

INSPECTION REPORT

GUILLEMONT JUNIOR SCHOOL

Farnborough

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116157

Headteacher: Miss B J Cook

Lead inspector: Ian Knight

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th September 2004

Inspection number: 266933

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	352
School address:	Sandy Lane Farnborough Hampshire
Postcode:	GU14 9ES
Telephone number:	01252 666846/7
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Wander Te Kuile
Date of previous inspection:	8 th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Guillemont Junior School is a large junior school serving the Cove area of Farnborough. The socio-economic indicators locally are better than average, and the take-up of free school meals is low. It houses a special Language Unit with 20 places for pupils with significant language disorders that make it hard for them to access the National Curriculum in a mainstream classroom without significant levels of support. In all, there are 113 pupils with special educational needs, 22 of whom have a statement of special educational need. The needs identified include a range of specific learning difficulties, including language disorders, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, hearing impairment, physical difficulties and autism. Almost all the pupils are white European, with small numbers of mixed heritage: Asian, Black African and Chinese backgrounds. A small number of children from the families of travellers also attend the school. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school received the 'Healthy Schools Award' in 2002. The full range of attainment is present on entry to the school, but overall it is average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2303 1	Ian Knight	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics.
1311	Barry Wood	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
1431 9	Michael Brown	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Information and Communication Technology; Art and Design; Design and Technology.
2189 9	Gillian Lawson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special Educational Needs.
1728 8	Megan Warner	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography; History; Religious Education.
2083 6	Alan Wilson	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Music; Physical Education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Pupils throughout the school achieve well because of good teaching based on a well-planned curriculum. Pupils in the Language Unit achieve very well. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning and they behave well. The school is led and managed very well. This is achieved at a cost per pupil which is lower than average. Consequently, the school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The clear vision and very good leadership of the headteacher have resulted in the distinctive ethos of the school:
 - * The school successfully emphasises the development of pupils' independence in all aspects of school life;
 - * The curriculum is thoughtfully designed;
 - * All members of the school community are highly valued and relationships are very good.
- Pupils achieve well overall, and very well in science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the school's work has not been effective enough in ensuring consistency in practice across the school.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection. Standards in mathematics have improved, especially in the last year. Monitoring of subjects is better, but there is still some work to do. Assessment is effective. Improvement in standards has been good overall, and the quality of teaching has been maintained at a good level. Leadership and management have further improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	D	B	B
mathematics	C	E	B	B
science	B	D	B	A

Key: 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.

Achievement in the school is good. Standards in National Curriculum tests fell between 2001 and 2003, but the provisional results for 2004 have significantly improved. Observed standards are above expectations and achievement is good in English, mathematics and religious education. Standards are well above expectations in science and ICT, and

achievement in these subjects is very good. Pupils with SEN achieve well in the main school; those in the Language Unit achieve very well. The few pupils with English as an additional language also achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are progressing well. Attitudes, behaviour and attendance are all good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching throughout the school is good, and very good in the Language Unit. Teachers emphasise independence in learning, encouraging and engaging pupils very well: as a result, pupils work very hard and collaborate very well. They generally maintain good behaviour, but expectations of behaviour vary from very good to satisfactory. Teachers make very good use of learning support assistants, which helps pupils make good progress. However, the quality of planning to ensure that all pupils are challenged appropriately varies from class to class, and the quality of marking is not always consistent across the school.

The school provides a good curriculum that is enriched very well by extra-curricular activities, and through the carefully planned topic system. Good provision is made for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The school maintains very good links with the community and good links with other schools. The partnership with parents is satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, supported well by other staff, all of whom share her vision for the school. The school is managed very well. The governing body has a number of new members and operates soundly. It has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and supports the headteacher well. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents feel the school is a good one. However, a small minority had concerns about behaviour, bullying, homework, communications and the organisation of SEN in the school. The inspection team found no evidence of bullying, and provision for SEN is good, and it is very good in the Language Unit. Homework is used satisfactorily to enhance learning. The written communications to parents are good. Pupils also think the school is a good one, and they feel that they are trusted to do things on their own. They also say they have to work hard. However, some expressed some reservations about behaviour in the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that the monitoring and evaluation procedures, including those for direct lesson observation, are effective in sharing the good practice in the school and in achieving consistency throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well throughout the school, and very well in the language support unit.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good in science and ICT.
- Standards in National Curriculum tests have improved markedly in 2004 over those achieved in 2003.
- Pupils with SEN in the main school make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans (IEPs).
- Pupils in the Language Unit make very good progress because they receive intensive support through individual tuition and small group work from specialist staff.

Commentary

1. In 2004, pupils in Year 6 attained standards that were above average nationally in English, mathematics and science. If the school is compared only with those having a similar intake, based on the results of National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds four years ago, then an even better picture emerges: standards in mathematics and science were well above average, and standards in English were above average. The proportion gaining the higher Level 5 in the tests was well above average in mathematics and science, and average in English. Standards had been declining up to 2003 before the significant improvement in 2004. The data is also muddied by the inclusion of pupils from the Language Unit, all of whom have a statement of special need, and who, although they achieve very well within the unit, do not usually attain the standards expected of those in the main school.

2. In the table, one 'point' represents approximately the progress expected in one term. The expected Level 4 is represented by 27 points, and the higher Level 5 is represented by 33 points.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (26.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.0 (24.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.8 (27.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 95 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The school noted the relatively weak showing in mathematics in 2003, and set a number of initiatives in train to improve matters, with the support of the local education authority. The provisional results for 2004, detailed above, show much improvement. In particular, the proportion gaining the expected Level 4 increased significantly in all three tested subjects, whilst the proportion gaining the higher Level 5 increased significantly in mathematics and

science. A comparison with these pupils' attainment on entry in 2000 suggests they made at least satisfactory progress over their time in the school, whereas the previous group made rather less progress than pupils nationally.

4. However, test results can tell only part of the story. They relate to only a few subjects in one year group. In addition, they can give no clues about *achievement*; that is, are pupils doing as well as they can? Inspection evidence can fill some of these gaps.

5. The inspection took place at the beginning of the school year, but already the observed standards in English, mathematics and history are above national expectations, with standards in the speaking and listening element of English being in line with expectations. Standards in religious education are above the expectations expressed in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in science and ICT are well above national expectations, whilst the work seen in art and design, design and technology and geography, is at least in line with national expectations. The remaining subjects were lightly sampled and consequently there was too little evidence to form a view. These standards reflect the good achievement in the school arising from the good teaching and learning. Indeed, achievement in science and ICT is very good.

6. Pupils with SEN achieve well because of good teaching and strong support in the classroom. Careful identification and assessment, and specific learning programmes, together with the consistent reinforcement of basic skills in many lessons, help pupils to make good progress in developing their reading, writing and number skills. Pupils in the Language Unit make very good progress because they receive intensive support through individual tuition and small group work from specialist staff. Learning support assistants make a substantial contribution to the achievement of these pupils, both in the Language Unit and in regular lessons. Two pupils with English as an additional language have attended the school for the past four terms. One of them, who is a fluent English speaker, is making progress which is comparable to that of his peers, and so has required no additional support. The other pupil is now progressing well through good on-going support provided for him by a bilingual support teacher, the class teacher and a learning support assistant. The levels of achievement of both pupils are carefully monitored so that suitable work can be provided as required.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have a good attendance record, and are usually punctual to school. The school makes good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like school and want to attend.
- Pupils' good attitudes to work and behaviour in the classroom greatly help their ability to learn.
- Pupils' good behaviour outside the classroom makes a major contribution to the smooth running and general happiness of the school.
- Pupils with SEN grow in confidence and develop good self-esteem because of the very good teaching they receive and the high quality of their IEPs.
- Pupils build very good relationships with each other, and they work and play together with total confidence.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.

Commentary

7. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained good attendance. In the last school year attendance was very good because the procedures were very rigorously implemented. Consequently, only a small number of pupils have poor attendance, unauthorised absence has declined, and most parents are focused on the need to control holidays taken during term-time. The school has needed to take full responsibility for improving attendance in the last two years, as there have been gaps in the level of support available from an education welfare officer.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7	School data	0.3
National data	5.2	National data	0.2

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

8. Pupils make a good start in the mixed Year 3 and 4 classes, and show good attitudes and behaviour. They quickly settle, and are determined to try hard in all activities and to please their teachers. Very few incidents of restless behaviour occur, and then only when teaching fails to sustain pupils' interest or the pupil has a recognised special need. As pupils progress through the school they acquire greater self-discipline. Their good attitudes and behaviour become more consistent, and teaching and learning proceed without interruption. Pupils work hard, listen well and enthusiastically engage in contributing their ideas in pairs or groups. Only a few pupils, usually boys, show any disengagement or passiveness, but there is no challenging behaviour. Pupils in the classroom show tolerance and help each other with difficult learning.

9. Around the school pupils are happy and calm, and they play safely together without fear of bullying or oppressive behaviour. Older pupils look after younger pupils. All pupils value each other's differences and contributions, either in the classroom or in assemblies. They take good care of resources and the school's pet animals and birds. They show obvious respect for the school building and the environment. Pupils like and respect the staff and show obvious trust. Although one in ten pupils have individual behaviour record cards to improve their behaviour, adult intervention is discrete and without fuss, and the school has excluded very few pupils during the last two years.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
352	2	0

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

10. Despite their difficulties, pupils with SEN have very good attitudes towards their learning. Teachers and learning support assistants expect pupils to achieve and behave well, and even those with the most complex difficulties try hard and respond well. Most pupils in the Language Unit have multiple learning difficulties and enter the unit with little confidence and poor self-esteem. The nurturing atmosphere engendered by very good relationships soon enables pupils to develop self-assurance and to learn to take responsibility and behave well. They know that they are valued and thus learn to value others. In this supportive environment they also learn to express their opinions and feelings and to listen to others.

11. The ethos of the school promotes pupils' moral and social development very well, and their spiritual and cultural development is also encouraged well. The good provision for spiritual development includes the 'Japanese Garden', designed and created in 2001 as a lovely, peaceful space within the school. The beautiful topic books that pupils produce raise their self-esteem and contribute well to their spiritual development. The natural environment is used widely to promote science, art and design, and literature, but opportunities are sometimes missed to awaken pupils' spiritual understanding. However, poetry that pupils have composed shows a genuine depth of feeling.

12. The school promotes pupils' moral and social development very well through the strong emphasis it puts on developing pupils' independence, through assemblies and the personal and citizenship programme that the school teaches. This was demonstrated very effectively in a class assembly in which the boys contributed particularly well. Whilst pupils play happily during the lunch hour, they also carry out a large number of responsibilities. They can be seen manning the main reception desk, acting as librarians in the central library, cleaning out the greenhouse and looking after guinea pigs or the aviary.

13. Pupils' cultural development is promoted well through listening to a range of music and learning about the beliefs of different peoples, such as Native Americans, in religious education. Pupils also develop a good understanding of their own cultural traditions in literacy, and of other people's traditions in geography; for example, when they study Saint Lucia.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good, based on a good curriculum that is enriched very well. The school cares for its pupils well. It maintains very good links with the community and good links with other schools. Links with parents are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning throughout the school are good. The use of day-to-day assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers take care to encourage and engage their pupils very well in lessons.
- Pupils develop the skills of independent and collaborative working very effectively.
- Learning support assistants are deployed very well and provide very good support to pupils.
- The SEN co-ordinator (SENCO), teachers and learning support assistants monitor the progress and achievement of pupils with SEN carefully. As a result, some pupils with SEN achieve well in school and in national tests.
- Tasks and expectations are not always varied enough based on individuals' needs in lessons.
- The quality of marking and target setting varies across the school and is not always helpful.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7 (17%)	23 (55%)	11 (26%)	1 (2%)	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 were seen.

14. Pupils work very hard in their lessons because teachers plan lessons that will excite them and make them want to learn. This happened in lessons across all aspects of the curriculum and across the whole age range in the school. The use of a curriculum based on topic work, and drawing threads from several subjects, helps pupils to appreciate the links between subjects like science, geography, history and art and design, and also gives them opportunities to use skills learned in English and mathematics in a variety of settings. Pupils are expected to become highly organised and independent learners. This was clear in a very good lesson covering elements of science, art and design, and ICT for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The lesson concerned related to properties of rocks, and groups of pupils closely observed and sketched rocks, tested them for permeability, and carried out research using the Internet. They achieved very well in this lesson because the groups were very well organised, and the expectations of the teacher were made very clear in the written and oral instructions given. As a result, pupils were enthused, worked exceptionally hard and achieved standards above those that would normally be expected.

15. Not all subjects are suitable to be taught in this way, and most of the direct teaching of English and mathematics is carried out following the guidance of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. In most such lessons, the levels of challenge for individuals are carefully planned so that they work beyond their comfort zone. For example, a very good mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 was re-planned following the teacher's review of the previous lessons. As a result, pupils were able to revisit areas of difficulty and consolidate them. The lesson focused on the task of purchasing items for an aquarium from a list of possibilities within a given budget. The complexity of the problem varied for different pupils so that none had an impossibly hard, nor ridiculously easy, task to complete. As a result, pupils worked willingly and consistently throughout the lesson in small groups or individually to solve the tricky problem they had been given.

16. All classes benefit from having a permanent learning support assistant. Typically, they are very well deployed to support groups or individuals during lessons, acting as an audience for diffident pupils, or encouraging them to take part in whole-class sections, or by encouraging and discreetly guiding pupils when working on tasks in groups. In a good English lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, two pupils with SEN were supported very well by a learning support assistant. She was well briefed by the class teacher, and it was clear that good relationships existed between them. She showed very high expectations of her pupils in order to ensure they were as well challenged as the rest of the class. In a religious education lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the learning support assistant transcribed for a pupil with SEN and provided him with very good support.

17. Staff in the Language Unit have very good relationships with their pupils. They are formed through careful induction and well-planned and detailed assessment. Teachers know pupils well and have the expert knowledge to meet their needs. This ensures effective

teaching and good achievement for pupils with SEN. Pupils make noticeable progress as a result of expert individual tuition and small group work, carefully tailored to match work in the mainstream lessons, together with skilled support in lessons. All staff involved in teaching pupils with SEN contribute effectively to the preparation and review of IEPs. Targets are specific and progress is measurable. Teaching in the Language Unit is highly effective and results in very good achievement for pupils with a statement of SEN. On entry to the unit, many pupils have no confidence in speaking, limited understanding and poor listening and attention skills. They soon make rapid progress due to careful, detailed professional assessment and expert individual and class tuition. They develop increasingly effective skills and strategies in speaking, listening and understanding, and in social communication. Many regularly succeed in the important targets set for them. A large proportion are able to return to full-time classes in mainstream schools within a few years, although some pupils with the most severe language and communication disorders go on to specialist provision in secondary education.

18. Teachers and learning support assistants make very effective use of on-going assessment for pupils with SEN, and this is reflected in their future planning. The SENCO uses a variety of standardised and non-standardised tests to identify and diagnose learning difficulties. In the Language Unit, diagnosis is thorough and leads to meticulous planning. The teachers, learning support assistants and the speech and language therapist work together to assess and measure pupils' development and write high quality IEPs with clear and measurable targets for learning. Statements are regularly reviewed and comply well with statutory requirements. Relationships with other visiting professionals are very effective.

19. However, not all teaching is as effective as the best in the school. The results of short-term assessments are not always evident in planning so that, in some lessons, pupils are not challenged enough. This happened in an open-ended mathematics task for pupils in Years 5 and 6. In this otherwise satisfactory lesson, pupils were expected to test some hypotheses about the numbers in subsections of a hundred square. Unfortunately, all of the class were given the same task, and the teacher did not make her higher expectations of the most capable clear; consequently, not all of these pupils worked to capacity. The most capable pupils had the capacity to work in a much more abstract way, but this was not made explicit to them, and they did not achieve enough in the lesson. The quality of feedback to pupils varies markedly. In lessons, teachers and pupils usually talk about the work in hand, and this is useful for pupils as they work through a task. However, inspectors examined the work of a sample of pupils over the last academic year and found considerable variations in the quality of marking and advice given. The best marking was annotated for both pupils and adults, making the strengths and weaknesses of pieces of work clear and setting helpful targets for improvement. However, in some books marking was irregularly completed and sometimes unhelpful. Some comments were abrasive rather than helpful, and targets for improvement were not clear. Pupils in those classes had a less clear idea of their own learning than those elsewhere.

The curriculum

The school provides a good, well-integrated curriculum to meet the academic and personal needs of its pupils. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils have equal access both to the day-to-day curriculum and to the very good range of enrichment activities that the school provides.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong team of teaching and non-teaching staff who are dedicated to providing interesting and exciting curricular activities for pupils of all abilities during and beyond the school day.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- The school provides very good accommodation and resources that make a positive contribution to pupils' all round development.

Commentary

20. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the quality of the curriculum by ensuring that all elements of the National Curriculum are taught. Inspectors share the parents' view that pupils enjoy a topic-based timetable that successfully and imaginatively links the various areas of the curriculum. A particular strength of this approach is that pupils are asked to write at length, and in their own words, in well produced topic folders, and this makes a positive contribution to the development of writing skills throughout the school. A positive addition to curricular practice, only recently introduced, has been the use of a specialist teacher for music and drama. This has the potential of introducing consistency and continuity into the teaching and learning of these subjects. The curriculum is considerably enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular sports and clubs offered by outside agencies, and by teachers who generously give up their own time to provide out-of-school activities. The school also plans a large number of residential trips for pupils in Years 5 and 6, and these make a positive contribution to their personal development and to teaching and learning, particularly in geography.

21. Curricular provision for pupils with SEN is good. The co-ordinator, specialist teacher and learning support assistants work with mainstream teachers to plan and adapt work and formulate targets for pupils with SEN. They also provide individual and small group 'remediation' for pupils who have significant difficulties with reading or numeracy.

22. The school provides a very good curriculum for pupils in the Language Unit. They enjoy supported work in mainstream classes as well as very intensive work in the development of language with the Language Unit team. Separate plans are made for speaking and listening and social skills lessons to meet individual and group needs. In this way, unit staff ensure that work closely matches all pupils' language and learning needs. The speech and language therapist gives individual, carefully focused tuition to pupils to develop their spoken language and understanding, together with a range of group sessions developing social communication.

23. The headteacher has successfully managed the recruitment and retention of suitably experienced and qualified teachers who are well matched to their roles and subject

responsibilities, and provide stability and continuity to the curriculum. Similarly, the school has invested very generously to provide a team of learning support assistants who support day-to-day teaching and learning, as well as helping pupils with SEN. They are committed to their work, strive tirelessly to provide good care for all pupils and form very good working relationships with teaching colleagues. Due both to the training provided by the school, and through their own initiative and school funding, they have become very well qualified to carry out the work they do.

24. The school has successfully maintained and improved both the excellent outdoor environment and the very good accommodation and resources which continue to have a very positive impact on pupils' academic and personal development. Pupils talk with pride about the outstanding features of their school, such as the aviary, the Japanese garden and science areas, and of their role in helping to maintain them. Since the last inspection, the school has added ramps to ensure wheelchair access to all parts of the school, and invested generously in improvement to the library, extension to the school hall and ICT resources in particular. However, some teaching areas are either somewhat cramped or arranged in such a way that makes it difficult for some pupils to see or be seen. The accommodation is very well maintained by the site manager and her cleaning staff.

Care, guidance and support

The school is effective in ensuring pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. It provides them with good support and guidance and has an above average level of involvement with pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The care of pupils is a strong feature of the school.
- The headteacher and staff have a very good relationship with all pupils and offer them good quality pastoral care.
- The headteacher, staff, and governors are vigilant in protecting pupils from dangers inside and outside the school, so that they feel secure.
- Staff have a good knowledge of their pupils' academic and non-academic qualities, but there are not enough records of pupils' personal development.
- Pupils are soon made to feel part of the school family through very good induction procedures.
- The school makes determined efforts to listen to pupils and to value their views.
- The management of behaviour is not always consistent across the school.

Commentary

25. The headteacher and staff give a high priority to the care of pupils. Pupils' good quality care is underpinned by a wide range of well written policies. As a result of effective training, committed and dedicated staff mostly implement policies with a common understanding. Pupils feel well cared for and secure within the school.

26. There are good induction procedures for the pupils with SEN on entry to school, and strong support is given for the next stage of learning. Great efforts are made to ensure every

area of the curriculum is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEN. A good example of this is the way the school adapted arrangements for a residential visit to accommodate a pupil with physical impairment.

27. Child protection procedures conform to Hampshire statutory guidelines. Staff training is up to date. The school is vigilant in reducing risks to children, but it could further help them to protect themselves by the display of the Childline telephone number. The school has an increasingly good focus on health and safety issues through the work of a nominated governor and staff. They undertake regular audits of the school premises. Risk assessments are in place for the many outside visits. The school is a safe place, as evidenced by the low minor accident rate.

28. The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance. Attendance procedures are rigorous and very effective in producing consistently good attendance for most pupils. Pupils new to the school quickly understand the school's culture of high expectations through its strong behaviour procedures.

29. School rules are well defined, and self-discipline is an expectation. However, pupils are not involved in developing their own class rules, and rewards are often too long delayed after pupils' good behaviour is observed. Sanctions are effective and behaviour strategies, including individual behaviour record cards, have a positive impact on pupils. The school quickly and successfully intervenes if there are any signs of oppressive behaviour and pupils feel safe. However, some staff need to give greater emphasis to positive behaviour management techniques.

30. The headteacher and staff give the highest priority to the pastoral care of all pupils. This is evident even before pupils transfer to the school from nearby infant schools. They are very carefully welcomed into the school and integrated through the thoughtful actions of staff and older pupils. Staff act as good role models and the school's culture encourages older pupils to help and support younger pupils without requiring adult intervention. There are also good induction procedures for the pupils with SEN on entry to school and strong support is given for the next stage of learning. Throughout the school, there is a strong mutual trust between adults and pupils, and pupils know that they can trust their teachers and other staff to listen to their problems and anxieties. Trusted visitors, such as the school nurse, give very good counselling support. Pupils are happy with their school life, and feel that they can undertake a learning adventure in a safe environment without distractions.

31. Support and guidance based on monitoring the individual child are satisfactory for most pupils. The use of individual performance targets in academic subjects is developing well, but the feedback from teachers on pupils' work is not always constructive enough. The tracking of pupils' personal development is mostly informal, lacks centralised records, and is overly reliant on the individual teachers' accumulated experiences with pupils. The use of individual performance targets for personal development is too variable between teachers.

32. The procedures for monitoring and supporting the personal development of pupils with SEN are good. The support for children with SEN is good because relationships between pupils and staff are very good and learning takes place in a purposeful atmosphere. Pupils are aware of their targets and contribute to the discussion of what they need to learn next or to improve. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice and works well with outside agencies, which enhances pupils' learning effectively. The monitoring and recording for pupils with a statement of SEN is good and annual reviews effectively meet requirements

33. The school shows pupils that it wishes to listen to their views. It has developed the school and class councils effectively. Pupils conscientiously apply themselves to the councils, and they are enthusiastic to register their views and have them put into practice. The school routinely calls for pupils' views through class teaching, assemblies and personal and social education sessions. All pupils write a 'This is me' appendix to their school report each year, and, by Year 6, they have a very perceptive understanding of themselves and their surroundings.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents are satisfied with the school and the education it provides. The partnership between the school and home is satisfactory. The school's links with the community are very good and links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents are happy with the school and appreciate the headteacher's and staff's efforts for their children's education.
- A minority of parents is dissatisfied with some aspects of the school, even though the headteacher and staff try hard to take their views into account.
- Despite the school's good written information for parents, the school does not explain clearly enough to parents about the high quality of education that their children receive from the school.
- All pupils benefit greatly from the school's very good participation in, and relationships with, the local community.
- The school has good relationships with the local schools, especially with the senior school, which greatly help pupils to settle well at the time of transfer to the next stage of education.

Commentary

34. The headteacher and other senior staff understand the importance of the school's relationships with parents, but other school issues have been given priority during the last two years, rather than developing this aspect of school life. Consequently, the partnership with parents has declined since the last inspection and is now only satisfactory in supporting the school and pupils' education and progress. However, despite this decline, parents are now more pleased with the school generally, and especially with the school's values and attitudes, range of activities outside the classroom, and standards of work. Approximately nine out of ten parents are happy with their children's education as evidenced by recent questionnaires. Many parents feel that the school respects and values their role, and that they are an equal partner in their children's education. The inspection team confirm the positive views of these parents.

35. There are no aspects of the school about which parents are significantly dissatisfied. However, a small number of parents are dissatisfied with some aspects of the school. Some parents have concerns about their children's education; this has its roots in parents not being given enough understanding of the teaching and learning methods in some subjects of the National Curriculum. Some parents have concerns regarding the school's approach to SEN, but the inspection team regard this as a strong feature of the school. Other parents have concerns about behaviour and bullying, but the inspection team believes that their concerns are unfounded. When the headteacher has been unable to satisfy discontented parents, they have accused the school of not listening, and have focused their resentment on other issues, such as lack of school uniform, homework and the personal style of the headteacher.

36. The statutory information for parents is good, and shows the essential ethos and character of the school. Annual reports to parents are very good statements of what children can do in all National Curriculum subjects. They do not contain explicit feedback on performance against the previous year's targets, but do indicate targets for the present year. Pupils write a 'This is me' written appreciation of their own school year to parents, and almost all parents give feedback on the report which is closely analysed by the school. Parents enjoy an informative newsletter. The school website is developing well.

37. The school is finding it difficult to stimulate the parental partnership, which, although satisfactory overall, is of variable quality. Most parents have signed the home-school agreement and fulfil their pledge through their children's good attendance, and some parents assist pupils with homework. However, the school is not proactive enough with parents in discussing how they might help their children, and explaining new education strategies and initiatives. Parents can experience occasional inconsistencies when they approach the school. The school finds it difficult to involve working parents fully in the life of the school or in its development. Only a few parents help in the school, and one parent governor position is presently vacant. The Parent, Teacher and Friends' Association is enthusiastic in trying to involve parents through social events and fund raising. New parent events are well attended, but the governors' annual general meeting is poorly attended.

38. Parents of pupils with SEN support the work of the school well by helping children with their homework, especially through reading, language activities and additional number work. This enables pupils to make better progress. They are fully informed about their child's progress and have good opportunities to discuss targets and reviews of IEPs with teachers and the co-ordinator. Parents of pupils with language and communication disorders are fully involved in their children's learning and experiences. They are kept well informed about their children's progress at every stage, from the pre-entry visits and very careful induction, to review and progress meetings.

39. The school has very good relationships with the local community and has a good reputation for being proactively engaged with local people, organisations and charities. Pupils benefit greatly from the close ties, which give them opportunities for additional activities and awareness of their local culture and traditions, as well as a sense of helping others. The local community is an important resource for the practical teaching of some subjects of the National Curriculum. People from the local community, including businesses, are welcomed into the school to support the spiritual and cultural provision, or to use the facilities for their own needs. The school has set up an on-site Nursery which is well used by local teachers and teachers within the school, thereby enabling teachers to return to teaching.

40. The school has good links with other schools. The school is well involved with the local cluster of primary schools, and there is a very good induction of parents when moving from the three main infant schools. Links to local secondary schools are good and lead to an effective working partnership for the transfer of pupils. Future curriculum links are being planned in mathematics, science and French. Parents receive knowledgeable and informative advice as the time for transfer to secondary school approaches. Although parents are nervous, the school's positive efforts, and the pupils' natural confidence, produce a mainly anxiety-free transition for the pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher offers very good personal leadership, well supported by her colleagues. The governing body is supportive and understands the school's strengths and weaknesses well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school that is shared by all staff and has resulted in the school's distinctive ethos.
- The school took swift and effective action to improve standards after a fall in 2003.
- Despite the problems caused by long-term staff absence, the provision of SEN is led and managed effectively, and the Language Unit is led very well.
- The headteacher and staff have a very good understanding of the school's financial position and educational priorities.
- The school uses best value principles very effectively in guiding the school's operation and performance.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the school's work has not been effective enough in ensuring consistency in practice across the school.

Commentary

41. The headteacher has a powerful personal vision of what a school should be, and this colours every decision she makes. She is supported well by staff, who share this vision. The principal element is that pupils should become independent learners, and the whole curriculum is designed with this in mind. The structure of the topics requires that pupils gain the skills of independent enquiry and collaborative work. The mixed-age classes form an integral part of this ethos so that staff can know their charges and their families well, and the social interaction between the age groups provides valuable experience as the young learners mature. Every member of the school community – staff and pupils – is highly valued, and the school tries hard to meet every need. This is evident in the best lessons when work is closely matched to pupils' needs, and in the Language Unit, where very good provision allows these pupils to achieve very well. The environment also reflects this clearly held vision, with open-plan classrooms that make possible the movement needed to learn in this way, and the excellent outdoor provision. This vision also colours every written document in the school, and the policies by which the school seeks to operate. Some parents felt that the headteacher is inflexible in her views; for example, about uniform and homework, but this partly reflects the strength of her commitment to her school and its ethos.

42. The school has amassed plenty of data about its work and pupils' progress. Nevertheless, the National Curriculum test results of 2003 were disturbing to the school as they were significantly lower than in 2002 and accelerated a modest downward trend in results. The area of most concern was mathematics, and, having analysed the papers, the school took quick action. They requested help from the local education authority, and the mechanism of performance management was used very effectively across the school to raise standards, especially in mathematics. However, the school improvement plan, which was already constructed, did not figure in these actions at all. The expected rise in standards did occur, with significant improvements at all levels in mathematics and science. The improvement in the higher Level 5 in English was not so marked, but the school identified that the results in writing were the problem, and closely analysed the completed papers for clues. The findings of this inspection agree with the school that standards in writing are comparable with those in reading and are already above expectations.

43. Although there has been significant and unavoidable long-term staff absence affecting the leadership and management of SEN, and of the Language Unit, the very strong support of the headteacher has enabled the pupils with SEN to continue to make good progress. The new acting SENCO, who also leads the Language Unit, is very experienced and works expertly with a team of highly trained and experienced learning support assistants and outside agencies to ensure that both pupils with SEN in the main school, and those with a statement attached to the Language Unit, continue to reach their potential. The high level of effective support provided by this team makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. The training and expertise of learning support assistants is updated by regular courses, and visits to other educational establishments and outside agencies, to further develop their own good practice. The acting co-ordinator ensures that all staff are up to date with new developments.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	994,886.00	Balance from previous year	11,089.00
Total expenditure	973,751.00	Balance carried forward to the next	132,029.00

Expenditure per pupil	2,697.00
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44. The financial management of the school is very effectively and competently managed. The headteacher is very well supported by her staff in developing and implementing the school's financial strategy. She is very skilled in developing many sources of additional income, and all staff are expected to operate carefully and prudently when using school resources. She has consistently implemented budgets that have sustained very good resources in the school and high levels of support staff, while, at the same time, maintaining a high level of carry forward each year. However, future budget forecasts indicate that the high surplus balance will decline in line with national recommendations. The school has applied the principles of best value very well, but mainly through the efforts of the headteacher and staff; there have been insufficient opportunities for governors to be fully engaged in the process. The overall costs of educating each pupil are below the national average for schools, and well below average when the costs of the Language Unit are separately assessed. Taking into consideration the good standards, the good quality of education, the very good leadership and management of the school, the good improvement since the last inspection and the good ethos of the school against the low cost of educating each pupil, the school gives very good value for money.

45. The school has prioritised its developmental needs effectively over the last couple of years. The headteacher and deputy headteacher spent considerable time and exerted much effort to ensure that the provision for SEN was maintained during a period of staff absence, and data was analysed closely following the dip in results in 2003, leading to effective action. However, a side effect of this prioritisation is that other areas received a lighter touch. Curricular co-ordinators do not routinely visit lessons, nor give demonstration lessons as part of their monitoring of their subjects. Parents reported that methods of managing behaviour varied between classes and were sometimes negative. The inspection team noted some inconsistencies between classes regarding expectations of behaviour, methods of behaviour management, as well as in the effectiveness of short-term planning and the quality of marking and feedback to pupils. Whilst there is undoubtedly very good practice in the school in all of these areas, there is variation in the quality of practice between classes and teachers. More rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning would have highlighted these inconsistencies. Now that the immediate problems raised by the dip in test results in 2003 and the effects of staff absence on the provision for SEN are largely resolved, the school is in a better position to carry this out effectively and remove these inconsistencies in practice.

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

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall; standards are above national expectations in Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject.
- Better use could be made of target setting and day-to-day marking to help pupils to improve their writing.
- There are too few opportunities to demonstrate and share the best features of good English teaching.
- Literacy is promoted well through teaching in other subjects.

Commentary

46. Standards at the time of the last inspection were above expectations. Subsequently, results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 from 2000 onwards remained broadly average until 2003, when they fell to below average. The school took swift action by analysing pupils' weaknesses in performance in the national tests and providing additional support for targeted groups of pupils in Year 6. This was successful and results in the 2004 tests rose sharply, particularly at Level 4, the expected level for pupils in Year 6. The inspection findings are that this improvement has been maintained and that standards in Year 6 overall, even at this early stage in the school year, are above national expectations. This is because of good leadership by the co-ordinator and good teaching throughout the school as a whole, particularly in the Year 5/6 classes. Pupils achieve well and the good quality of support throughout the school for pupils with SEN enables them to achieve as well as their classmates. These findings reflect good improvement since the last inspection.

47. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations in Year 6. Teachers throughout the school use introductory sessions at the beginning of lessons well; they ask sharply focused questions, and use a range of good strategies, such as asking pupils to prepare clear answers with a partner or in groups. The most capable pupils provide considered and articulate replies, reflecting good standards for their age. Most other pupils offer less sophisticated, but nevertheless confident, responses at the expected standard for their age, and very few need to be prompted or helped by an adult at this stage.

48. Standards in reading are above national expectations in Year 6. This is because teachers successfully use a wide range of strategies to promote an interest in books. These

range from book fairs, occasional visits by popular authors, and initiatives such as the 'Roller Coaster' reading scheme to encourage reading through the summer holidays. These are supported by shared or guided reading sessions and regular use of the school library. The most capable pupils are avid readers and can name several titles they have read by a favourite author.

49. Standards in writing are above national expectations in Year 6. Nearly all pupils write independently, planning their work carefully and adapting their style to the intended audience, and introducing imaginative and emotive language into their work. More capable pupils write

consistently well, clearly illustrated by the work of one pupil who wrote, 'It was as if all the suffering Sam had put her through had taken away her final ounce of happiness and left her without soul, without joy'. The written work prepared in folders for the various topics across the curriculum is presented with care and pride, and the overall standard of handwriting is above expectations.

50. The quality of teaching is good overall, with more consistently good teaching in the Year 5/6 classes. A strength of teaching throughout the school is that teachers encourage pupils to write at length in their own words, and to use the vocabulary that is specific to whichever subject they are learning. This is a very encouraging development that is creating a good platform for future improvement. The main area for development lies in the strategies needed for improving the consistency in the overall quality of written work. Most teachers mark work regularly and sometimes add encouraging comments. However, marking does not always guide individuals or groups of pupils towards clear targets or show them how they can improve. Additionally, progress is slowed in some lessons where teachers follow the practice of setting a writing activity for three groups in the class and providing support exclusively for two of these groups, without intervening to check and improve the quality of work in the remaining group. In both cases, missed opportunities to assess and improve pupils' work slow the rate of achievement over time.

51. The leadership of the subject is good. The school gives high priority to promoting the development of literacy skills in colleagues' planning for all subjects, and there is potential for further improvement. The main area for development lies in improving the quality and use of target setting. Some useful systems are in place for assessing pupils' progress on a regular basis. This information is not always used to provide sharp, individual targets, closely linked to National Curriculum Levels. As a result, pupils and their teachers are not always sure how to improve work, and tasks are not always planned at exactly the right level of challenge for individuals. This already takes place to a limited extent in some classrooms, but it is not consistent throughout the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. The development of literacy skills through teaching in subjects across the curriculum is good. Teachers throughout the school ensure that pupils are regularly asked to write about the various topics at length and in their own words, and this is having a positive impact on the overall quality of handwriting and the standard of work. All adults working in the school could help to improve the quality of pupils' spoken English by encouraging the use of clear and articulate language at every opportunity during the school day.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are now rising because of the actions taken when standards fell.
- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.

- Mathematical tasks are integrated well into the topic work.
- There are inconsistencies in the practice across the school.

Commentary

53. As noted above, standards in National Curriculum tests fell in 2003. Much of this fall was explainable in terms of the higher than usual proportion of pupils with SEN in that group. However, it continued a trend of modest decline, and the school took action to improve matters. These actions included obtaining support from the local education authority, amending plans, changing the format of booster classes, staff meetings and training. All staff had specific mathematical targets

set in their performance management reviews. This action was highly effective and standards improved significantly in 2004. An analysis of pupils' work from last year confirms the improvement, and standards observed this year show that pupils in Year 6 are already attaining standards that are above national expectations for their age.

54. In the majority of lessons tasks are varied to match closely the needs of individuals. This is based on teachers' clear knowledge of their classes, as well as reviews of earlier work. As a result, pupils are motivated and challenged beyond their comfort zone. For pupils who are less confident, learning support assistants provide valuable support. They encourage pupils to work to their potential, using open-ended questions very effectively to help pupils take part in lessons and to progress with their peers. In most classes, behaviour management is so effective as to be invisible, so that lessons are not subject to disruption. As a result, pupils work hard independently and in groups. However, at this early stage in the school year, as pupils learn new routines, movement around classes from a whole-class section to working in groups, can take too long.

55. Most of the direct teaching of mathematics follows the methods of the national numeracy strategy and is good. All of the observed teaching was at least satisfactory. Some parents were concerned that the methods taught were 'bizarre', but the analysis of work and observation of lessons confirm that the methods taught are, indeed, those from the strategy. Parents also said that there had been no meetings to discuss the strategy and its methods, so they were not familiar with its structure and progression. Such a meeting is now planned to take place. The school also teaches significant amounts of the curriculum through topics based on science or the humanities. A key feature of each of these topics is the inclusion of mathematical tasks – typically data collection or handling tasks – that enable pupils to set their more formal learning in context. Indeed, some lessons based on the strategy also worked from a real-life starting point; for example, when pupils in Years 3 and 4 planned how they would spend a set sum of money on the contents of an aquarium.

56. There are variations between classes in terms of teachers' expectations of behaviour, the closeness of the match of tasks to individuals' needs and the marking of work. Some parents said that behaviour was managed negatively in some classes with little use of praise or reward. This was observed in some mathematics lessons, although in the majority behaviour was managed well. In the best lessons, tasks are very accurately matched to pupils' needs, and this is confirmed in the analysis of completed work. However, in other lessons all pupils were given the same task, and teachers did not make it clear how their expectations for the most capable were more rigorous than for their peers, with the result that they did not complete as much as they should have. In the analysis of work, some marking was very positive and helpful, identifying areas to improve and making clear to pupils just how well they were doing. Work was also annotated for adults so that they knew what level of support might be needed, and how well individuals are progressing. In other classes, marking was perfunctory, and sometimes overly harsh, lacking any encouragement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Although most of the teaching of mathematics takes place in the designated lessons, the school effectively reinforces the concepts through the cross-curricular topics. For example, in these topics mathematics is used as a tool to support the understanding of scientific or geographical concepts. This use ensures that mathematics is seen by pupils as a useful tool

as well as a subject of study in its own right, and is effective in helping pupils to apply their learning in new situations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above national expectations and pupils' achievement is very good.
- Pupils are skilled in first-hand investigations and apply themselves with effort to independent and collaborative work.
- The curriculum is very well planned to provide a progression of scientific learning and to establish suitable links with other subjects.
- Teaching and learning are good; some lessons are very good.
- Leadership and management are very good and the subject is very well resourced.

Commentary

58. The performance of pupils in the Year 6 national tests in 2004 was a significant improvement over the previous year, in which results were unusually low. The findings of this inspection are that standards are well above national expectations, and pupils' achievement is very good. These match the judgements reported in the last inspection.

59. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and evidence from pupils' previous work shows that they are sometimes very good. All pupils, including those with SEN, make very good progress throughout the school. They have a very positive approach to learning and work with interest and enthusiasm. Much of their written work is of a high standard and is often presented in an attractive and creative way, showing considerable care and application.

60. The curriculum is broad and fulfils national requirements. It is imaginatively designed to provide a matrix with links to the other subjects taught in the school. Teachers plan and prepare their work well so that pupils are engaged in profitable scientific investigation and learning.

61. Teachers use thoughtfully worded questions that guide and challenge pupils' thinking. As a result, pupils co-operate well when working in pairs to discover, for example, the characteristics of electric circuits, helping each other and discussing their task thoughtfully. They work productively and remain on task when working independently, showing perseverance with the learning activities set for them. Teachers also ensure that pupils are taught to understand and use correct scientific vocabulary, and are given suitable opportunities to develop their language skills through informed discussion on scientific themes. Pupils make good use of ICT to support their learning. For example, they frequently use the Internet when researching their topics, and they confidently use the computer when tabulating results from their experimental work. They listen carefully to the teacher and to each other and concentrate well during lessons, applying themselves assiduously to their work. Their standards of independent working are high.

62. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator monitors samples of pupils' work and interviews pupils about their learning, whilst monitoring teaching as part of her duties on the senior management team. Pupils in Year 6 use previous test

papers as preparation for end of year national tests, and this enables the school to make prior assessments of their attainment. The subject is very well resourced, and the school makes full use of the first-rate amenities in the school grounds, including a wilderness area, ponds, a greenhouse, an aviary and a science trail through woodland. The curriculum is enriched by a variety of visits that include the Science Museum, a working farm and an indoor rain forest.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management and has a clear view of how the subject should be developed.
- Pupils are very confident and attain very high standards in using ICT because teaching is very good.
- The school is very well equipped with computers and related hardware.
- Information and communication (ICT) is used consistently to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- Teachers and learning support assistants are confident in their use of ICT.

Commentary

63. Standards are currently well above national expectations throughout the school and pupils' achievement is very good. This represents a very good improvement since the last inspection when standards were only in line with national expectations. The improvement is largely the result of good staff training, investment in new equipment and the effective leadership of the co-ordinator. The quality of pupils' work in their books and folders shows that they make very good progress.

64. Teaching is very good. Planning at all levels is thorough and provides pupils with a very good progression of learning that matches the cross-curricular approach employed within the school. Teaching staff and learning support assistants enable pupils to use ICT confidently during lessons and provide suitable support and challenge to pupils of all abilities. Pupils have very positive attitudes to ICT and apply themselves well to using it in their learning. Most pupils in Years 3 and 4 can explain correctly how to log on and how to access information from the Internet. Pupils collaborate well and are helpful towards others when working in pairs; for example, when using a language program from the Internet. In design and technology, the more capable pupils used ICT skilfully to make a multimedia presentation on exceptional weather phenomena. In Years 5 and 6, the work of many pupils shows very good skills in the use of ICT to produce text of different colours, sizes and fonts. Pupils enhance their work with pictures and drawings that they download with confidence from the Internet. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 are adept at using the Internet to widen their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are studying. As a result, they apply and improve their skills in ICT whilst further developing their facility in investigation as well as their capabilities as independent and self-motivated learners.

65. Leadership and management by the co-ordinator are very good and have been a major factor in the development of the subject. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic, capable and well organised, and has a clear vision of how ICT should be embedded within the distinctive curriculum of the school. Assessment is centrally placed to enable suitable planning for pupils of varying needs. Very good provision is made for staff development. There is thorough monitoring, with detailed feedback and a full programme of school based in-service training, supplemented by an impressive portfolio of reference material. The school is very well

equipped with computers that have recently been upgraded, together with related hardware and software. It also benefits from the provision and maintenance of its network by a major information technology company that is situated nearby.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used extensively to support pupils' learning throughout the school. Great ingenuity has been shown in the development and use of the school's ICT curriculum delivery map, which provides a valuable framework for planning ICT to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. In science, pupils used the computer to create a database on mini-beasts or plants and to access information about different creatures and plants from the Internet. In many subjects, pupils use word-processing to support their writing, as, for example, in design and technology, when they wrote about how they made a sandwich. In art and design, pupils used computer programs as a stimulus when they created patterns, whilst the digital camera is used well to record examples of pupils' work in art and design and technology for subsequent use with other groups of pupils.

HUMANITIES

Pupils' work in history was sampled during the inspection, but no lessons were observed. Consequently, overall judgements on provision cannot be made. The analysis of past work shows that the subject is taught in a very imaginative way and covers a broad range of content, and that the standard of work is above national expectations. History is taught both as part of other topics and as a subject in its own right. It is very well led and managed. Work is assessed and monitored regularly and an enthusiasm for the subject engendered.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Fieldwork is used extensively to teach the subject.
- When geography is the main focus of a topic, the quality of the work is very good.
- The full range of the curriculum is covered better in Years 3 and 4 than in Years 5 and 6.
- Whilst the subject manager keeps a record of how geographical skills are taught progressively, this is not evident in the pupils' work.

Commentary

67. Many visits, both local and further afield, are used very well to help pupils become geographers. Local studies, such as in Years 3 and 4, are linked to a history topic, but geography is well covered and pupils learn a number of mapping skills as well as learning about land use and comparing two local areas with places such as St. Lucia. When all aspects are considered, the work seen is in line with national expectations and achievement is sound.

A topic on rivers is very well covered and standards in this topic, where geography is the main focus, are well above expectations. In this topic, work is very well presented indeed with pupils producing books of high quality. In written evaluations, parents commented that they were pleased with the outcome of this topic. Year 5 and 6 pupils study geography on a residential visit but, from the work seen, this tends to focus on science and history rather than on developing pupils' geographical skills. For example, opportunities for developing mapping skills are missed. Aspects of geography are also taught as part of other topics, mainly focusing on science. Where the focus is geography, the subject is taught in much greater depth. For example, it is very successfully taught in a five-day block of time once a year.

68. Geography is taught well. When lessons are very good, the teacher asks well phrased, challenging and progressive questions. In a lesson on rain forests, the teacher used good quality resources and pupils were well supported, with the result that they made very good progress, reaching well above average standards. They achieved very well. However, in another lesson the level of challenge was not as good and pupils made only satisfactory progress because group discussions were too dependent on sharing the knowledge that some pupils already had, rather than all pupils gaining new knowledge, skills and understanding.

69. Geography is well led by the subject manager. She has monitored pupils' books and noted variation in quality. The subject is well supported by very good resources, such as videos, computer software, globes, maps, atlases and fieldwork. The subject manager provides teachers with grids to show pupils' levels of attainment and their progression in learning geographical skills, but the outcomes of these records, for example through marking, are not apparent in pupils' books from all classes.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are excellent step-by-step, medium-term plans.
- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent.
- Teachers' and pupils' evaluations provide helpful information for the management of the subject.
- Past monitoring of the subject gives clear guidance as to what should be done next.

Commentary

70. The subject is being led jointly by the headteacher and deputy for this year because the previous co-ordinator left in July. An excellent co-ordinator's file provides clear guidance as to where present strengths and weaknesses lie. The school follows the Hampshire locally Agreed Syllabus which was updated recently. Clear leadership will be needed this year to implement it successfully, and the guidance given by the previous subject leader will be invaluable. The individual unit plans she has prepared, based on different questions, are very detailed and provide excellent guidance for teachers to plan individual lessons. However, teachers' self-evaluations show that, in spite of this, some teachers feel they have insufficient knowledge to teach the subject.

71. Teaching and learning are good, although variable. In the one lesson observed in Years 5 and 6, teaching and learning were very good, although some time was wasted in moving from the class-taught part of the lesson to individual work, and this prevented even higher standards being reached in the time given. The very good relationships between the teacher and pupils enabled a new culture and belief system to be introduced with sensitivity. Respect was shown for it, and lessons learned from it, which enabled the pupils to achieve very well, reaching above average standards. Good support was given by the learning support assistant to the less capable pupils and a pupil with SEN; for example, scribing for him using a laptop computer. However, the analysis of completed work across the school shows that this standard is not consistently maintained. Work is well marked in some books, but there is no marking at all in others. Some more capable pupils produce work of a very high quality, but the work of average and below average pupils is sometimes unsatisfactory, both in terms of content and presentation.

72. There is no long-term co-ordinator for the subject at the moment, which, as the new locally Agreed Syllabus is expected to be implemented this year, could be a concern. However, the headteacher is aware of the situation and the current medium-term plans are in line with the

new syllabus. Training has been planned, and the clear guidance given by the previous subject leader together with the very helpful guidance given in the locally Agreed Syllabus, particularly on concept development, should enable the headteacher and deputy to monitor from their senior management positions until a new subject leader is appointed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. Inspection priorities meant that subjects in this area were only lightly sampled. No lessons directly focused on art and design or design and technology were observed. One music lesson and three physical education lessons were seen, but there was insufficient evidence through lesson observation to make substantial judgements about provision. However, the medium term plans in these subjects provide good opportunities for interesting learning opportunities.

74. An analysis of pupils' work and displays, together with observations of pupils' drawing and painting, shows that standards in art and design are at least in line with national expectations. Standards in design and technology are similarly at least in line with expectations. No judgement about standards in music and physical education could be made. In all subjects, the elements of the National Curriculum are covered satisfactorily. The topic approach to learning enables good links to be made between these subjects and, for example, geography, ICT and science.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

75. No lessons with this area as a principal focus were seen, so no overall judgements can be made. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) which enables pupils to explore a range of social and moral issues, discuss their own physical growth and development and to make important choices about their contribution to both the school and the wider community as they grow older. In addition, the school's organisation and guiding principles ensure that pupils' personal and social education have a high priority in all lessons, and especially the topic-based lessons in which pupils are expected to work with considerable independence or in groups. Other aspects are effectively covered in religious education lessons. For example, pupils grew in their understanding of the cultures and beliefs of native Americans in one very good religious education lesson observed.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
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	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).