

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FREEMANTLE C OF E INFANT SCHOOL**

Southampton

LEA area: Southampton

Unique reference number: 116341

Headteacher: Mr Kevin Barnett

Lead inspector: Brenda Spencer

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 266848

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 7  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 142

School address: Mansion Road  
Freemantle  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
Postcode: SO15 3BQ

Telephone number: (02380) 227 925  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs Sue Osment  
governors:

Date of previous February 1999  
inspection:

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Freemantle is a small infant and nursery school in Southampton for pupils aged three to seven years. Attainment on entry to school is below average and socio-economic background is well below average. There are 92 pupils attending full-time and 50 part-time; 77 boys and 65 girls. Twenty-three pupils left and 18 pupils joined the school last year outside the normal times of transfer. Nearly three quarters of pupils are White British. The remaining pupils come either from a variety of Asian backgrounds, or are of African or Caribbean heritage. There are 19 pupils at an early stage of learning English and most speak either Panjabi, Urdu or Turkish. Twenty seven per cent of all pupils have special educational needs, with none having statements of special need. This is well above the national average. These special needs are predominantly related to moderate learning; autism; social, emotional and behavioural and speech/communication difficulties. In 2004, the school regained the Healthy Schools award. The Basic Skills Quality Mark was awarded in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20451	Brenda Spencer	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science
9537	Caroline Marden	Lay inspector	
3574	Kawaljit Singh	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Creative development Personal, social and health education and citizenship
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics Humanities Information and communication technology Religious education Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Freemantle C of E Infant School is a good school.** All pupils achieve well. They enjoy their lessons immensely. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Leadership and management are good overall. The school provides good value for money.

### THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- Pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes.
- The pupils learn well and achieve well.
- The teaching benefits from the positive response the school has made to points for improvement revealed by its self-evaluation measures.
- Standards in English are below average.
- Children are given a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Extra curricular clubs, visits and visitors enrich the curriculum very well.
- Subject leaders play too small a role in strategic planning to raise standards and achievement.
- The partnership with parents and with other schools enhances pupils' learning well.
- The school provides very well for pastoral care and personal development.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and who have English as an additional language is good.
- Levels of attendance are too low.

Improvement since the last inspection in 1999 is good. The minor points for improvement identified then have all been addressed. In addition, strengths have been maintained in leadership and management and teaching. The partnership with parents, tracking of pupils' progress and achievement, personal development, enrichment of the curriculum, care of pupils and provision in the Foundation Stage have all improved further. Standards in national tests have dropped but this reflects significant changes in pupils' starting points and the effects of turbulence in the school population.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	A	A	E	C
writing	C	B	E	C
mathematics	C	B	D	B

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

**The pupils' achievement is good overall.** It is good in mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education in Year 2. It is satisfactory in reading and writing. The drop in standards in the 2004 test results was due to the lower capabilities of the group of pupils who took the tests, combined with a high level of turbulence in the school population. The same reasons accounted for a fall in

results when compared with similar schools, though standards were average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Building from the pupils' below-average starting points, standards in the current Year 2 are average in science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. Standards are above average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. After half a term in school, indications are that most children in the Foundation Stage are likely to reach most of the goals for their learning by the end of the reception year. However, they are likely to exceed them for personal, social and emotional development. Because of particularly low standards when they first start school, the children are unlikely to meet them in communication, language and literacy. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the careful analysis of their needs and the targeted provision they receive. Pupils with English as an additional language progress well, reflecting the emphasis placed on developing pupils' vocabulary and communication skills.

**Pupils' personal qualities are developed well. Their personal, spiritual, moral and social and cultural development is very good.** Their attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils are enthusiastic, very well behaved and work hard. Attendance is below average and punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.** It is satisfactory for English. Pupils' behaviour is managed very well so that a very good climate for learning is established in the classroom. Pupils' vocabulary is developed well across the curriculum, benefiting in particular those with English as an additional language. Teaching assistants support learning very well. However, marking does not point out ways in which pupils can improve.

The breadth of the curriculum is good. The enrichment of activities through extra-curricular clubs and visitors and visits serves to enhance pupils' engagement in their learning. The school takes excellent care of pupils' health, safety and welfare. Academic guidance is presently satisfactory and improving with the impact of recently established tracking of pupils' progress. Links with parents and other schools are very good and support pupils' progress well.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The headteacher leads the school very well and is making a very effective response to the rapidly changing nature of the school. The school is well managed. Key staff fulfil their roles satisfactorily and are beginning to expand their part in improving standards and achievement. Governance is satisfactory overall. Governors have taken very difficult decisions with regard to the budget and they ensure statutory requirements are met. Financial control is good but the governors' role as critical friend is insufficiently developed.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents hold the school in high regard. They rightly value how much their children enjoy school, the progress they make, the quality of leadership, management and teaching, the curriculum and how well pupils behave. Pupils do indeed enjoy school and the friendliness

of the other pupils. They know who to turn to at times of worry but judge sternly the behaviour of their peers. Their expectations are very high.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE ARE:**

- raise standards and achievement in English;
- strengthen the role of subject leaders in raising standards and achievement; and
- increase rates of attendance to levels similar to the national average.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

**Achievement is good overall across the school.** Standards in most subjects are in line with the national average, with pupils building from below-average starting points overall. However, in English, standards are below average. They are above average in mathematics. Achievement in English is satisfactory. In other subjects it is good.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of wide ranging strengths in the provision.
- The curriculum and teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship enable pupils to achieve very well.
- Children with English as an additional language and special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is limited by few opportunities to apply skills across the curriculum.
- Good levels of challenge in mathematics promote good achievement.
- Pupils' knowledge of science is better than their investigating and exploration skills.
- Assessment is not used to identify precisely enough how pupils can improve their reading and so has a negative impact on their achievement.

#### Commentary

1. Most children enter school with well-below-average starting points in literacy. Most recent baseline assessments show that the proportion of children with low-level skills is generally greater than the Southampton average. The current Reception intake has a very wide range of capability. Overall, their skills are above average for personal, social and emotional development. In communication, language and literacy, they are below average and in writing, well below average. Skills are average for mathematical development. However, this group includes children who are highly talented and some who find learning very challenging. By the end of reception, most of the children are likely to reach the goals for their learning, except in personal, social and emotional development, where they are likely to exceed them, and in writing and reading, where some are unlikely to reach the expected level.

#### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.2 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.5 (15.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.7 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. By the end of Year 2, pupils reached standards in the 2004 national tests that were well below the national average in reading and writing. Standards were below the national average in mathematics. They were in line with the average of similar schools in reading and writing and were above average in mathematics. In science, the proportion of pupils reaching both the expected level and the higher level, judged by teacher assessment, was in line with the national average. In this subject, comparisons with similar schools were well above average for the expected level and above average for the higher level.
3. Standards in the tests dipped from previous years. This reflects differences in the attainment of pupils on entry. Contributory factors include: the unusual breadth of the range of capability, the higher-than-average number of pupils of lower attainment, and the turbulence in the school population, which has depressed the overall level of capability and increased numbers of pupils at an early stage of learning English.
4. Girls consistently outperform boys in national tests. This has been a concern for governors. In lessons, boys achieved as well as girls and showed the same interest in their work. However, to improve boys' achievement in reading, books have been purchased which are likely to motivate them. Teaching of writing has been reviewed and the oral component has been given greater emphasis to help pupils formulate their ideas. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage focuses on practical activities and relevant literacy and numeracy teaching stems from these. Assessment is used carefully to ensure skills, for example, phonics and spelling, are taught at a level appropriate for pupils of different capability. This serves to keep all children interested in learning and encourages good achievement.
5. Pupils in the current Year 2 reach standards which are below average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Standards are above average in mathematics. They are average in science and information and communication technology. Pupils' standards in religious education meet expected levels.
6. No secure judgements could be made about standards and achievement in art and design, design and technology, physical education and music. There was insufficient evidence and these subjects were not a main focus of the inspection. Indications are that standards are above average in geography and average in history. No judgement could be made about achievement in these two subjects.
7. Pupils' achievement is good overall. This reflects the very good management of behaviour which ensures there is a good climate for learning. However, achievement in English, unlike other subjects, is only satisfactory, as is the teaching. Basic skills are taught in reading but assessment is not used to identify next steps so that parents and staff can focus on aspects which will maximise pupils' progress. Pupils lack confidence in predicting and recent analysis of test papers shows that pupils generally do not comprehend beyond the literal meaning of the text. Achievement in writing is hampered by too few opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across the curriculum. Written tasks which are set, in common with science, too often are not tailored to the different capabilities of pupils. Opportunities for discussion are frequent and cross-curricular. The focus on developing vocabulary supports well those with limited communication skills.

8. The good achievement in mathematics is associated with high expectations, enjoyable tasks and the use of assessment to identify gaps in learning. In science, pupils achieve well overall. However, achievement is better in knowledge of science than in investigating and exploring. This reflects the relative lack of emphasis on developing skills of prediction, concluding and hypothesising. Leadership in the subject has not identified the strengths and weaknesses in the provision to inform the action plan for improvement. Good achievement in information and communication technology reflects recent very good resourcing and effective development of the skills of staff. Pupils do well in religious education partly because the subject leader improves provision in the light of her monitoring and evaluation. Personal, social and emotional development and citizenship are given high priority. The pupils' very good achievement in this area of learning reflects the richness of the curriculum and the determination of the school to be at the cutting edge of developments.
9. In the Foundation Stage, children develop very good social skills. They achieve very well because of the very good example they have of teamwork between staff. They also have many opportunities to work and play together, for example, in the spacious nursery role-play area. The organisation of classrooms and resources gives children many opportunities to be independent and promotes good achievement in design and making. Personal achievement is also promoted by staff who consistently help pupils to sort out their own problems rather than briskly doing it for them. Good achievement in literacy, mathematical and information and communication technology development reflects the many opportunities for children have to apply their skills across the curriculum. In addition, skills are taught well according to the capability of different groups of children. When investigating, children are encouraged to formulate conclusions and to engage in high-level thinking.
10. Pupils new to English make good progress, but their standards remain lower than their English-speaking peers because they have not yet acquired the appropriate skills in the language. With good support from teachers and teaching assistants, these pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils from ethnic minorities who are English speakers make good progress and attain standards similar to their peers.
11. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, including in English. This reflects the careful tracking of their progress and the effective contribution by teaching assistants to support them in lessons. However, tasks to record their learning are not sufficiently tailored to allow their independence in English and science. By the end of Year 2, the teachers enable a large proportion of them to reach the average national standard in mathematics.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

The school is a **very well** ordered, hardworking community with very warm and positive relationships. Pupils' attendance is **below** the national average; their punctuality is **good**. There have been no exclusions.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching and a rich curriculum develop very good attitudes and behaviour.

- The school engenders very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance is too low.

## Commentary

12. Pupils behave very well in lessons. This particularly results from lively teaching, which uses interesting methods and promotes self-confidence and independence. In one physical education lesson, for example, the teacher asked pupils to devise their own sequences of movements based on the behaviour of a deflating balloon. She challenged them to improve their ideas and structured the lesson with a good balance of talking and activity. Consequently, they responded keenly and with well-controlled movements. She approached the one or two pupils who were reluctant with firmness but kindness, so that they included themselves in the lesson. In all lessons, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language have as positive attitudes to learning as the other pupils. Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs and opportunities to learn outside lessons. There are no differences between the attitudes of boys and girls or between pupils of different ethnic origins. Pupils do not gain a great deal of motivation from the quality of teachers' marking and only have written targets for English to which to respond.
13. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good as they move about the school. This is in large part the product both of the school's high expectations and the level of care. It also results from regular recognition, in assemblies and lessons, of pupils' acts of consideration for others. At the beginning of the day, pupils come into school and immediately settle down to reading, often with the adult who has brought them in. The calm atmosphere carries on seamlessly into the first lesson. Occasionally, largely because of some personal upset, a pupil comes in reluctantly. The school uses a very successful and caring strategy to deal with these rare instances. Pupils transfer from one area of the school to another sensibly and are polite to one another and adults.
14. Pupils' behaviour is very good at both playtimes and lunchtimes. The spacious playground and other outdoor facilities provide many opportunities for pupils to choose whether to play energetically or quietly. Pupils playing games move in a sensible, controlled manner. They co-operate well, whatever they are doing. No unpleasant incidents were observed during the inspection. There is no evidence of bullying and the level of racial harmony is good. In the dining hall, pupils talk quietly to one another, are very courteous to adults and wait patiently to collect their lunch.
15. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. They put themselves in other people's places so that they share their feelings. For example, pupils understand the plight of evacuees in the War and of many Iraqis in modern times. In religious education lessons, pupils show respect for other people's faiths and religious practices. This partly stems from the interesting displays teachers make about other religions, including artefacts. The school has also developed a very good relationship with the local church, there are plans to visit a synagogue and they have already visited a temple. Pupils appreciate beauty in their natural environment. Teachers look for opportunities for spiritual development. In Reception, for example, pupils showed great delight at the antics of bubbles which were used as a stimulus for movement. Assemblies teach pupils the meaning of reflection and reverence.

16. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. They distinguish right from wrong, and state that they learn both from the Bible and from fictional characters. Where pupils need to co-operate in groups, they do so willingly from a very early age. In all school situations, pupils are not only confident but also respectful of other people's points of view. This links both with the atmosphere of trust that exists between adults and pupils and the school's insistence that pupils treat other people with consideration. Older pupils care for the younger through a 'buddy system'. 'Circle Time' is a good opportunity for pupils to learn to take time in expressing their views. The school has recently introduced a programme aimed at heightening pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills, which will eventually be evaluated for its impact.
17. Pupils' cultural development is very good. Religious education includes studies of the cultures associated with different faiths. The school introduces pupils to the cultures of the performing arts through listening to music and participating in an Arts Week and a Dance Festival.
18. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved well since the last inspection. This is because of the closer attention given to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## Attendance

19. The level of the pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard at improving attendance, including working with the Educational Welfare Officer and introducing awards for 100% attendance. Parents now have an interview with the headteacher before he will agree to authorise leave of absence for holidays. There are some parents who are committed to getting their children to school regularly and on time, sometimes in the face of extremely difficult home circumstances, but there are too many who show less commitment and allow their children to miss school without a valid reason. Consequently, unauthorised absence is also very high. Punctuality in the mornings is usually good, with only a very few pupils arriving late.

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	1.8
National data	5.1	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 quality of education is good.** Teaching and learning are **good** overall. The curriculum is broad and interesting. The care of pupils is **excellent**. Links with parents and with other schools are **very good**.

### Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with English as an additional language receive good support and consequently achieve well.
- Pupils receive good oral feedback on how to improve. This is not the case for marked work.
- The quality of discussion and development of pupils' vocabulary promoted by the teaching supports the pupils' language, thinking and ability to communicate.
- Assessment is used well in the Foundation Stage to plan an appropriate curriculum for pupils of different capability.
- Classroom assistants contribute well to pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs.
- Lessons are generally well planned, resulting in pupils' good sense of purpose.
- There are some shortcomings in expectations of pupils' written work.

## Commentary

20. The good quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. Parents and pupils have a high opinion of the teaching. They comment positively on the expectations for hard work.

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	15	3	0	0	0

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

21. A very good climate for learning sets the right atmosphere in which pupils can make progress. The school ethos is positive and encouraging. The model of courtesy provided by adults is exemplary. Pupils receive praise for working hard and helping one another.
22. Teachers pay good attention to the intended learning when they plan lessons. This has been a point of improvement in the last year. This ensures pupils involve themselves in discussion and practical activities with a sense of purpose. However, not enough thought is given to how written work, particularly in science and English, can be matched to the needs of pupils of different capability. Generally, all pupils do the same thing, with different levels of support according to their capability. This means that lower-attaining pupils are sometimes not independent enough or higher-attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently. As a result, teaching of writing is only satisfactory.
23. At the last inspection there were weaknesses in the verbal interchange between adults and children in the Foundation Stage. This is now a strength of the teaching. Careful attention is paid to developing children's vocabulary, for example, of the parts of plants when sowing seeds or features of shapes. In the nursery there is a constant flow of conversation between adults and children during their activities, such as when they mould play dough or use construction kits. In Reception, capable children think at high levels when investigating and exploring because conversations encourage them to draw conclusions from their observations.

24. The school has responded very well to the recent increase in numbers of pupils at an early stage of learning English. These pupils are well supported by their teachers and teacher assistants and their achievement is good. The specialist teacher assistant works closely with class teachers and help pupils within classes in lessons. She is multilingual and also supports pupils in their mother tongue. The LEA support service is also used to provide translations and interpretations for pupils. In Reception, the bilingual teacher provides a good model of key vocabulary and phrases and offers bilingual support where necessary.
25. Teachers' use of 'PowerPoint' presentations are effective in explaining and demonstrating lessons. The strong visual content helps all pupils to understand what they are required to learn. Teachers use good questioning, and explain key vocabulary well. As a result, pupils successfully complete their work and achieve well. In one lesson, when a pupil was not sure of what a torch is, the teacher ensured that he handled a torch before progressing the lesson further. This extends learning. However, more use of artefacts and resources would further improve learning.
26. Teachers' positive acceptance of a diversity of languages in their classes adds significantly to their bilingual pupils' ease and, as a result, these pupils are confident and proud of their command of more than one language. Teachers frequently write labels and captions in pupils' home languages. This helps improve pupils' self-esteem and confidence in their own identity.
27. Teachers plan specific activities and use good methods to support pupils with special educational needs. This includes using the expertise of learning support assistants with whom they liaise closely. In a Year 1 design and technology lesson, for example, the assistant helped them to make a simple mechanism in a model to imitate a flashing lighthouse. Many of the assistants are well trained in supporting the pupils. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to draw out sentence answers to questions, so that pupils do not develop their speaking. However, most teachers try to ensure that pupils include themselves in discussions. Provision for very able pupils is improving, with some extension work being targeted to meet very specific needs.
28. Systems for assessing pupils' standards are satisfactory. They are good in mathematics, where there is meticulous tracking of pupils' individual progress. The school makes thorough use of national numeracy test results to learn if there are any differences in the attainments of boys and girls or in those of pupils of different ethnic origins. The system for assessing pupils with special educational needs is detailed and regular. This enables teachers to write specific plans to meet the needs of those who need a great deal of support.
29. The systems for assessing progress in English and science are less rigorous. They provide enough information to know how well pupils are progressing generally. However, recorded data in these subjects does not give as much specific help towards planning as that in mathematics. In science, for example, there are no criteria against which to assess what is below or above a specific level of knowledge, skill or understanding. The teaching of reading is only satisfactory because specific strategies to move on individual pupils are not precisely identified.

30. Teachers make satisfactory use of what they learn from assessment to adjust their planning in order to meet pupils' needs. Again, in mathematics, teachers make good use of assessment to alter the mathematics curriculum where data reveals a gap in provision. In the Foundation Stage, comprehensive observations are made of children. These are used well to tailor planning for future learning to meet the wide-ranging needs of the children across the areas of learning. As a consequence, both very capable children and those who experience learning difficulties achieve well.
31. Oral assessment of pupils' work and effort helps them to know where they have been successful or have tried hard. This gives them adequate help in knowing how to improve. Any criticism is constructive and teachers give praise where it is due. However, written marking is patchy and gives no such help. During the inspection, the pupils themselves volunteered comments about this.

### **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is **very good** in the Foundation Stage and **good** for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for the Nursery and Reception is very good.
- The curriculum for Years 1 and 2 is well balanced, broad and stimulating.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is a strength of the school.
- ICT is used well to support learning in a range of subjects.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is very good and enriches pupils' learning experiences.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good.

### **Commentary**

32. The school provides pupils with a broad range of activities and experiences covering all areas of the National Curriculum and fulfils statutory requirements, including those of religious education. Overall, the quality of the curriculum has been maintained since the last inspection, although the provision in the Foundation Stage and for personal, social and health education has improved.
33. Nursery and Reception use the Foundation Stage curriculum and provide a very good range of stimulating activities in all six areas of learning. Very good emphasis is placed on teaching personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. As a result, children's achievement is good.
34. The quality and the range of learning opportunities provided for Year 1 to Year 2 pupils are good. All aspects of the curriculum are well covered. The school ensures that the pupils are provided with an interesting and varied curriculum that effectively meets the needs of all pupils through good quality and detailed planning, as well as using national strategies and recommended guidelines. However, pupils are not consistently challenged in English and therefore their achievement and progress



remain only satisfactory. Pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to practise their literacy skills in science, history, geography and religious education.

35. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. The school has been a part of a pilot programme for improving 'Social, Emotional and Behavioural Skills' and as a result, it has been very successful in improving pupils' skills in these areas. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and their relationships with peers and adults are very good. The school is part of the 'Healthy Schools' Project'. Pupils are given many opportunities to exercise through strategies such as 'Moving Play Time' and after-school sports clubs. The school ensures that appropriate attention is given to raising awareness of the dangers of drugs misuse. The governors have decided not to provide discrete teaching on sex education but pupils' questions are answered as and when they are raised.
36. The very good range of extra-curricular activities contributes very well to pupils' learning. A wide range of clubs in areas such as dance, drama, gardening and sports is offered. Visits to places of educational interest and visitors to school such as the vicar, the local policeman, guide dogs and the 'Visiting Farm' support the curriculum very well. Artists in residence are used very well to stimulate and extend learning. The match of teachers' qualifications and experience to the curriculum is good. Teacher assistants are well trained and support the curriculum well and make important contributions to pupils' learning. The school's links with the local play groups and the junior school are good.
37. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is a considerable amount of mobility as pupils come into or leave the catchment area. The school is careful to identify those who have special educational needs as soon as possible so that they are given the right level of support. This includes those who are very capable. The curriculum is well planned so that the pupils are totally included in all schoolwork. The school is careful not to withdraw pupils for teaching, unless it would benefit them for a short while. However, a room has been recently allocated to provide resources for meeting specific physical and emotional needs.
38. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive a broad and balanced curriculum and take full part in all school activities. There are some notices, signs and dual-language books to show that the school values other cultures and languages. LEA service is also used to borrow dual-language books. Asian and African storytellers are invited to the school and this enriches the curriculum.
39. The school provides a curriculum that reflects other cultures positively. This adds to ethnic minority pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils get good opportunities to gain confidence about other cultures through displays, religious education, geography, assemblies, and celebration of festivals such as Diwali. Pupils have many opportunities to use the dressing up clothes that reflect costumes from India, Africa and China.
40. Engaging displays of pictures, artefacts and pupils' work enhance the accommodation very well. The stimulating environment adds very positively to pupils' desire to learn. The library supports pupils' learning well through its collection of fiction as well as

non-fiction books. Accommodation and resources are very good and are very well used to promote learning.

## **CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

The school takes **excellent** care of its pupils. The impact of pupils' views on the life of the school is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides excellent pastoral care.
- There are very good induction procedures for pupils new to the school.
- Procedures for dealing with child protection issues are excellent.

### **Commentary**

41. The good level of pastoral care of pupils seen at the last inspection has improved further.
42. The school has very successfully created an environment in which pupils feel safe and parents are confident that their children are well cared for. Staff know the pupils exceptionally well and have a very clear understanding of their circumstances. The school works very closely with parents and other agencies to provide extra support for pupils and their families where this is required.
43. Health and safety procedures are very strong in the school and those for dealing with child protection concerns are excellent. The headteacher is the designated person for dealing with child protection issues and understands the procedures very well. He ensures that staff are regularly updated about these procedures and consequently they know what to do if they have a concern.
44. Children quickly settle into the nursery and this is due to the sensitively phased induction process. The introductory period is tailored to the child and the home visits help staff gather information about the children's needs before they join the school. For pupils who join the school at other times, there is a guided tour and a 'buddy' to help them learn the school routines as well as providing a playmate.
45. Pupils receive satisfactory advice and guidance in their work. For example, teachers prepare pupils well before they start their group tasks so that they are clear about what they have to do. They also acknowledge good work with praise and make constructive suggestions where it is necessary. Written guidance is less strong, with little detail about how pupils could improve. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, and those who belong to different ethnic backgrounds, are very well cared for and are an integral part of the school community. Their progress and achievement are well recorded and good support is provided within lessons.
46. At present, pupils are having a satisfactory impact on the life of the school by expressing their views through informal conversations they have with the headteacher. However, there are plans at an advanced stage to improve this by introducing a junior leadership team that will have a small budget and make reports directly to the headteacher.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with parents and other schools are **very good**. Links with the community are **good** and those with other schools are **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are excellent procedures for acting on parents' views.
- There is good provision of education and facilities to meet parents' needs.
- Very good links with secondary schools have a positive impact on pupils' learning and their environment.
- Good links with the community extend the curriculum and provide a summer school.

### Commentary

47. The school has markedly improved its partnership with parents since the last inspection. It is now very good. The school places a high priority on encouraging parents to become active partners in the school community. The school sends out an annual questionnaire to identify and respond to areas that parents would like see improved. The outcomes inform school improvement planning. As a result, the school erected shelters for parents to wait under at the end of the day and a community room for parents' use. In addition, the headteacher spoke to anyone who had made negative comments on the questionnaire in order to resolve any issues. Parents requested more information about what their children were being taught so the school now sends out an outline of the curriculum at the beginning of each term. Staff are also developing packs of information for parents to help them support their children's learning in English, mathematics and science. Written reports provide satisfactory information for parents about their children's progress but parents say that they value most the dialogue with teachers at the termly consultation evenings. Parents and guardians of pupils with special educational needs know who to contact if they have a particular concern. However, mutual reviews of the pupils' progress are only held where the needs are acute or when there is an impending visit from the educational psychologist. The school makes every effort to involve the parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language in all school activities. Staff members who are bilingual support parents with translations and interpretations. Parents who can speak more than one language also help in interpretations. Home visits are made as and when required to explain rules and regulations to parents. The LEA service is used well to provide translations and interpretations as and when required.
48. Links with other schools are very good and benefit pupils both here and from the schools involved. Pupils from a local secondary school painted a mural on playground walls as part of their GCSE course and this has brightened up the environment. Another school has provided pupils and teachers to support physical education lessons as part of the Sports in Schools Co-ordinator programme. An exciting initiative that is about to start will involve secondary-aged pupils working under the guidance of a local college to build a large pirate ship for the pupils of Freemantle to play in. A local college provides adult education classes at Freemantle to develop literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology classes, which have proved popular

with parents. Working together with other infant and junior schools as part of arts week, pupils had the opportunity to enrich their art and music skills.

49. The school wants to be at the heart of the local community and has moved strongly in that direction. The school has addressed the need for a toddler group in the area. There are close links between this group and the nursery, so children are getting used to coming into school before it is time for them to officially enrol. The school works very closely with the church and uses it for special assemblies and to celebrate major Christian festivals. The vicar is a regular visitor to the school supporting assemblies. There is a very close link with residents of a sheltered accommodation that is equally valued by both sides. Year 2 pupils enjoy reading to the residents who in their turn look forward to the pupils visiting.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. Leadership by other key staff is satisfactory overall. Governance is **satisfactory** and management is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides very good leadership in seeking school improvement.
- Financial control is good and the governors are able to take difficult decisions.
- Recently established tracking systems are effective in identifying priorities for improvement.
- The role of the governing body as critical friends is not strong enough.
- Subject leaders have not completed the shift from holding responsibility for resource management to influencing standards and achievement.

### **Commentary**

50. Freemantle is a rapidly changing school. The starting points of pupils on entry are falling and the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is increasing. The range of pupils' capability has also increased. This necessitated a review of teaching strategies to ensure pupils' wider-ranging needs are being met. These changes provide greater challenges to leadership, management and governance and are being successfully addressed. The trend of a falling roll has been reversed and the school is larger than in recent years. The youngest classes in the school are now oversubscribed. The pupils achieve well.
51. After a year in post, the headteacher has established a successful senior management team and partnership with the deputy headteacher. They are working well together to ensure the school responds effectively to the changing nature of its population and to ensure all pupils achieve well. This has included a radical overhaul of many of the management systems and reallocation of curriculum leadership in September 2004. These measures are serving to identify well where the school needs to focus its efforts to improve. Imaginative strategies are also in place to refocus teachers' workload in order to achieve more effective provision.

52. Presently, analysis of strengths and weakness in learning is undertaken by the headteacher as he gets to know the school and its needs in depth. National assessments in writing were analysed last term and then, more recently, reading and mathematics. A wide-ranging action plan is tackling teaching strategies across the school to address the immediate priority of raising low standards in writing. These are already having a positive impact in reception classes where phonic knowledge and spelling are progressing well.
53. Professional development opportunities are well linked to the needs of the school and individual members of staff. The school has correctly identified the need to strengthen the role of present subject leaders in improving the achievement of pupils. This will necessitate rigorous monitoring and evaluation of standards and achievement to inform their action plans.
54. Although new to the role, the co-ordinator of special educational needs provides satisfactory leadership and management. As yet, she has had no opportunity to monitor teaching, and influences it through informal advice, based on looking at lesson plans. The school works with governors to evaluate the impact of provision and makes a comprehensive report to parents. The leadership and management of the English as an additional language are good. All pupils are assessed and their stages of language acquisition are determined and recorded, and their progress is tracked and monitored against the targets set for raising standards. All bilingual pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are provided with good support.
55. Management is good. Performance management procedures and induction procedures for new staff support the drive for higher achievement. Appropriate priorities have been carefully established and an aspirational timetable for improvement has been set.
56. Governors are very supportive of the school and fully share in the vision for the school to be a community school in its fullest sense. They ensure statutory requirements are met. Their involvement in strategic planning is satisfactory. They play a full role in deciding how the school is to develop. However, it is difficult for them to monitor the effectiveness of the school improvement plan as the success criteria are not sufficiently precise or linked to their effect on pupils. Governors are beginning to use data that shows how well the school is performing compared to other schools to help them identify areas for improvement and as a tool to hold the school to account. They visit the school to gain first-hand information about how effective the school is and receive very good information from the headteacher. This results in them having a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school, including teaching. The budget is closely monitored and when difficult decisions have to be made, governors do not shy away from them.

## **Financial information**

57. The school's financial management is good, with best-value principles being used appropriately. Financial planning is carefully targeted to educational developments. In the last year this has had a good impact on provision and achievement in information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	632,471
Total expenditure	602,743
Expenditure per pupil	3,484

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	73,591
Balance carried forward to the next	29,782

58. The school is well placed to build on its strengths because of the strong leadership of the headteacher, the teamwork and commitment of other staff and the governing body, the quality of teaching and learning and the support of parents and pupils.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The provision in the Foundation Stage is good, with many very good features. Achievement, curriculum and resources have improved since the last inspection.

The attainment of children joining nursery is well below average and is below average on entry to Reception. Writing skills are well below average. There is currently no leader of the Foundation Stage. However, the governors and the senior management team value the importance of a good start to schooling and are generous in resourcing this stage of learning. Staff from the nursery and reception classes frequently meet to agree planning and identify ways to improve provision. Assessment is thorough across the areas of learning and is used very well to inform planning. Consequently, children of a wide range of attainment and with special needs do well. There are very good arrangements to ensure children make a good start and settle well.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are very good; children settle very well and are very involved in their activities.
- Children are very independent.
- Adults encourage children's autonomy very well.

#### **Commentary**

59. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and consequently, children achieve very well. Those entering Nursery with low starting points benefit from the very good example set by the established members of the class. The interesting and well-planned activities on offer are very effective in promoting concentration and delight in learning. Adults do not tell children how to solve problems but support them in seeking their own solutions. Consequently, they develop resourcefulness. The organisation of resources in Nursery and Reception allows children to make independent choices. The teamwork of adults is evident and they encourage children to play well together. As a result, social development and awareness of each other's needs are very good. These children should attain above what is expected by the end of Reception year.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's vocabulary is developed very well.

- Phonics are given a strong focus because of children's limited knowledge.
- Literacy is promoted well across the curriculum.
- Assessment is used very well to ensure pupils with an unusually wide range of attainment are challenged by their activities.
- Children with English as an additional language are supported well in developing communication skills. Consequently, they achieve well.



## Commentary

60. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning and children's achievement are good. The verbal interaction between adults and children is a very strong feature of teaching. This was an area of relative weakness at the time of the last inspection. The opportunities in the nursery allow children to develop communication and literacy skills well. They self-register at the beginning of sessions by picking up name labels. Where children were observed to make an error, they chose names beginning with letters the same as their own. Stories are a strong feature of the curriculum and children are encouraged to predict what characters might do next in order to develop their comprehension skills. Writing opportunities are recently available in the home corner and there is scope for expanding the opportunities to read and write in children's play.
61. Children enter Reception with a very wide range of attainment, from well below average to high levels of attainment. The cohort has a large proportion of children of below-average attainment. Assessment is thorough and activities are planned to extend children of different capabilities. For example, a highly talented reader read the instructions from a recipe book as her group made chocolate cornflakes. Those developing good phonic skills used fishing rods to select letters in order to spell words. Those who are at an early stage of learning English or who have limited vocabulary receive very good models of language and are sensitively encouraged to copy these. Consequently, they make good progress and achieve well across the curriculum. Links with other aspects of the curriculum are strong. For example, a guided writing session compiled instructions for planting seeds following the practical activity. Most children, because of low starting points, are not on track to meet the goals for their learning by the end of Reception year.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical language is developed very well.
- Children have good opportunities to make mathematical links with other areas of learning.

## Commentary

62. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with very good development of children's mathematical vocabulary. Children's achievement is good. Singing nursery rhymes reinforces and extends children's number knowledge well. As adults mould play dough alongside children, the conversation flows easily around concepts of shape and size. This natural interchange allows children to understand the relevance of mathematics to their lives. Recent notices in the home corner allow children to refer to telephone lists for numbers.
63. The quality of links with other activities and the promotion of mathematical vocabulary are strong in Reception. For example, when making chocolate cornflakes,

children measured out five cupfuls of cornflakes and higher-attaining children counted out 48 pieces of chocolate. Good assessment procedures are used well to ensure that children are faced with activities which they find intellectually stimulating at their level of need. Consequently, children are well motivated. In teaching shapes, there is a strong focus on correct language for two- and three- dimensional shapes. Making links with children's own experience, for example, upending the cone so it looks like an ice cream cone, enhances their learning. Engaging activities are chosen, for example, singing a 'pass the shape' tune and, as it ends, children choose a shape to describe. They sing with a tangible sense of anticipation. Lessons are well structured so previous learning is reviewed, new vocabulary is rehearsed frequently; consequently, children learn to communicate mathematical ideas accurately. Most children are on track to meet the goals for their learning by the end of the Reception year.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The environment supports learning well.
- In Reception, children are encouraged to draw high-level conclusions about their investigations.
- ICT is used well to support children's learning.

### **Commentary**

64. The improvements in provision instigated since September have improved in particular children's skills of exploration and investigation and in the use of information and communication technology. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement is good. In both Nursery and Reception, the arrangement and quality of resources allow children to select tools and techniques in constructing. The development of ICT skills progresses well. Newly installed whiteboards are used confidently by Reception children, for example, to listen to stories, experiment with phonics and draw. This is the result of very good teaching of ICT skills. Role-play areas support children's understanding of the world, in Nursery of family life and in Reception of the theatre and ticket office. When investigating bubbles, children are able to draw conclusions. The higher attainers conclude, 'more soap allows more bubbles to be made' or 'the blower which made small bubbles had small holes', and 'stirring the froth quickly makes big bubbles'. Children gain a good understanding of other cultures. Festivals are celebrated. Books reflect the diversity of children's races. Dolls in home corner also are of different races. Most children are on track to meet the goals for their learning by the end of the Reception year.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have access to a wide range of tools to develop their muscle control.
- In Reception, children are taught well to be controlled in their movements.

### **Commentary**

65. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement is good. Nursery children use a range of small tools, for example, dough knives and rolling pins, a range of markers, scissors and small construction kits. They have access to wheeled toys and are taught to throw and catch balls. Higher attainers bounce the ball repeatedly before aiming for the basket net. In using wheeled toys, children show control of space and avoid collisions well. Even new members of the class enjoy using the computer and show good control of the mouse.
66. In the newly organised design and making area, Reception children have access to a range of tools and resources. They use scissors, manipulate the computer mouse, are taught handwriting and use construction toys. This all develops their fine muscle control well. The great majority of children move with confidence and imagination. They have good awareness of space and know that they need to warm up their muscles before vigorous exercise. This attainment reflects the impact of well-planned lessons and teaching which develops children's physical and movement vocabulary well. Children respond to and use words such as 'curved', 'jerky', 'jogging', and 'stretch'. Carefully chosen praise helps children refine the spread, level and pace of their movements. Children provide models of high standards and stimulate others to reach the same. Most are on track to reach the goals for their learning by the end of Reception year.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are encouraged to be imaginative.

### **Commentary**

67. The quality of teaching, learning and achievement is good. In both Nursery and Reception classes, imagination is promoted across the curriculum. When hearing stories, which are told capturing the emotional response of the characters, for example, in 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', Nursery children are enabled to get inside the characters. Musical instruments are available for children to play and some seek them out. All enjoy singing familiar songs and rhymes and accompany them with actions.
68. In Reception, children engage creatively across the curriculum. When investigating bubbles, some children, after drawing conclusions on how to create different kinds of bubbles, threw the froth across the ground, excitedly creating snow. Another smeared them across his face to be Father Christmas. Children very skilfully use their dance vocabulary to move imaginatively and create beautiful shapes. They respond with delight to the size of mustard seeds and to the different characteristics of three-

dimensional shapes. In role-play, both in Reception and Nursery, children play with concentration, for example, when a boy fed a baby doll of another race. Whilst children have opportunities to create pictures, the balance of display reflects too much of the adult input and does not reflect the genuinely creative opportunities children enjoy. Most children are on track to reach the goals for their learning by the end of Reception year.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below the national average by the end of Year 2.
- Analysis of data is good and information is being used to improve standards in writing and speaking and listening.
- Strategies need to be implemented to improve standards in reading.

#### **Commentary**

69. In National Curriculum tests in 2003, Year 2 pupils' results at Level 2 placed the school in the top five per cent in reading. Results in writing were well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, the results were well above average in both reading and writing. However, results in 2004 have fallen to well below the national average in both reading and writing. But the results are in line when compared with similar schools. The lower standards in 2004 are because of the number of pupils in the cohort who speak English as an additional language and who have special education needs. The large number of pupils leaving and joining the school during the school year also had a negative impact on standards.
70. Standards of current Year 2 are below average in reading and writing and speaking and listening. A high proportion of pupils are likely to attain Level 2, but the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is likely to be lower. Most pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported and achieve well in relation to targets set in their individual education plans. Pupils of ethnic minority heritage do as well as their peers. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are highly motivated and achieve well.
71. Standards in speaking and listening skills are below the expected levels. Many pupils are new to English and do not have the necessary vocabulary to answer questions in class lessons and plenary sessions. Some lack confidence and do not volunteer to answer. Standards are improving as a result of a whole-school priority for development. Strategies such as paired discussions and class discussion (Circle Time) are successful in improving speaking and listening skills.
72. Teaching of reading skills is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory, but overall standards are below the national average. Pupils of all

abilities enjoy reading, and use their phonic skills, context and picture clues to understand the text being read. They explain what they have read, but are reluctant to predict what is likely to happen in a story as they lack confidence in expressing their own ideas. Whole-class and guided reading sessions are used well to develop pupils' reading skills, but teachers do not record pupils' strengths and next steps for improvement. Thus opportunities to use assessment information to improve standards are missed. Pupils take books home to read but there are no home-school contact books to inform parents about what their child can do and what needs improving. Thereby opportunities to seek parental support to improve reading are lost. The school is drafting parents' information and guidance on how to help their children read.

73. Standards attained by the end of Year 2 in writing are below average and the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils write for a range of purposes and Year 2 were observed writing instructions to make jam sandwiches. The scrutiny of work indicates that all pupils are given similar work and pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are given good support and achieve well. However, more capable pupils and sometimes less capable pupils do not consistently receive work of an appropriate level of difficulty and this results in only satisfactory achievement. The school has analysed test papers and has implemented strategies to improve standards. This is having a positive impact. For example, in one Year 2 lesson, the task given was appropriate for all levels of ability. Year 1 pupils were observed using computer programs well to develop their phonic skills. Year 2 pupils use computers to write and this contributes well to their progress.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards in their demonstrations and explanations, which stimulates pupils' interest. Pupils are given good opportunities through regular sessions to improve their handwriting. All pupils write in joined script. Consistently good questioning promotes pupils' thinking and maintains interest. Behaviour in lessons is very good and, as a result, the pace of lessons is good, with no interruptions. Learning support assistants are used effectively and they contribute well to pupils' learning. However, work given is not consistently challenging for pupils of different capabilities and this results in only satisfactory achievement. Marking does not make pupils aware of what is good about their work or what they need to do to improve.
75. The leadership and management role of the new subject leader is developing satisfactorily. The performance data in writing has been analysed and strategies to improve standards are being implemented. The school has analysed data for reading but has not yet developed or implemented strategies to improve pupils' performance.
76. Since the previous inspection, the school's progress is satisfactory. Year 2 pupils' results have fallen from above to below average. This is mainly because of the change in the cohort's attainment on entry to the school.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

77. The provision for literacy across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. Computers are used well to draft or word-process text. However, pupils are not given opportunities consistently to write extensively in other subjects, for example, in science, history,

geography, religious education, and design and technology. Pupils discuss their work but do not use literacy skills to record.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching motivates pupils to achieve well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is strongly inclusive so that they achieve well.
- The subject leader oversees good arrangements for assessment of pupils' progress.
- Pupils have few indications on how to improve.

### **Commentary**

78. In the 2004 national tests, pupils in Year 2 attained standards below the national average but in line with those attained by schools with a similar intake. This reflected the abilities of that particular year group and was a decline from previous standards. Nevertheless, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieved well, with a large number attaining the average level.
79. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 2 attains standards above the national average for this time in the school year, and that all pupils are achieving well. The inspection found no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. All pupils understand place value to 20 and add to 40. They draw and recognise simple two-dimensional shapes and measure accurately in centimetres. They recognise additions that are near doubles so that they use an appropriate strategy for calculating the answer. More capable pupils regularly work to 100 and sequence numbers in fives and tens.
80. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers know what their pupils will understand. Their lesson planning shows high expectations and raises their achievement. Occasionally, activities do not challenge higher-attaining pupils enough. Overall, however, lessons enable them to work towards a level above what is expected at the end of Year 2. From an early age, teachers ensure that pupils learn to handle coins confidently. They also involve them in enjoyable ways of learning to estimate, such as guessing how many toys there are in a pile before counting them. Teaching assistants work closely with pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language so that they achieve well. Their careful explanations help these pupils to be included in answering questions. Teachers' written marking does not contribute to pupils' learning how to improve. Moreover, pupils are not kept aware of personal learning targets.
81. The subject leader is continuing the good co-ordination of the subject. She ensures that there is detailed evaluation of the school's provision in mathematics. She works with the staff to scrutinise the national tests to see where there are common gaps in pupils' learning, and the curriculum is changed accordingly. Equally importantly,

teachers carefully track individual pupils' progress, and use the information to plan to meet their needs.

82. The curriculum includes interesting investigations, such as finding out all possible ways to join five squares. There is little evidence of the use of computers in a systematic way to extend learning. Overall, the subject has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

83. Teachers do not regularly develop pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum. There were no examples evident in the scrutiny of work.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' scientific knowledge is developed well.
- Pupils with English as an additional language benefit from the good focus on vocabulary.
- The worksheets commonly used to record work are not sufficiently well matched to the wide range of capability.

### **Commentary**

84. In 2004, results in annual assessments at the end of Year 2 show the proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels was in line with the national average. Comparisons with similar schools were well above average for the expected level and above average for the higher level. Pupils in the current Year 2 also reach average standards. Standards have fallen since the last inspection but this reflects the very different and lower starting points of pupils compared to five years ago. Overall, pupils in Year 2 achieve well from below-average starting points. However, the achievement of pupils of above-average capability is only satisfactory, as their scientific thinking is not challenged sufficiently. Pupils with special educational needs do well because of recent and careful tracking of their progress in literacy and targeted support from teaching assistants. The pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from the generally good focus on developing vocabulary and achieve well.
85. Only one lesson was observed in science. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Warm relationships and interesting tasks ensure all pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They are encouraged to use scientific vocabulary such as 'solid' and 'liquid' when, for example, discussing whether changes caused by heating different materials can be reversed. Pupils have a good vocabulary to describe their knowledge of living things, materials and forces, but lack the words to describe investigative and experimental procedures such as predicting and fair testing. Their knowledge of science is also much better developed than their investigative skills. Good opportunities are given for discussion. However, questions are likely to be targeted at pupils to give reasons for ideas which are known to be correct, for

example, that the changes caused by melting chocolate can be reversed. This hampers the development of hypothesising skills and the understanding that scientific knowledge is gained by observation and experiment. Worksheets used to record learning are general. As a result, recording is sometimes too demanding for pupils of lower attainment. In addition, higher-attaining pupils infrequently practise literacy skills by writing their own conclusions and ideas. Resources are used well to promote learning, for example, the light room in Year 1 and the CD Roms in Year 2. Teamwork of staff is very good and everyone is clearly well briefed. This contributes to the pupils' positive attitudes and the good development of their scientific knowledge.

86. The science leader has been in post since September 2004. Science has not been a main priority for development in recent years. The new leader has received recent and appropriate professional development to improve the effectiveness of subject leadership and assessment. The current action plan for the subject concentrates on resource management. This needs to be updated. The headteacher has carried out a detailed analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils to inform future planning. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but do not serve to identify precisely the needs and attainment of pupils at the extremes of the range of attainment. Neither does marking point out how pupils can improve. The subject is well resourced.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in developing their information and communication (ICT) skills.
- Very good resources ensure that all pupils are regularly included in learning.
- Subject evaluation procedures and development plans concentrate too little on what pupils are learning.
- Pupils do not often enhance their learning through using ICT skills in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

87. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards in line with national expectations, which reflects good progress since entry to the school. They use computers to record their stories, including changing fonts for themselves. They paint effective pictures, choosing their own colours. They input simple commands for a floor robot so that it travels and turns. Pupils also control toys with a handset. There was no evidence of differences in attainment between boys and girls or pupils of different ethnic origin. Overall, the pupils achieve well.
88. It was not possible to observe a whole lesson of ICT. Pupils' work gave evidence of strong teaching. Teachers make good use of the new interactive whiteboards to put across new ideas and to add variety to pupils' paths to learning. For example, in one lesson, the teacher helped pupils select their own musical sequences combined with moving pictures to compose a piece called 'Fireworks'. Planning ensures that pupils



with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive their entitlement to the full curriculum as well as support.

89. The subject leader provides satisfactory leadership and management very early in her new role. She works with the previous co-ordinator to increase and update resources regularly. However, the present subject development plan concentrates too much on improving provision and focuses too little on how it will raise standards. Therefore, its contribution to learning cannot be evaluated. The scheme of work covers the statutory curriculum. The system for assessing pupils' attainment is satisfactory, but does not yet indicate to teachers what constitutes advanced or retarded learning. There are no formal arrangements to provide professional development of teachers or for monitoring their work in the classroom. Many pupils enjoy participating in the school's ICT club. The subject has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

90. Teachers make good use of ICT in putting across new ideas and skills in different subjects, but there are missed opportunities for the pupils to use computers. Pupils in Reception watch a PowerPoint demonstration on the interactive whiteboard, which stimulates interest in reading. Pupils throughout the school both learn new literacy skills and practise them through word-processing their stories. However, pupils do not regularly use ICT to either investigate or record.

## HUMANITIES

No lessons were observed in history and geography. These subjects were sampled. There is insufficient evidence to judge overall provision in these subjects, which were not the focus of the inspection.

91. An interview with pupils suggested that their standards of attainment in **history** were in line with national expectations. They contrasted the facilities such as lighting and toilets in past and present houses and their effects on people's lives. However, they did not have a sufficient sense of the past, and had little knowledge of chronological sequence. Pupils realised that artefacts were an important source of historical evidence.
92. There was little work available for scrutiny in **geography** at this point in the school year. A representative number of pupils were interviewed. Their answers suggested that their attainment is above average and that they are therefore achieving well. They describe the natural and man-made features of their local environment and are beginning to understand how they interact. They express their likes and dislikes about Southampton, citing the parks and noisy vehicles respectively. Pupils like visiting the countryside for its wildlife, spaciousness and sunsets, so that geography contributes well to their spiritual development. They know that the advantages of living at the sea are tempered by the dangers of flooding. They also know that the weather brings both advantages and disadvantages, including making things grow and making travel dangerous. Pupils talk readily about the differences between where they live and places they have been to on holiday.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **good**.

### Strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well.
- The subject leader evaluates provision and assesses pupils' progress to make important adjustments to provision.

### Commentary

93. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards in line with the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Pupils achieve well overall. They have an average awareness of the features of a Christian church and are beginning to understand the symbolism behind the cross. They know some of the details of Christian services, partly through having enacted them. Pupils state what Easter is about, and know a little about the Bible. Their recall of accounts of the life of Jesus or of the stories that he told is not yet detailed. They know a little about other faiths. This is enhanced by displays around the school. Pupils with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language, receive the support they need. There was no evidence in differences in attainment between boys and girls or pupils of different ethnic origins.

94. Only one lesson was available for inspection. However, this, together with evidence from talking to pupils, indicated that the quality of teaching is good because pupils learn well. In the observed lesson, the teacher made a good connection between the Old Testament's account of how God made rules for living and the need to have school rules. Pupils enjoyed writing their own ideas on scrolls. There was no evidence of the use of computers.
95. The subject leader provides good leadership and manages the subject well. She has drawn up a detailed scheme of work which adapts the Agreed Syllabus to meet the needs of Freemantle's pupils. She carries out a thorough evaluation of whether the subject is improving. She regularly carries out assessment of pupils' learning, but does not have opportunities either to monitor or to model teaching. The subject has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

One lesson was observed in design and technology, one in physical education and none in music and art and design. No judgements can be made about current standards because of a lack of evidence. These subjects were not the focus for this inspection. The work in pupils' books and on display was insufficient for an overall judgement to be made about provision, standards, pupils' achievement, teaching and learning or improvements from the previous inspection. The school's overview of curriculum planning indicates that National Curriculum requirements are met.

96. In one lesson observed in **design and technology**, overall teaching and learning were good. Year 1 pupils were learning to make the light go on and off for traffic lights. Pupils apply themselves well and learn the sequence of lights to make a moving model. In a very good **physical education** lesson, Year 2 pupils learnt to create a simple sequence of movement, and practised moving like a 'balloon', thinking about height, twisting and turning and falling down when the air was taken out quickly.
97. In an interview with pupils about their work in **music**, they remembered using percussion instruments to make up simple rhythms. They can copy and compose two-bar rhythms. Their singing in assemblies is in line with national expectations. In **art and design**, pupils have very good opportunities to improve skills through working with artists in residence.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

The provision for personal, social and health education is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Cross-curricular links are strong.
- Health education is very good.

#### **Commentary**

98. The provision for personal, social and health education is very good. It is taught through all subjects of the curriculum, circle times and assemblies. The school has taken part in a pilot programme to improve 'Social, Emotional and Behaviour Skills' and has given presentations to other schools. The school's ethos contributes positively to pupils' development as effective citizens, as well as to their personal and social education. Strong emphasis is placed on raising pupils' self-esteem and they are encouraged to become aware of other people's needs and feelings. Relationships in the school are very good.
99. The provision for developing a healthy lifestyle is very good. Pupils learn about good eating habits and the importance of exercise. The school emphasises the need for healthy living through 'Healthy Eating Day', 'Healthy Day', and for physical development through after-school sport clubs and lunchtime activities.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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