

INSPECTION REPORT

Medina Primary School

Portsmouth

LEA area: Portsmouth

Unique reference number: 116195

Headteacher: Mr H Payne

Lead inspector: Mr D Clegg

Dates of inspection: 21 – 23 February 2005

Inspection number: 267300

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	194
School address:	Medina Road Cosham Portsmouth Hampshire
Postcode:	PO6 3NH
Telephone number:	023 9237 5475
Fax number:	023 9221 4237
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S West-Thomas
Date of previous inspection:	26 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This an average sized primary school with 194 on roll with 108 boys and 87 girls. The most significant imbalances are in reception and year 5. The great majority of pupils are White British. All pupils are fluent English speakers, although there is a small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The main language spoken, other than English, is Bengali.

There is a high proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Almost 40 per cent of pupils have special educational needs; this is above average. These pupils are not distributed evenly throughout the school. In some year groups the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is as high as 50 per cent. The main learning difficulties are social and emotional problems, specific learning difficulties and speech and language problems. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is about average.

The school is involved in a number of initiatives including Excellence in Clusters¹, On Track² and Extended School Initiative³. The school has out of school care facilities catering for 30 children. This is a relatively new development.

The school has been awarded the following

- Healthy Schools Standard 2004
- Investors in People (IIP) in 2002

When children enter reception their skills are often very low in comparison with other schools.

¹ An national initiative to raise standards of attainment

² An initiative that helps to support pupils to achieve their best

³ An initiative to help schools to provide extended care and support outside the normal school day

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
4341	Mr D Clegg	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Physical education English as an additional language
11096	Ms M Davie	Lay inspector	
4343	Ms S Billington	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Religious education Special educational needs
14997	Ms V Emery	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science History Music

The inspection contractor was:

Wessex Education Limited

3 Greenacres
Puddletown
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 8GF

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	16
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school has improved significantly over the last two years to the extent that it is now a **good** school that helps pupils to achieve well. The overall quality of teaching is good; it is very good for the youngest children. The school is well led and benefits from very good management procedures. It provides **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well, particularly in the basic skills of reading and numeracy, but speaking skills are weak throughout the school
- Boys' performance in writing is weak
- Pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes to their work; the school makes good provision for their personal development
- Children make a very good start in reception
- There is a very good range of activities outside the school day
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- There are very good links with other schools and the community
- Not enough time is given to some subjects in years 1 to 6

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The rate of improvement has been limited by disruptions to staffing that have mitigated against sustained improvement. However, following a period of stability, standards are improving, teaching is improving and the management systems are more secure in making sure that pupils achieve their best. There have been good improvements in the following areas:

- Standards and achievement in years 3 to 6 in reading, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT)
- The effectiveness of assessment procedures
- The provision for design and technology (DT)
- The efficiency of the governing body

Art and music provision remains weak across the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

The majority of pupils throughout the school achieve **well**. Children make a good start in the reception class and often make very good progress. This is successfully built on in years 1 and 2. The progress made by pupils in years 4 to 6 is also consistently good. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their targets.

The results in national tests vary from year to year due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The inspection found that current standards are slightly below the national

average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Speaking skills are also weak throughout the school. Standards in science are broadly in line with the national average. Over time, there is little variation between the performance of boys and girls although in some years there is a marked difference in results. In 2004 boys performed less well than girls and boys are currently significantly weaker in writing. The trend in performance is erratic but taking account of the improvement in 2004, results are improving more quickly than in schools nationally.

Standards in ICT are broadly in line with expectations. There was not enough evidence seen to judge standards in other subjects.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education. The quality of teaching is **good**; it is consistently good and sometimes very good in years 4 to 6 and it is very good in the reception class. Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of pupils who are very well managed to ensure that they benefit from the teaching. The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is particularly strong. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and benefit from good support and work that is carefully matched to their needs. The curriculum is broad and includes all subjects. There are particularly good programmes for teaching literacy and numeracy but not enough attention is given to subjects such as history and geography to sufficient depth. The curriculum for the youngest children is very well planned.

There is **good** provision for pupils' personal development. There is a very high level of care and support extended to pupils. The school develops and sustains a good working relationship with parents and there are very strong links with the local and wider community. The attendance levels are well below the national average.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is **well** led and managed. The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction and purpose. There is a very strong sense of teamwork throughout the school; the senior management team is particularly effective in taking the school forward. The governance of the school is good, but not all the statutory requirements are met in relation to information for parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are very positive about the school. Parents are particularly pleased with the teaching and the progress their children make. Pupils have a great deal of confidence in their teachers and feel that they are helped as much as possible.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in speaking
- Improve the performance of boys in writing
- Ensure a better depth of coverage of art, history, geography, music and RE

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Make sure the governors' annual report and the prospectus contains all the required information.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are generally below the national average but overall pupils achieve well, particularly in the core skills of reading and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage⁴ achieve very well
- Throughout school achievement is good in mathematics, although standards are slightly below average
- In English, standards in reading are significantly better than in writing and speaking skills are weak throughout the school
- Pupils achieve well in science
- Prior to 2004, results in national tests were well below or below national averages

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter school with skills that are often well below what might be expected for their age. Language skills are particularly low; skills in numeracy are higher, although still below what is often seen.
2. Due to the very good teaching children make very good progress and achieve well. By the time they start year 1, many children are on track to attain broadly average standards.

Years 1 and 2: Literacy, numeracy and science

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (14.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.4 (13.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.4 (14.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The most recent results in national tests in reading and mathematics are below the national average while in writing standards are well below the national average. However, in comparison with similar schools, the results are above or in line with the average. This represents a good improvement on previous years when standards in each of the tests was either below or well below those of similar schools. There has been steady improvement in results in the last three years. In 2004 boys performed much less well than girls in reading, writing and mathematics.
4. Current standards are a little better than the test results. Standards in reading are close to the average but standards in writing are below average. Speaking skills are also weak; pupils' limited vocabulary makes an impact on how well they achieve in other subjects.

⁴ The Foundation Stage refers to children in the reception class

5. Standards in mathematics are slightly below average but it is evident that standards are improving in both year groups. Standards in science are broadly in line with the national average, although pupils struggle to express themselves using accurate scientific vocabulary.
6. Overall, the pupils currently in years 1 and 2 are achieving well. Virtually all have made the progress they should have given their starting points when they entered the school. A significant number of pupils have done better in national tests than was predicted.

Years 3 to 6: English, mathematics and science

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (24.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.4 (25.1)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.5 (26.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

7. The results in 2004 represent a significant improvement on results in recent years. This is due to much tighter management systems and more consistent teaching throughout the four years. The pupils currently in these year groups are achieving well, they are making good progress and building on what has gone on previously. In the most recent year 6 tests English results were above the national average, science results were average and mathematics results were below average. In comparison with similar schools, English was above the average, mathematics was below average and science was average.
8. Current standards in English are below the national average although in reading they are close to where they should be. Standards in writing and speaking are weak and this has an impact on work in other subjects. Boys' written work overall is much weaker than that of girls. Many of the oldest pupils make simple spelling errors in their writing and struggle to express themselves when speaking. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly in line with the average, although few pupils are working at above average levels.
9. Throughout the school there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In some year groups it is as high as 50 per cent of pupils and seldom less than 30 per cent. These pupils achieve well despite attaining below average standards. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs inevitably depresses the test results in comparison with all other schools.

Standards and achievement in other subjects across the school

10. Standards in ICT are broadly in line with expectations throughout the school; this represents a good level of improvement since the last inspection. It was not possible to judge standards in other subjects although there is some evidence that pupils could achieve more in history, geography and music if they had opportunities to study the subjects for longer periods and at greater depth.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Provision for their personal development is good. Attendance is well below the national average and a number of pupils arrive late at school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to take advantage of all that the school offers
- Behaviour is generally good and pupils respond well to the clear and consistent expectations of staff
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good
- The school is making good efforts to tackle low attendance and the late arrivals of pupils

Commentary

11. Pupils are generally very positive about school life and keen to learn. The vast majority listens attentively to teachers and pupils are generally quick to organise their activities and get down to work. They cooperate well in pairs, for example, when they are sharing a computer in the ICT suite or discussing a question posed by a teacher and noting their ideas on small whiteboards. They are enthusiastic about the clubs and activities available to them and particularly enjoy visits to places in the locality and the residential visits. They also enjoy having visitors to school; some year 6 pupils talked animatedly about the link with Portsmouth Football Club and the star footballer who came to play on the new all-weather pitch when it opened last year.
12. Behaviour in lessons, assemblies and the play areas is generally good and for many pupils is very good. Pupils move around the building in an orderly way and show consideration for others; they queue sensibly when they are waiting for lunch in the hall. Pupils with significant behavioural difficulties are very well managed. They benefit from specific support programmes that encourage them to understand the impact of their actions and ways in which they might control them. Boys and girls and pupils from minority ethnic groups play amicably together. There was no evidence of bullying or racism during the inspection and the school has good procedures in place for dealing with any incidents that occur.
13. Assemblies, the programme for personal, social, health and emotional development (PSHE) and circle time make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Specific themes such as friendship and belief are discussed and pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others. The school places a strong emphasis on boosting pupils' confidence and self-esteem in a variety of ways. These include posters with positive messages ('believe in yourself'), praise and rewards for effort and nomination of 'pupil of the week' in individual classes. Pupils are also encouraged to appreciate the role that they play in the school and wider community through considering the contribution that they can make. The range of visits and visitors, participation in local events such as carnivals and activities in lessons such as art and science make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are made aware of the diversity of multicultural Britain through talks from visitors representing ethnic minority groups and different faiths.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	0.1
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.

14. Every effort is being made by the school to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality. However, the large number of children being taken on a family holiday during term time contributes significantly to the unsatisfactory rates of attendance. Staff try to lessen the impact these absences have on pupils' attainment by encouraging parents to ensure their child does some reading and keeps a holiday diary while away.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	168	15	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	22	0	0

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

15. Three pupils were temporarily excluded on a number of occasions in the last year. This serious step was only taken after giving the pupils concerned a good deal of extra support, but became unavoidable due to their continued displays of aggression and unwillingness to cooperate with teachers.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. It is consistently very good in the Foundation Stage and good in years 4 to 6. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Assessment procedures are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching of English, mathematics and science throughout the school
- Lessons are well planned; work is well matched to the needs of pupils but occasionally time in lessons is not used most effectively
- Class management is very good; rules and sanctions are consistently applied
- There is good support for pupils with special educational needs; occasionally teaching assistants could be used more effectively

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6 (20%)	13 (43%)	11(36%)	0	0	0

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

Commentary

16. A key factor in the school's success and improvement is that the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school. The school has put a great deal of effort in to ensuring that these lessons are carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Each lesson has a very clear teaching focus that is explained to pupils at the start of lessons. They are given good feedback about how well they are doing in relation to what they should be learning as the lesson progresses. This ensures that pupils know what they are doing and why they are doing it

and encourages them to think about how well they are doing. This motivates them to do even better and keeps them engaged.

17. There are a significant number of pupils who often struggle to concentrate throughout the lesson. However, the teachers are very skilful in managing pupils so that there are very few disruptions to the learning of others. Teachers in all year groups consistently apply rules and sanctions so that pupils are made very aware of the boundaries within which they behave. Teachers emphasise the positive and readily reward and acknowledge when pupils have done what is expected of them. Teaching is often lively and lessons move on at a good pace. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and this enables them to teach confidently. Just occasionally the introduction to lessons is too long and pupils become restless and distracted.
18. There is a good number of adults working alongside teachers in various capacities. These assistants are usually well used to provide support to specific pupils; they often sit with them at the start of lessons to reinforce what the teacher is saying and work with pupils in small groups. Some of the support given to pupils with special needs is very effective. Teachers and assistants work closely together; the records maintained by assistants are very helpful in tracking how well pupils are doing. Occasionally, teaching assistants are not used in the most effective manner. This happens at the start of lessons where teachers do not always plan assistants' time to ensure that they are fully engaged with pupils from the very beginning of teaching.
19. ICT is beginning to make an impact on the quality of teaching through the use of interactive whiteboards. The timetabling of the ICT suite ensures that teachers make effective use of online resources and software packages. This helps to keep pupils interested and motivated and enhances teachers' explanations and instructions.

The curriculum

The curriculum is sound and offers very good opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy and numeracy are strong features of the curriculum
- The foundation stage curriculum is very good
- Extra curricular opportunities are very good
- Provision for PHSE is very good
- Some subjects are not taught in sufficient depth

Commentary

20. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. It has improved significantly for the Foundation Stage, where it is now very good. The needs of the youngest children are met very well by a practical, challenging curriculum, which focuses well on developing skills in interesting ways; because of this they achieve very well. In years 1 to 6 there are particularly good programmes for literacy and numeracy which are helping to raise standards and meet the needs of the pupils. Good improvement has been made in the ICT curriculum and this is enhanced by the provision of two computer suites. The school employs a very good number of teachers and teaching assistants and these are used well to provide good support for an interesting curriculum that includes all pupils.
21. A very good number and range of activities are offered to pupils at lunchtimes and after school. Interesting activities cover a wide range of areas from sport to film club, chess, needlework and drama. The very good outside accommodation is used very effectively at lunchtimes to provide supervised games. This contributes well to preventing any lunchtime behaviour problems.

Residential visits are provided for years 4, 5 and 6 and are an important contribution to the personal development of pupils.

22. A strong feature of the curriculum is the very good provision for PSHE. A consistent programme goes through the school and all teachers have had training for developing pupils' self esteem; this underpins the good attitudes and behaviour seen in the school.
23. The school has recently reviewed its curriculum to include more integration of subjects and use of a wider range of teaching styles. Planning is being reviewed at the end of each half term to ensure that it is appropriate. At present, some subjects such as history and geography are not taught in sufficient depth.
24. The accommodation and resources of the school are good. The outside area is spacious and includes very good sporting facilities such as an all weather pitch. The inside accommodation is also very good, providing good classroom spaces and office facilities. In addition there are a number of rooms that are used by the community such as the music room and an ICT suite. The hall space, although adequate for the number of pupils for whole school gatherings, provides limited space for physical education lessons for the older pupils.

Care, guidance and support

This is a strong feature of the school. Pupils are very well cared for and their personal and academic development is very well supported. The way pupils' views are taken into account is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements to ensure pupils' safety and welfare are very effective
- Pupils have confidence in the adults who work with them
- Pupils have very good access to any additional support that they need

Commentary

25. Parents' views are very positive about this aspect of the school's work. They rightly feel that great care is taken of their children. Regular health and safety checks and very good site security ensure that pupils are working in a safe and secure environment. Disabled access is good, the school being designated by the local education authority to receive pupils with physical disabilities in the north of the city. Staff are regularly trained in matters of child protection and are aware of their responsibilities toward vulnerable pupils.
26. Relationships at all levels are very constructive. Pupils feel that staff help them as much as possible and have confidence that any problems they have will be dealt with effectively. Consistent behaviour management and the very good use of positive praise helps children to quickly understand what is expected of them and as a result behaviour is good. Bullying is taken seriously and any incidents are usually dealt with by the headteacher. Children in the reception class make very good progress in their personal and social development because of the very good support they receive.
27. The warm, caring way in which teachers deal with pupils helps them to understand how to work and play with each other in a productive manner. This was obvious in a year 4 PSHE lesson, during which pupils followed their teacher's example and helped one another while discussing what makes a good friend. Staff have a good understanding of how well pupils are doing and, as a result, personal and academic guidance are good. This helps pupils to make steady progress during their time at the school so that they are well prepared for further stages in their education.
28. The school provides a good level of extra support to those pupils who need it. In lessons, this entails planning work suitable to the needs of individual pupils, giving extra adult support or organising small group work. The learning mentor has an important role in helping specific

pupils to remain focused in lessons. Links with outside agencies are also very good, for example the school has ready access to a family link worker who works alongside other local agencies to tackle barriers to learning such as poor attendance.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good. Links with the community and other local schools are very good and enrich pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning but some written information that they are given does not meet requirements
- The Family Learning Programme supports parents very well
- The headteacher is very responsive to the needs of the community

Commentary

29. The support of parents is highly valued by the school and they are kept well informed about school life. They have ample opportunities during the year to meet with their child's teacher. Reports on progress are satisfactory, but because they are sent out at half yearly intervals, parents do not get year-end information about their child's progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The prospectus is informative and gives detailed information to help parents become familiar with school routines and practices. It is, however, missing some required information such as the results of the most recent statutory tests and their national comparisons. The governors' annual report is also missing required details such as the aforementioned national test comparisons.
30. During the inspection a very successful session of the Family Learning Programme, which is delivered in conjunction with Portsmouth College, was observed. Parents enthusiastically shared their ideas about different ways to manage children's behaviour. Previous sessions have helped parents to find out about how young children learn and included opportunities for them to work together with their children. These sessions are very popular and are involving parents more fully in their children's education.
31. Community use of the school is highly encouraged and well established. New facilities such as the all weather pitch and arts and music block are used by community organisations on a regular basis. Local children also use the all weather pitch as a play area in the evening when it is not let. The after school club is well attended and provides a valuable resource to working parents.
32. The school's participation in the Excellence in Clusters initiative supports pupils' development well. It gives both pupils and teachers the opportunity to take part in a range of events. Involvement also helps to provide additional adult support in school such as the learning mentor and further support for pupils when they transfer to year 7 so that they make this transition as smoothly as possible. Other programmes such as the 'On Track' initiative are helping to increase access to services for families in the area in order to combat barriers to learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and very well managed. The governors play a good part in setting the direction of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong sense of teamwork and key staff provide very good leadership
- Performance data is very well used to guide improvements
- The leadership is very successful at seeking outside funding to improve provision

Commentary

33. The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction and purpose. He enjoys the confidence of the community and is instrumental in ensuring the school strives hard to meet the needs of all pupils.
34. The senior management team is particularly effective. The team represents all sections of the school and includes the managers of literacy and numeracy as well as the Foundation Stage. Senior managers are very good role models both as teachers and as managers. They are enthusiastic, clear thinking and have a sharp determination to drive the school forward. They have benefited from some helpful support and advice from the local education authority who have given the school some intensive support to raise standards.
35. Senior managers have a keen sense of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their own strategies for finding out how things are proceeding are successful; there is regular checking up on the quality of teaching and this helps to identify aspects that need improvements. The senior managers also use the information gained from assessments to guide improvements. They identify any pupils who may not be making enough progress and have a range of intervention strategies to help these children to make up lost ground. The interventions range from focusing teachers' attention on particular children to the sensible deployment of teachers and teaching assistants to work with groups of pupils on specific programmes.
36. The school provision is significantly enhanced by involvement in a series of local and national initiatives. These have been instrumental in funding new arts and sports facilities that include the all weather pitch and the arts block. The school is also working on several local initiatives designed to improve what is on offer to pupils so that they can achieve their best.
37. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They work more effectively than at the last inspection; they are well organised and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	617784	Balance from previous year	22114
Total expenditure	594051	Balance carried forward to the next	23743
Expenditure per pupil	3062		

38. The school is particularly successful at strategic financial planning and seeking resources outside the normal budget to improve the opportunities for pupils.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and has improved since the last inspection. From a very low base on entry, children achieve very well because teaching and learning are very good. Standards overall, at the end of the Reception year, are in line with expectations. The teacher provides a wide variety of interesting and imaginative activities in a very good curriculum. Whilst children on entry to school have weaknesses in their social skills, language skills and linking of sounds and letters, their number skills are comparatively better. The Foundation Stage manager provides very good leadership. She provides a very good role model of purposeful, practical and interesting teaching. She works particularly well with other adults, deploying them efficiently to increase the learning opportunities. Assessment information is gathered regularly through careful observations and is used well to plan different work for groups of children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strength and weaknesses

- A regular strong emphasis on class rules reminds children about how to behave
- Regular planned activities promote children's independence well
- All staff present good role models to children

Commentary

39. Teaching is very good and children achieve very well. This area is a particular weakness for a significant number on entry to the reception class. The teacher has very high expectations of what the children can achieve. Discussion time in a circle is a regular feature and helps to underpin class rules and good relationships. Puppets are used to promote discussions about unkind actions and children explore how these make you feel and why. This helps them to understand why being kind to each other is a class rule.

40. Very good opportunities are regularly provided for promoting children's independence and their social skills. Expectations of independence in undressing and dressing are high and school conventions are explored and reinforced well. The school day is carefully designed to give children regular access to both planned and a choice of independent activities. Children play well and interact well on these occasions. They share resources well and have good relationships with each other and adults.

41. The teacher and other adults show children care and concern at all times. Very high expectations of behaviour and relationships are almost always maintained. Immediate insistence on maintaining these standards by the teacher means that the classroom has a happy purposeful atmosphere, where children want to learn and work hard.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children experience regular teaching of sounds and letters
- Children regularly share books and writing at school and take books home regularly
- Discussion partners and rehearsing what children will write are used well

Commentary

42. The very good teaching means that children achieve very well from a low starting point. This very good achievement is because the teacher has very high expectations of what the children can do and gives regular attention to reading, writing and speaking and listening activities. Children regularly practise their sounds and activities are carefully planned to use the sounds they know, to start to read and write. Their progress in acquiring these sounds is carefully assessed and recorded. Because the classroom assistants and other helpers in the classroom are used very well, children can work at different levels in groups with work that matches their different abilities.
43. All adults in the classroom are used well to hear children read regularly. Additionally, children take their books home and parents give good support in sharing books with their children. Children have many opportunities to write in their work and play. Whole class writing sessions are regular and children practise writing their names for example, first thing in the morning.
44. Children are often asked to discuss their ideas with a partner and this helps them to talk and listen carefully. When preparing to write sentences these discussion partners are used very well to rehearse their ideas for sentences with a great emphasis on making them interesting. A range of objects and pictures were used to help children to write sentences, starting with the word 'Yellow' and children were rehearsing sentences such as 'Yellow is the colour of a juicy lemon'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Due to the very good teaching, the children learn and achieve very well in their mathematical development
- Teachers' plan a wide range of practical activities linked to other work to make learning fun

Commentary

45. Children develop their mathematical understanding through regular and planned opportunities to count and compare and use this knowledge in problem solving situations. Counting forwards and backwards from a given number, counting in tens using number lines and number squares are used regularly. Exciting and interesting activities help children to learn well. A 'Spider' and 'Flies' were used at different points on a number line to find out how many more the spider had to count on to eat the fly. Children's work is carefully matched to their number recognition ability and group practical activities are well supported by adults. All activities are related to children solving problems such as 'how many more' or practical number recognition.
46. Children regularly sing number songs and each morning a child is asked to count the number of children. From this, the children find out how many are absent. They count the numbers of hot dinners and packed lunches to check the number matches the number present in the class. One number, one object is well established because of regular counting practice in the class day.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Due to the very good teaching, the children learn well and achieve very well
- Good access to computers excites and interests children

Commentary

47. The teacher plans a good variety of imaginative practical experiences to ensure that children have a good knowledge of the world around them. The 'travel agent' creative play area helps children to explore far away places and plan holidays in hot or cold climates. The children are taken for a walk around the grounds and observe and collect growing plants such as blossom and seeds. They have a growing awareness of the seasons and the cycle of growing plants.

48. Children are developing good ICT skills because of good access to the four computers in the classroom and to the computer suite. They use the mouse well to click on icons so that they can use programs or the Intel microscope. They were amazed and delighted to see the close up image of blossom they had collected on a walk in the grounds through the microscope. They also used the digital camera to record this image and later enhanced the picture to print the blossom in real and imaginative forms.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good teaching results in children's very good learning and achievement
- The curriculum provides good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills

Commentary

49. The teacher plans well to provide a high level of challenge in both teacher directed and independent play activities. Regular access to the hall enables children to experience working on large apparatus. They are aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies and use the large space well as a class. They change direction on command and their movements are controlled. They carry some pieces of large apparatus, such as mats and benches, with careful awareness of their own and others' safety. The topic of 'bridges' has made them aware of taking their weight on different parts of their body when forming a 'bridge' while moving along a bench. The outside play area is well resourced with a good variety of wheeled vehicles and other climbing, bouncing and shooting apparatus. This is used regularly and children play energetically and sociably. They score goals individually using the net on the post, climb and balance together and move around on bouncing or wheeled toys.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have regular music making and dance activities
- Good provision is made for creative paint, collage and drawing and play activities

Commentary

50. Teaching is good and the children learn and achieve well. They are on course to be at the nationally expected goals by the time they enter year 1. Children have good access to the music room, which is a very good space to make music and dance. They are starting to recognise long and short sounds through well planned practical activities. They respond to music creatively to make their dance movements. Self portraits of children displayed in the classroom indicate growing abilities to mix and match paints. They use drawing well to illustrate their writing and use a variety of collage materials. The current theme of 'Travel agent' in their creative play area

provides good opportunities for children to plan holidays and dress up and play out imaginative situations.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving, but there is still scope for pupils to do better in some aspects of the subject
- Planning is good and teaching is well structured and consistent
- Very good leadership underpins the rapid improvements

Commentary

51. Pupils throughout the school are achieving well and standards are rising. However, there is variation in how well pupils are doing in different aspects of the subject. The majority of pupils listen attentively and show good understanding of the main points in a discussion. For many pupils, however, speaking skills are weak and this has an impact on their achievement overall. In reading, standards have improved to broadly average levels. Improvement is also evident in writing, particularly for pupils in years 1 and 2, but there are weaknesses in the skills of older pupils and this has an impact on their overall achievement.
52. The school is very aware of the need to improve pupils' vocabulary and expressive language. Good provision is made in many lessons to promote speaking skills through, for example, encouraging pupils to rehearse ideas with 'talking partners' or to formulate questions to ask a key character in a debate. This is having a positive impact and many pupils are confident in offering their ideas and opinions in a class discussion. However, they often struggle to express themselves clearly and few are aware of the need for formal vocabulary and the use of Standard English on these occasions. While key vocabulary is identified in planning for many lessons and teachers introduce it and explain its meaning, they miss opportunities to ensure that pupils themselves use it consistently throughout the lesson.
53. Pupils in years 1 and 2 are building on a good start in learning early literacy skills. Most pupils read accurately and with reasonable understanding. Regular reading practice, specific teaching of skills and support programmes for pupils with reading difficulties are having a good impact on standards. Pupils are also achieving well in writing, with most extending the quantity and quality of their written work. Girls are doing better than boys in this area; most of the girls in year 2 are working at average levels but the written work of a significant proportion of boys is below average standards.
54. In years 3 to 6, pupils are benefiting from a well-structured programme to raise standards and address previous underachievement. As with younger pupils, there is strong attention to ensuring that pupils read regularly and extend their awareness of different styles and authors. Most pupils in year 6 read independently and show understanding of the main themes and events in a story. They understand how to locate information, but still need specific guidance on using inference to get beyond the literal meaning in a text. Their written work generally shows improvement in structure and vocabulary and they engage in a good range of work, including factual accounts, poetry and extended stories. However, they often find it difficult to sustain a specific style, such as writing in note form. Spelling, handwriting and punctuation are weak for many pupils, particularly boys.
55. Teaching is good. Teachers make good use of a range of resources, demonstration and explanation to highlight key aspects of literacy and to help pupils understand what they need to achieve in their lessons. Planning is detailed and very specific; it is used well to guide teaching

and to ensure that activities build on what pupils already know or have experienced. The objectives of specific units of work and of individual lessons are clear and are shared with the pupils. Teachers also make clear the criteria for achieving success, but occasionally this leads to some confusion for pupils as they try to concentrate on too many elements in a short space of time.

56. The subject benefits from good systems to track pupils' achievements, provide extra support where needed and identify specific areas for improvement. Extra support from the local education authority in the form of in-service training for staff and regular monitoring by the subject manager have been effective in improving provision and ensuring consistent approaches to teaching and learning.

Language across the curriculum

57. Pupils are encouraged to use their literacy skills in a range of subjects across the curriculum. In science, for example, they use labels and diagrams to note key facts and observations. In history, year 4 pupils created stories of Boudicca based on well-presented facts about her life. Some good links are made with ICT; for example, year 3 pupils researched and presented facts about the local area. In PSHE, pupils reflect on and write up their personal targets for display in the classroom, for instance, 'to work better in groups'.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematics is taught well throughout the school
- The mathematics curriculum is very well planned
- The subject is very well managed

Commentary

58. The provision for mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection particularly in the work done in years 3 to 6. Overall, despite the results of national tests being slightly below the national average, pupils often make good progress and most achieve well. The good start made in the reception class is successfully built on in years 1 and 2. Pupils gain more confidence in using numbers; they become familiar with addition and subtraction and begin to understand how numbers work. As they progress through years 3 to 6, they extend their understanding, most use the four operations to calculate and they have a good range of ways of working things out. They are increasingly confident about their tables and in using what they know to solve mathematical problems.
59. There are a number of key factors in the improvement and better standards. Sustained good teaching is making sure that all pupils are given a chance to succeed. Teaching is often lively and imaginative and lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Each lesson has a very clear focus which is explained to pupils at the start and they are given regular feedback about how well they are achieving as the lesson progresses. Pupils are very well managed; teachers are very positive and encouraging and teaching assistants are generally well used to work with pupils who may struggle to remain on task. The work of the teaching assistants is particularly effective in helping pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who find learning difficult.
60. The school makes very good use of the national guidance for teaching mathematics. There is a very clear programme of work that makes sure that as pupils go through the school their lessons build on what they already know and understand. Pupils' progress is very carefully assessed and recorded and so teachers have a good picture of how well each pupil is doing.

61. The subject manager, working very effectively with other members of the senior management team, uses the information about pupils' progress very well. The information is used to track pupils and identify any who may not be making enough progress. Once identified, the school has a number of strategies and programmes in place to give added support to ensure that pupils make up lost ground. The subject manager is a particularly effective teacher and is instrumental in supporting colleagues; the regular observation of lessons is helpful in raising the overall quality of teaching.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. There is evidence of numeracy skills being used in a range of subjects. In science, data handling skills are used in recording investigations; mathematics makes an impact in ICT when looking at data handling programs. In design and technology, pupils use accurate measuring to help them to design and make a range of models.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management in the subject is good
- Due to the good teaching, pupils are developing good scientific enquiry skills
- Good attention is paid to developing scientific language
- Assessments do not track pupils' progress accurately through the national curriculum

Commentary

63. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are now average at both the ends of year 2 and year 6. Teaching is good and there is good curricular leadership; because of this pupils achieve well through the school. The improvements have been mainly due to better teacher knowledge and skills and by improving how the subject is planned. Skills and knowledge are now taught progressively. Although results have been erratic over the years, they have shown recent improvement.

64. Overall, teaching and learning have improved and are now good throughout the school. In all the lessons seen, pupils were given good opportunities to develop their skills of enquiry. In year 2, pupils were investigating different appliances that use electricity, sorting them into appropriate groups. In year 3, pupils were identifying push and pull in everyday situations, whilst year 4 pupils were constructing a circuit to test out their predictions of conductors and non-conductors of electricity. In year 6, pupils were investigating how to use mirrors to change the direction of light.

65. Lessons are practical and interesting to pupils. Because of good classroom management and the good level of adult support, the practical and investigative approach is successful and pupils learn well. Pupils are interested, behave sensibly and they cooperate well. Lessons are well planned, include clear learning objectives and identify scientific vocabulary to be focused upon. When testing materials as conductors or non-conductors, these terms were used accurately by pupils. Knowledge is reinforced well at the end of lessons and language is extended. The word 'insulator' was introduced when pupils reviewed their work on conductors by looking at the construction of a domestic plug to discover how different materials are used. Resources are good and used well. A year 6 class was able to split into small groups and use mirrors and a torch to investigate how they could change the direction of light. The interactive whiteboard was used well by the teacher and pupils to experiment to find out how they could accurately change the direction of light to a specified point. Teachers mark work well and give helpful support to pupils on how to improve.

66. Although teachers regularly assess their pupils in relation to the learning objectives of each lesson, there is, as yet, no system which accurately assesses their national curriculum levels through the school to see if they are making sufficient progress. The school is aware of this and has targeted it for a future area for development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards vary in different aspects of the subject
- The subject is well managed; there has been good improvement since the last inspection
- Resources are good
- ICT is used well in other subjects

Commentary

67. There has been good improvement in this subject since the last inspection. The issues identified have been addressed and pupils now reach standards broadly in line with expectations and achieve satisfactorily. However, there is some variation in the standards reached in different aspects of the subject.

68. Pupils often struggle to recall some of the learning they have experienced some time ago although they are very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their most recent lessons. For example, current year 6 pupils talked very eagerly about their work in producing a multimedia presentation but struggled to recall work about spreadsheets and did not have a secure grasp of what control technology might include. This was in contrast with year 5 pupils who were very familiar with control since they were looking at this aspect currently. Throughout the school, work in word processing is strong with some good use of technology to enhance the quality of written work. Overall, pupils' sound grasp of basic skills enables them to approach their work confidently.

69. Teaching is satisfactory. There are a number of strong features including teachers' own knowledge and confidence and an increasingly well planned curriculum. The programme of work helps teachers to plan their lessons and make sure that learning has a clear objective. Just occasionally, the work that pupils are given is not well matched to their levels of skills. Reasons for this are that the school is using a wide range of new programs and the assessment procedures for ICT are just beginning to be put in place.

70. The current review of the curriculum is taking account of ICT. The school uses national guidance sensibly and is striking the right balance between teaching ICT as a subject and making sure that ICT skills are used across other subjects. A particularly positive feature of ICT is the way in which it is used in other lessons. The introduction of interactive boards in two classrooms has been very beneficial and the school is sensibly planning to expand this into all classrooms.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. This is a good feature of the subject. ICT skills are used across a wide range of subjects including literacy and numeracy. In literacy, technology makes an impact in enhancing written work or in some instances stimulating writing through the use of downloaded works of art. In numeracy and science, ICT is used in data handling to produce graphs. It is also used to research information in geography and for instance, to plot land use in the local community.

HUMANITIES

History

72. No history lessons were observed but work was scrutinised and there were discussions with pupils. Pupils use their research skills well, using the Internet, books and pictures to investigate various topics. They are asked for example to study different portraits to find evidence of Henry VIII, or use books and the Internet to compare Victorian and modern schools. However, despite this work, when talking to pupils, they have no real idea of how history fits together or a sense of how long ago historical events happened. Overall, history does not have sufficient coverage or depth.

Geography

73. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision in geography. However, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of previous work, indicate that there are some weaknesses in the curriculum coverage. Not enough time has been given to studying the subject to sufficient depth and year 6 pupils' grasp of key geographical ideas is weak. There is some evidence of more successful work where pupils have undertaken land use studies of the local community and some of the current work on St Lucia is providing a good opportunity to use ICT in an interesting way.

Religious Education

74. Only one lesson was seen in religious education and it is not possible to make a judgment about the quality of provision. The curriculum is currently going through a major revision as the locally agreed syllabus is being revised; there was a limited range of recorded work and therefore insufficient evidence to judge standards or achievement. Discussion with year 6 pupils and a review of work through the school show that the curriculum covers the four main religions prescribed by the current agreed syllabus. Pupils have some knowledge of stories and ceremonies associated with different faiths, but their recall is often hazy. The use of artefacts and direct input from pupils of Muslim faith has had a significant impact on the learning of the oldest pupils; they demonstrate interest and respect for different customs and beliefs. In the lesson observed, good use of resources and opportunities for pupils to reflect on the significance of the Easter story led to good learning. In role play, many pupils showed that they were able to empathise with the feelings of key figures such as the disciples and Mary. However, limitations in their speaking skills meant that they often found it difficult to find appropriate language to express their thoughts and ideas.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical Education (PE)

75. There was not enough evidence seen to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision. Two satisfactory lessons were seen in gymnastics. These two lessons were well planned and pupils are clearly enthusiastic about the subject. They worked well together to produce sequences of movements. In one lesson there was not enough teaching about how to improve whilst in the other, the hall proved very cramped for the size of the group. This impacted on the quality of the lesson.

76. There is a generally broad range of PE opportunities although the school is aware that not enough dance is currently being taught. The provision for PE is supplemented very effectively by the good range of extra-curricular provision, some made possible by links with other schools and the local community. The recently opened all weather pitch has added a further dimension to the opportunities for PE.

Design and technology

77. Only one lesson was seen in design and technology and it is not possible to judge the overall quality of provision. However, there has been good improvement since the last inspection; the subject is now taught regularly throughout the school and pupils have a good range of experiences. Most year groups are taught regularly by the subject manager and this helps to ensure pupils' skills are built up gradually. In year 3, for example, pupils learn to measure, cut and join spars to make a photo frame; in year 4 they make the same structure as a base for a moving vehicle. Year 6 pupils design and make fairground rides with battery-powered cams. Work in food technology links with a focus on healthy eating in health week. The co-ordinator has introduced a clear structure for planning and support materials to help with practical aspects of teaching; her enthusiasm for the subject ensures that it now has a secure place in the curriculum.

Art and design

78. It was not possible to observe any lessons in art and design and there was limited evidence of work in displays. The subject manager has recently taken over responsibility for the subject and is currently focusing on other curriculum priorities. Scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks and discussion with year 6 pupils show that pupils have a range of experiences in the subject but their skills do not develop in a systematic and progressive way. Year 1 and 2 pupils experiment with colour mixing and begin to learn about line, tone and shade. They have limited opportunity to use what they are learning – there is very little scope to experiment with techniques or to use a range of methods to represent observations and ideas. Older pupils learn about some famous artists such as Picasso and Clarice Cliffe but there is limited work in their style. The work of older pupils shows little evidence of a sustained focus on a particular aspect of art or of improving techniques. Art is sometimes used to enhance work in other subjects; for example, some pupils have produced detailed observational drawings of plants as part of their science work.

Music

79. No lessons were observed in music. One assembly was watched where pupils were encouraged to sing with enthusiasm. The enjoyment of music is an aim identified by the school which was achieved well in this session. The school recognises that progression in music is an issue and a subject manager has been appointed for next year. Additional support has been arranged and it is planned to review the provision and set out an action plan. In the meantime, the school continues to participate in musical events such as the Festival in the Guildhall and carol concerts. Recently, recorder lessons have been set up. The school arranges regular visits from musical ensembles.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

80. The school has a policy and scheme of work for personal, social and health education. Teachers give high priority to developing knowledge and understanding through regular discussions. In these discussions, pupils explore emotions and a range of feelings. Teachers work well to promote pupils' self esteem and confidence. In one lesson about 'Friendships', pupils were confident and their good reflective thoughts resulted in such comments as 'a friend is someone who always believes in you'. Another session included personal safety situations. Pupils discussed risks that they had taken in their own lives. The teacher helped pupils to identify what they feel like when taking risks and how to handle this.

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	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
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	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

