aspects of assessment could be improved.

Commentary

78. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. This represents very good achievement taking into account the knowledge and understanding pupils have when they come into the school and the rapid progress they are currently making in lessons. Pupils learn to combine words and pictures, to store information in a simple database and to paint digital pictures. Basic computer skills are firmly established by the time the pupils move into Year 3. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above average, representing very good achievement overall. In some lessons pupils' achievement is excellent. Boys and girls do equally well, often being paired together when working at the computer. Pupils develop a broad range of skills, such as researching topics on the Internet or producing multi-media presentations and select these appropriately to enhance their work.
79. Teaching and learning are very good and sometimes excellent. Information and communication technology permeates all aspects of the curriculum. For both the pupils and teachers it has become a natural everyday tool but their enthusiasm for learning new skills is always an exciting challenge. This is the result of careful planning, expert knowledge and

experience and the excellent use of powerful resources. Teachers build very well on what the pupils have learned before and tasks are open-ended so that pupils can combine different areas of understanding to make their presentations. One excellent lesson was observed and is described below:

Example of outstanding practice

A mixed Years 5 & 6 geography lesson in which pupils describe the attractions of their local coastal area for the benefit of their Swedish pen pals:

Drawing a map of the Portsmouth-Southampton area from memory and then labelling the towns to show what you find there would be challenging enough for most people, but this was just the opening brainteaser for these ten and 11 year olds. The teacher then used the interactive whiteboard to show where the resources were to be found. Powerful information technology is just an everyday tool for the pupils, who were soon engrossed in locating maps by postcode on the Internet, rescaling and centring, copying and pasting and labelling. Their ability to manipulate images, text boxes and arrows in a well-known word-processor was amazing! The teacher employed a system of pairing the Year 5 with Year 6 children to spread these skills around and was able to rely on her accurate knowledge of what pupils already knew to continually extend their understanding. By the end of this session it was easy to locate the nearest shopping centres, where to catch the ferry to France (book early, the ferry only holds 100 cars), not to mention the best beaches – and all in full colour. Watch out for an influx of young Swedish tourists over the next few weeks!

80. Whilst teachers have a good understanding of the pupils' knowledge and achievements, the recording of assessment and marking is more limited. The introduction of new hardware and software, the high quality of staff training and the commitment and enthusiasm of the teachers ensure that learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is never less than very good.
81. The leadership in information and communication technology is excellent. The commitment is inspirational and has fired all teachers with a determination not only to master the excellent resources, but also to overcome most of the practical difficulties associated with small classrooms and an open-plan computer suite. The management of all these resources and the development of the curriculum are very good. The school has clear, well-argued plans for the future. These include building on its very good links with the local secondary school to provide further expertise in measurement, data-logging and extending the activities for the most able pupils.
82. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good: standards have improved even further; achievement has increased and control technology has been introduced. The pupils' understanding of information and communication technology in its wider context has moved with the times and the level of competence is very high.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is very good. All teachers and support staff have received training to a high standard so that they are able to make use of the excellent resources. The use of interactive electronic whiteboards enhances learning in all subjects and has replaced that of more traditional tools almost entirely. The fact that pupils and teachers have access to a wide range of easily accessible resources within their own classrooms means that learning can be more spontaneous. In an entertaining mathematics lesson with a Year 3/4 class, pupils were able to explore number patterns and respond to a times-table challenge in a way that would have been difficult and slow with using non-electronic methods. In addition, the exercise can be repeated without any additional work for the teacher. As well as learning different subjects using information and communication technology, pupils are also gaining a high level of skill and understanding so that, by the time they reach the end of Year 6, they are proficient users of a broad range of tools and are able to refine and develop their work for specific purposes.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and reported below. As no lessons were taught in history and only one lesson was observed in geography during the inspection, it was not possible to give a judgement on the provision within the subjects.

84. Analysis of teachers' planning; talking to subject co-ordinators; an analysis of previous work and discussions with pupils, indicate that standards meet national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. National guidelines are used for planning and plans indicate there is full coverage of National Curriculum requirements and that skills and knowledge are built upon year-on-year. Good strategies are promoted to enrich pupils' studies in **geography** and a wide range of visits and visitors play an important part in making learning interesting and relevant. Research and study skills are good, with the use of the computers playing a vital role. In the very good lesson observed, the interactive white board was used to show a film of life in a Swedish school with whom pupils in Years 5 and 6 are going to correspond. The local vicar who had recently visited the school introduced the lesson and answered pupils' questions. At the end of the lessons, pupils used a variety of methods to research the unanswered questions. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively and the very good management structure ensures that there is a consistency in the quality of teaching throughout the school. Resources are very good.
85. Samples of pupils' work in **history** throughout the school indicate that pupils have a wide knowledge of different periods of history and an increasingly clear understanding of changes that have occurred over time. Visits and visitors play an important part in making the work interesting and relevant. Pupils in Year 6 reported that they enjoyed history topics and they demonstrated good recall of differences in life in ancient Athens and in Sparta.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject has an appropriately high profile and reflects the Christian ethos of the school.
- Standards exceed those set out in the locally agreed syllabus.
- Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards the subject.
- Teaching is consistently good.
- Pupils have no opportunities to visit places of worship of faiths other than Christianity.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

86. The school's Christian foundation is reflected in the importance placed on religious education within the school. Lessons are carefully planned to ensure that pupils explore and respond to human experiences and investigate the religious traditions of the Christian faith, Judaism and Hinduism.
87. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This judgement is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They give thoughtful responses to teachers' questioning and their written work is very carefully presented. In discussion they talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about what they have been taught. The good achievement and the positive attitudes demonstrated are the result of the consistently good teaching they receive. Teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and work. Links with personal, social, health and emotional development are particularly good. Much of the work pupils do is directly linked to their own life-styles. This helps them to understand the ideas that are being taught. For example, in the very good lesson about

a Hindu family, seen in the Year 1/2 class, the teacher started by asking children to think about their own families. She then built upon this by skilled use of questioning to make the idea of an extended family clear. As a result, one pupil was able to give a very clear explanation of what was meant by 'respecting family members'.

88. By Year 6 pupils build up a sound knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, teachings and practices of the three religions taught, and reflect on what religious experiences might mean to those who believe. However, first hand experience of believers and places of worship is limited because the visitors to school and visits to the places of worship are limited to local Christian churches.
89. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject. She knows the syllabus thoroughly and has ensured that appropriate resources are in place for effective teaching and learning. These are of very good quality and used very effectively in lessons. The management structure of the school helps ensure a consistent and systematic approach throughout the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design was inspected in full and reported below. As no lessons were taught in design and technology and only one lesson was observed in music and physical education, it was not possible to make an overall judgement about provision within these subjects.

90. Scrutiny of **design and technology** work samples shows that during Years 1 and 2 the range of projects tackled is imaginative and challenging and pupils reach above average standards. The quality of labelled designs and written evaluations are very good. By the time that pupils are in Year 6 they have experienced a broad and balanced range of activities based on the National Curriculum. The resources employed are at least good and the standard of work achieved is above average. For example, the design and manufacture of carrier bags by Years 5 and 6 pupils show that they have carefully examined the requirements and specifications, then designed, tested and evaluated high quality products.
91. The one **music** lesson observed was in a Year 3/4 class. This was concerned with composition and the understanding of dynamics and tempo. In this lesson the teaching was of a very good standard, pupils were enthusiastic and performed at an above average level expected for their age. The only singing heard was during the acts of worship and the quality of this was good. The provision of instrumental tuition from visiting teachers is of a high standard. Extra curricular clubs, such as the orchestra and choir, enhance the musical provision and pupils talk with enthusiasm about the subject and the concerts they have given to parents. The very able co-ordinator is a music specialist and the subject is very well led and managed. Resources for the teaching and learning of music are very good.
92. One physical education session was observed in a Year 5/6 class. The focus for the lesson was developing striking skills and aiming for targets with a ball. Teaching was of a good standard. This was because the pupils were encouraged to 'warm-up' at the start of the lesson. This session moved at a good pace and effective use was made of the pupils to demonstrate improvements that could be made to the development of their skills. Extra-curricular skills further develop physical skills and these are thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. The subject is well resourced and led and managed appropriately.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above national expectations.
- Teaching is very good.
- Very good use is made of cross-curricular links, which enhance the work in other subjects.
- Provision for art and design is very well co-ordinated within the team units.
- There is a very good range of resources available.

Commentary

93. Standards in art and design have been well maintained since the last inspection when they were judged to be well above national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Both boys and girls, those who have special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented achieve very well. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is very good and skills are taught progressively through the school.
94. Year 2 pupils very skilfully create close observational drawings and carefully use their pencils to highlight details. For example, they have sketched a wasp's nest and different types of kitchen utensils. They use varying degrees of pencil lines and shading to show details, such as the holes on a food grater. The pupils competently mix paints and make appropriate colour tones in preparation for their self-portrait work, which is of a very high standard. Different types of crayons and printing materials, such as sponges, cotton reels and material are used to create visual effects. For instance, the pupils have made an underwater scene using crayons. The addition of a *'blue wash'* effect has made it particularly effective. Pupils are developing a good knowledge of famous artists and recognise the differing styles of both Picasso and Lowry.
95. By Year 6, pupils very confidently discuss different ideas and methods. Charcoal is used skilfully to create tone. For example, very high standards were attained when they made caricatures of their teacher and of Tony Blair! Older pupils very skilfully use watercolours and carefully create particular features by using their systematically developed brushwork skills. For example, in a very good Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were observed modifying and improving their work by using different types of brushstrokes to create perspective and proportion. They are very knowledgeable about mixing different colours together, but also work particularly effectively using black and white to create a monochrome finish. Pupils have a very good knowledge of famous artists. For example, they talk with enthusiasm about the work of Georgia O'Keefe and confidently refer to Picasso's *'Blue Period'*.
96. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and this has a very positive impact on the acquisition of pupils' skills. Lessons are carefully planned and learning objectives clearly shared with the pupils. This ensures that they understand what they are doing. In one very good lesson in a Year 5/6 class, the teacher had identified a target for improvement and this was being used to further develop their skills. During the session the teacher referred to their target and this really helped the pupils to achieve at a much higher rate than would normally be expected. Teachers use a very good range of resources, such as the interactive whiteboards, which is used to display examples of the focus for the lesson. Music is also used very well to create a learning atmosphere that pupils enjoy, in which they fully participate and to which they respond very well. The teaching of art and design also has a very positive impact on the development of pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness.
97. Art and design is very well co-ordinated within the team units. Pupils' progress is appropriately monitored and checked by the teachers within each team. Resources are very good and pupils benefit very well from the use of specialist tools. A particular strength is the way in which the programme of study for art and design is used to develop links across the curriculum. For instance, to support their work in history, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have drawn pictures of Mary

Seacole and Queen Elizabeth the First, whilst older pupils have designed ancient Greek patterns and created Egyptian death masks.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education and citizenship was sampled.

98. The school's arrangements for personal, social and health education, including drugs awareness education and citizenship are very good. Team units co-ordinate provision very well. All classes have regular sessions in personal, social and health education. The pupils are confident and very interested in the work they do. Year 6 pupils say that they enjoy the sessions and find the information and advice sympathetic and helpful. They are given very good opportunities to explore and think about issues that affect them, responding very well through discussion and debate. The pupils are helped to understand and respect the feeling of others and this is done, very well, through the excellent role models demonstrated by the staff. The school gives the pupils opportunities to develop their awareness of living in a community through the council and this helps them learn to support each other. In the one personal, social, health and emotional development lesson observed, teaching was of a very good standard because all the ideas and values of the pupils were respected and very good use was made of the interactive whiteboard.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	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	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
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).