

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **NORTHERN PARADE INFANT SCHOOL**

Hilsea, Portsmouth

LEA area: Portsmouth

Unique reference number: 116191

Headteacher: Mrs S Wilson

Lead inspector: Mrs L Woods

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2004

Inspection number: 267407

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



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:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	254
School address:	Kipling Road Hilsea Portsmouth Hampshire
Postcode:	PO2 9NJ
Telephone number:	0239 266 2596
Fax number:	0239 265 5717
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Sheehan
Date of previous inspection:	4th May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Northern Parade is a larger than average infant school to the north of Portsmouth. There are 254 boys and girls on roll between the ages of four and seven. At the time of the inspection, 86 of these pupils were in their very first week of school and only attending part time. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds, with around 8 per cent coming from ethnic minority groups. Ten pupils are identified as coming from homes where the first language is not English, representing around 4 per cent of the school. This is slightly above the national average, but only one pupil is at the early stages of learning English, and is well supported by the school. Thirteen per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. Attainment on entry to school, however, is overall below average. There are 37 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, amounting to around 15 per cent of the school's roll. Most have needs relating to literacy, especially speech and communication. Although the number is likely to increase as needs are identified in pupils who have just started school, the proportion is expected to remain close to the national average. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. Turnover amongst pupils is slightly higher than found nationally, largely as a result of the changing nature of the housing in the area around the school, and overall the roll is also falling.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21079	Mrs Woods L	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Foundation Stage curriculum Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Modern foreign languages
9614	Mrs Webb C	Lay inspector	
21372	Mr Hobday K	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Science Physical education
25925	Mrs Pacey E	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education Geography History Personal, social, health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Ltd

102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucester  
GL53 7JX

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE ONE</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>30</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school. It provides a **satisfactory** quality of education, with many good features. Standards are improving, and attainment in English, mathematics and science is average by the end of Year 2. Children in reception achieve well, as do pupils in Year 1, as a result of good and often very good teaching and learning. Teaching overall, however, is satisfactory, because there are inconsistencies in expectations between individual teachers, which affect standards, achievement and the ethos of the school. Leadership is good, and the headteacher has a very strong vision for the future, which is supported by most of the staff, resulting in a good, shared sense of purpose by the majority. This, however, cannot be fully realised until all staff work together to achieve it, and management overall is consequently satisfactory. Governors are very supportive but do not play a sufficiently active role in challenging and monitoring the work of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors do not monitor the work of the school closely enough, particularly in relation to implementation of statutory requirements.
- Children in reception receive a flying start to their education because of excellent induction procedures.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, which affect standards, achievement and the ethos of the school.
- Teaching is good overall in reception and Year 1, and the teaching of specialist music and physical education teachers is very good.
- Learning support assistants provide invaluable support.
- Assessment throughout the school is good.
- The school provides a good curriculum, enriched by a good range of additional activities.

The school has made good progress in addressing most of the issues identified by the last inspection report in improving the effectiveness of senior management and subject co-ordinators and in agreeing and improving lesson planning. It has maintained its overall effectiveness since that time. Although standards have fluctuated in the intervening years, they are now improved to be average overall.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 2 results

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

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

Achievement overall is **satisfactory**. However, whilst there is no significant variation in achievement between boys and girls, or between pupils learning English as an additional language and their peers, there is notable variation in the achievement between different years. Pupils currently starting Year 2 are not as far advanced as was last year's group. In lessons, achievement is better in reception and Year 1, than in Year 2. The practice of pupils retaining the same teacher for two years does not take variations in teachers' expertise into account sufficiently, resulting in the potential for standards to continue fluctuating, with inevitable impact on pupils' achievement by the end of their time in the school.

The table shows the fluctuating standards attained in national tests, which have caused the school some concern. Effective strategies have been set in place to address areas of weakness, identified through good assessment, which have resulted in significantly improved results in the 2004 tests. Although national and similar school comparisons for these are not yet available, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are likely to be average, and this is confirmed by inspection findings. Standards in information and communication technology and religious education meet expectations, and standards in music exceed expectations. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and achieve standards in line with their abilities. Children in reception receive a flying start to their education. They make good progress and achieve well, from attainment which is below expectations when they start school to meeting the goals expected for their age by the end of this first year.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **satisfactory**. Pupils enjoy school, and have good attitudes towards their work. Their behaviour and attendance are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **satisfactory** education, which has many good features. Teaching and learning overall are **satisfactory**, with good and very good teaching seen consistently in the reception classes and in music and physical education. Teaching overall is better in Year 1 than in Year 2, with a significant proportion of good teaching in the former. Assessment throughout the school is good, and gives teachers a clear picture of the achievement and progress of individual pupils. The school provides a good curriculum, which is enriched by a good range of additional activities. The school cares satisfactorily for its pupils, and the introduction reception children get to their school life is excellent. Partnership with parents, other schools and the community is good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management overall are **good**. The headteacher provides good leadership and has a very clear sense of purpose and direction for the school. Other senior staff demonstrate good leadership overall. Management is satisfactory, but with many strong features. Governance of the school is satisfactory.

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

Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciative of the education it provides for their children. Pupils like their school, enjoy their work and feel confident that adults have their best interests at heart.



## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Address the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Ensure governors play an active role in monitoring the work of the school.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure compliance with the requirement for a daily act of collective worship.
- Provide all required information in the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Overall, standards are **average** by the end of Year 2. Achievement is **satisfactory** overall; it is **good** in reception, where children make **good** progress, and better in Year 1 than in Year 2.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in national tests are improving as a result of focused attention on the development of core skills.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Variations in pupils' achievement result from differences in teachers' expectations.
- Music standards exceed expectations, and pupils achieve very well.

#### Commentary

1. The position relating to standards found at the last inspection has broadly been maintained. Children join the reception classes with overall levels of attainment below expectations for their age, particularly in core skills in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Development of these is central to the work in reception, and staff have a very secure understanding of the needs of young children and how they learn. Teaching is consequently good, and as a result, reception children achieve well and make good progress to meet the expectations for their age in the six areas of learning at the end of this important first year of school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.8 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.1 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.1 (16.9)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. In the 2003 national tests for seven year olds, standards in reading and mathematics were below average, and in writing were well below average compared with the national picture. In reading and writing, standards were well below average compared with similar schools, based on free school meals statistics, and were below average in mathematics. The school has been concerned to raise standards, which have presented a variable picture over the past four years, and has analysed results in detail in order to target areas for improvement. Strategies set in place are beginning to have a positive impact. The school is justifiably pleased with the results from the 2004 tests, which show a significant improvement in all tested areas over those in 2003. In writing, for example, results improved from an average points score of 13.1 in 2003 to 15.0 in 2004, which was just above the national average for the previous year. Based on the work pupils completed last year, inspection judgements show that standards

are average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education meet expectations and achievement is satisfactory. In music, standards exceed expectations and pupils achieve very well as a result of very good teaching from an experienced specialist teacher.

3. Whilst there is no significant variation in achievement between boys and girls, there is notable variation in the achievement between different years. Pupils currently at the beginning of Year 2 are not as far advanced as the corresponding group was last year. In lessons, achievement was better in the three Year 1 classes than in those in Year 2. Although the practice of pupils staying with the same teacher for two years enables them to settle quickly into their new class, this does not take variations in teachers' expertise into account sufficiently. There is the potential for standards to continue fluctuating, with inevitable impact on pupils' achievement by the end of their time in the school.
4. Pupils with more severe special educational needs achieve well in relation to their capability and previous levels of attainment. This is because experienced learning support assistants who are fully aware of their needs assist them as they work. Pupils with comparatively minor needs make satisfactory progress. Their needs are identified well in individual education plans but, in some classes, tasks are not adapted sufficiently for them in all subjects. The vast majority of pupils for whom English is an additional language have no difficulty in taking a full part in lessons, and achieve standards in line with their abilities. Those new to the language receive sympathetic support from dedicated learning support assistants to help them understand their work.

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

Pupils have **good** attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour, attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory** overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES:**

- Pupils like being at school, and most arrive eagerly in the morning.
- Children in reception already have very positive attitudes to school.
- Registration procedures are not followed consistently.
- All pupils, whatever their problem or difficulty, are well integrated.

### **COMMENTARY**

5. Pupils enjoy school, maintaining the position found at the last inspection, and most arrive on time or earlier in the mornings. Their attendance is satisfactory, being in line with the national average, and there are good incentives to promote attendance, and regular monitoring. However, registration procedures are not consistent between classes, and in some classes they are too casual, which can result in following up on absence taking some time. The educational welfare officer is appropriately involved where non-attendance or punctuality cause concern.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.7
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

6. Reception children are already fully familiar with their surroundings as a result of excellent induction systems, and have settled quickly and happily, and are thoroughly enjoying their first activities. Overall, pupils appreciate all the opportunities provided by the school. They have good attitudes to work, and develop as mature and confident individuals. Behaviour in the school is satisfactory overall, but in classes is largely dependent on pupils' relationship with teachers, their expectations and challenge in lessons. In reception and Year 1 classes, attitudes to learning and behaviour are at least good, and often better, and pupils try hard to please. In Year 2, this is not always the case. Outside, although play is exuberant and 'rough and ready' pushing and pulling is a part, no bullying behaviour was observed. However, in assemblies, some disrespect is evident as many pupils chatter amongst themselves rather than concentrate. Within this lively, friendly and somewhat noisy community all, whatever their individual problems or difficulties, are well integrated with, and well supported by, their peers. Pupils value their rewards, and their well-structured 'Golden Time' is very important to them. They are proud to have their names recorded in the Gold Book for good work. Sanctions are effective and there have been only three exclusions for a fixed period in the past twelve months.

### 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	224	3	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0

Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	9	0	0

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

7. Most pupils with special educational needs display positive attitudes to their work and are treated fully as equals by their peers. A small number of pupils with behavioural or emotional needs find it more difficult to relate well to their teacher or to other pupils. There are occasional instances of poor behaviour, and these inhibit the learning of the majority. Most pupils learning English as an additional language are confident, well integrated members of their classes. Those who are very new to the country and the school are warmly welcomed by their peers and the staff, and helped effectively to 'feel at home'.
8. Pupils develop good moral values and satisfactory social skills. They debate class rules sensibly and clearly understand the principles of right and wrong. They are keen to be trusted with responsibility, for example carrying messages and handing out books, and provision for their personal development is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual development is also satisfactory, although opportunities are missed in lessons and assemblies to enhance this. Their cultural development, enhanced through the Christian, Hindu and Chinese theme weeks, is good and has improved since the last inspection. Celebrations of different religious festivals help pupils to understand how other people live and worship.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall, with much that is **good**, and with **good** assessment systems. The curriculum is **good**, with a **good** range of activities out of lessons. The school provides **satisfactory** care for its pupils and has **good** links with parents.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. They are good for children in reception, and better overall for current Year 1 pupils than for those in Year 2. Assessment is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching and learning in reception classes is consistently good, and often very good.
- Very good specialist teaching in music and physical education makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning.
- Some pupils experience better teaching than others.
- Procedures for tracking pupils' progress and setting targets for their achievement are good.
- Good samples of assessed work give clear profiles of individual pupils' progress and attainment.

### Commentary

9. The quality of teaching has broadly been maintained since the last inspection, although, as then, variations in quality between Years 1 and 2 are noted. In lessons

seen during the inspection, those in reception were consistently good, with over half being very good. In Year 1 classes, three-quarters of lessons were good or better, and a third of them were very good. Within this positive picture, the contribution of specialist teachers in music and physical education is invaluable. Their teaching is never less than good, and in almost all cases is very good. As they teach all classes in the school, all pupils are given equal access to their knowledge, experience and enthusiasm.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	9 (24%)	12 (32%)	16 (42%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

10. The teamwork between teachers and assistants in the reception classes is a significant strength, with all staff being equally adept at encouraging children to think and talk about their activities, and having a clear understanding of how young children learn. As a result, reception is a lively and stimulating learning environment in which children thrive and achieve well.
11. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 plan work carefully together to ensure that all pupils in the same age group receive similar lessons and have good equal opportunities. However, teachers' varying skills and expectations lead to some pupils experiencing better teaching than others. Additionally, because pupils have the same teacher for two years, there is a noticeable variation in the quality of learning, standards and achievement between classes and between year groups. Whilst there is potential benefit for pupils working with a teacher who knows their abilities well for an extended period, the school acknowledges that this can be outweighed by less stimulating teaching and learning. Three-quarters of the satisfactory teaching was seen in Year 2, and one lesson was unsatisfactory, as it lacked sufficient challenge to enable pupils to make progress.
12. Targets in individual education plans written for pupils with special educational needs are usually precise and realistic. Occasionally, however, they are over-optimistic, so that a pupil is given identical targets in subsequent plans and appears to be making little progress. The targets in some plans are incomplete. Teachers mostly give learning support assistants the responsibility to work on the specific activities suggested in the individual education plans. They do not always ensure that other tasks take enough account of pupils' preferred ways of learning or existing knowledge and understanding.
13. Learning support assistants play an invaluable role in all classes, supporting the teacher in maintaining good behaviour, and specifically providing pupils with special educational needs, and where necessary those learning English as an additional language, with close, effective support. This is mostly within the classroom, but learning support assistants also run a range of specific programmes designed to supplement and improve pupils' core literacy and mathematical skills very well, and thus make an invaluable contribution to the quality of learning in the school.
14. Assessment procedures are good throughout the school. Comprehensive analysis of children's standards when they start school in reception, together with regular,

detailed assessments ensure that Foundation Stage staff can clearly demonstrate the progress children have made and the value added in this first important year.

15. The school has successfully developed 'user friendly', clear and agreed systems for assessment in Years 1 and 2 during the past year. As a result, pupils' progress, attainment and achievement in mathematics, English and other subjects is very clearly tracked, and information is being efficiently used as a basis for setting sensible targets for pupils to achieve. Data from tests in mathematics and English is closely analysed to show areas of weakness, and teachers plan additional work to rectify these. Procedures for assessing other subjects show clearly how pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developing. Good samples of work are collected and annotated clearly to show what levels pupils have attained in a variety of subjects. This provides clear evidence of pupils' abilities and what they need to do to improve. As a result, teachers have a good understanding of their pupils' needs and most use this to set appropriately challenging work which has a positive impact on pupils' progress. In the majority of pupils' books, marking is clear and informs teachers and parents how successfully pupils have carried out their tasks. However, there is a minority of books where work has not been so regularly or clearly assessed. A good system for pupils' self-assessment has been implemented, and pupils also make good contributions to their annual reports. The school is in the process of setting up a simple effective system for recording how pupils have achieved during lessons. When this is complete, teachers and parents will have even better information about pupils' achievement and what they need to do to improve.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum provided by the school is **good**, with **good** opportunities for enrichment. The school's accommodation and resources are **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES:**

- The curriculum is planned in an interesting and relevant way, to provide effective links between subjects.
- Themed weeks, visits and visitors and other activities enrich the curriculum well.
- Specialist teachers in physical education and music make an important contribution to overall good staffing levels.
- Learning support assistants are invaluable members of the teaching team.
- Young children in reception are prepared very well for formal school.

### **Commentary**

16. The school has maintained the good curriculum provision reported at the last inspection. The curriculum for children in reception is good and provides a very good foundation for later stages of learning. It is based securely on the recommended areas of learning for the age group, but teachers are very skilled at developing this to prepare children for the National Curriculum. The curriculum provided by the school is good overall, and includes all statutory requirements, including personal, social and health education. Sex education and education about drugs misuse are effectively taught as part of topics. These good, cross-curricular topics are planned on a two-year cycle to prevent repetition, and to make learning interesting, relevant and fun. The school strives successfully to be fully inclusive and takes care that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, have equal opportunities during the school day.

17. Interesting themed weeks, such as Book Week, Chinese Art Week and Christian and Hindu weeks in religious education, enhance the curriculum effectively. As well as making a good contribution to the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding, these themed weeks are clearly thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. Good opportunities are taken to enrich the curriculum, such as the very good use of high quality music and physical education specialists, providing pupils with interesting and stimulating lessons, which enable them to make good progress. Many topics start with relevant visits or visitors which provide an imaginative stimulus and make a very positive contribution to pupils' understanding and learning, for example, the visit to Wickham in geography and the 'Bee Man' in science. 'Golden Time' combines encouragement and reward for good behaviour with a wide range of interesting activities that complement the curriculum, such as sewing and cooking. Good links with the neighbouring Junior School exist as teachers plan, teach and assess work for a transition topic together. This provides valuable preparation for the pupils' next stage of learning as well as being a good opportunity for liaison between the schools.
18. The school has an ample number of staff with a suitable range of teaching experience to meet the needs of the curriculum. There is also a good number of experienced and well qualified learning support assistants, who are a significant asset to the school and instrumental in helping raise the standards of groups of pupils such as those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. Accommodation is good. It is bright, clean and well maintained, providing a good environment for learning. The building provides ample room for teaching, including an ICT room, a music room, a separate dining room and a library. The playgrounds are adequate although the surfaces would benefit from levelling, where tree roots are breaking through, and the markings for games are rather faded. There is no grassed area, although the school does visit the local park for some activities. Resources are good overall. They contribute well to the development of children in the reception, although they are not always used as well as they might be with some older pupils. Resources are generally well stored in classrooms, but storage space in the school is at a premium and there are areas that have a somewhat cluttered appearance. The library has a good range of books, which are of good quality and appealing for young pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school's procedures to promote the health, welfare and safety of pupils are **satisfactory**. Consultation with pupils and setting targets for them are **satisfactory**.

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

- The school has excellent induction procedures for the youngest children.
- Some policies and procedures are not followed rigorously enough.
- Staff knowledge of pupils and their circumstances is good.

### **Commentary**

19. The school has maintained the position found at the last inspection in its care for the health and welfare of pupils. Health and safety are high priorities for the school, with regular risk assessments carried out, and good health and safety practice expected. However, more rigour is needed to ensure agreed procedures are adhered to. The school, now aware of new child protection regulations, has arranged training for this half-term in order to comply with these, and will amend the draft policy in the near future. Trained learning support assistants deal well with incidents requiring first-aid



and record them. The school was given a list of health and safety matters noted during the inspection.

20. Good pastoral care and relationships ensure pupils are happy to be in school, and this is particularly evident in the youngest classes. As a result of teachers' home visits and their three taster sessions, reception children are already fully familiar with their surroundings and settle quickly and happily. Entry is carefully organised in small groups, and on their first day, no tears or tantrums were seen, indeed all of the children were taking a lively interest in their new surroundings and enjoying their first games, music and other lessons.
21. Consultation with pupils is largely informal, but the school and pupils are pleased with the result of the 'draw and write' trial identifying pupils' ideas and feelings. Monitoring of pupils' work is good, and targets inside most literacy and numeracy books, together with shared learning objectives, ensure parent, teacher and child know what has to be done.
22. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by a generous number of well-qualified and mostly experienced learning support assistants. The school makes good use of the services of external agencies to provide additional expertise. Most of the pupils learning English as an additional language have no problem in taking a full part in school life. The very few who are new to the country are supported very well by dedicated learning support assistants. The local education authority EMAS staff are effective in supporting Chinese- and Bengali-speaking children, but less so in relation to minority languages, such as the Arabic dialects.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's links with parents are **good**, as they are with other schools and with the local community.

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

- Overall, information for parents is good, although the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents between them do not contain all statutory information.
- Good links with the junior school ensure smooth transition.

### **Commentary**

23. The school tries very hard to meet parents' needs, and has good relationships with them, broadly maintaining the position at the last inspection. Family literacy and numeracy group workshops are arranged, and working parents in particular are pleased with the before- and after-school clubs facilitated by the school. Parents appreciate the values underpinning the school's philosophy. Although few are able to help during the day, their attendance at consultation evenings is 100 per cent. Parents feel comfortable approaching staff if they have concerns. The 'Friends Association', organised by a small core of parents who are ably assisted by an army of willing helpers, run many successful fund-raising events, which family and the local community enjoy, and for which local shops provide raffle prizes, strengthening community links.
24. Through curriculum and other newsletters, parents are kept well informed about what is happening at school and when special events are due. However, whilst interesting and containing useful data, neither the governors' annual report nor the prospectus contains all the necessary statutory information, which was also noted in the last

inspection report. Parents like children's annual reports, detailing individual achievement, National Curriculum levels reached, and recording their children's views on what they have done and need to do. The school seeks to work in partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs, and individual education plans written for these pupils include a specific role for parents, although the school reports that some find it difficult to provide much support. However, the school does not ask parents to sign the plan it has negotiated with them, as a way of confirming that they agree to assist the school. Parents whose children are learning English as an additional language are appropriately involved and are well supported by specialist staff. Translations are available should parents need such help, and friendly office staff are always ready to answer any queries.

25. Good links with playgroups and with the junior school next door ensure continuity for pupils through the regular exchange of information. Infant and junior headteachers meet monthly and teachers have shared joint training days. Both infant and junior school pupils attend the before- and after-school clubs, and they and their parents very much appreciate the facility. Pupils also appreciate the opportunity to use the facilities of the local secondary school, for example, to experiment with clay. Students enjoy their work placements so much at the infant school that some decide to go on and train as teachers.
26. Good community links include visits by representatives of the church, police, medical, ambulance and fire services, who talk about their jobs and remind pupils of dangers outside their school community. As a result of the junior school's proximity and resultant familiarity, and the very useful Year 2/3 transition units, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **good**. The headteacher provides a **good** lead and sense of purpose for the school. Other senior staff demonstrate **good** leadership roles overall. Management is **satisfactory** but with many strong features. Governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher is a strong leader, managing change effectively and developing the roles of senior staff well.
- There is good commitment to raising standards in core literacy and mathematical skills and promoting a broad curriculum.
- The headteacher monitors teaching and learning well, but some subject leaders' monitoring of teaching is limited.
- The deployment of class teachers does not ensure all pupils are taught equally well.
- The governors' monitoring of the implementation of school policies is not sufficient.
- Financial administration by governors, headteacher and administrative staff is efficient.

### Commentary

27. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has very clear ideas about the future direction of the school and has communicated these successfully to most of her staff. She has put in place practical and realistic plans to raise standards, particularly in literacy and mathematics, and is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This is because she monitors the work of the school thoroughly, spending two weeks in each of the three age groups, observing teaching, talking to pupils and

examining their work. Detailed feedback is then given to teachers, plans are made to improve areas of weakness, and future performance management targets for individual teachers are identified. However, not all subject leaders have sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching across the school themselves to enable them to understand where strengths and weaknesses lie.

28. At the previous inspection, it was noted that the roles and responsibilities of senior staff were not well defined. The headteacher has been particularly successful in addressing this deficiency. The three senior members of staff, including the deputy headteacher, now have clearly defined responsibilities. Together with the headteacher, they steer the work of the school well and provide very good role models for other staff and pupils. In an annual rotation, one of the three has no class of her own, acting instead in a supportive role. This is an effective use of time and of the teachers' expertise. This year it is enabling two newly-qualified teachers to benefit from excellent levels of support and other teachers to teach smaller groups in ICT, French or Spanish lessons. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good, resulting in excellent procedures for the induction of new children and consistently good and very good teaching, so that children make an excellent start to their education.
29. A strong focus on raising standards in literacy and mathematics is evident in the school's improvement plan. The school evaluates its performance clearly and honestly, indicating areas in which less success is achieved. It has identified the importance of developing pupils' independence, of using information derived from tracking their progress more effectively and of improving aspects of teaching. These three elements permeate action plans for individual subject areas. The school has adopted an innovative approach to ensuring that it provides an effective curriculum. It has identified a teacher to act as 'excellence' leader, with the responsibility of ensuring high standards and good progression across the whole curriculum, and another as 'enjoyment' leader, to ensure that visits to places of interest and visitors to the school are used well to maximise pupils' learning.
30. There are many strong features in the headteacher's management of the school. The results of assessment are analysed thoroughly and action is taken promptly to improve areas of weakness. The headteacher has acted well to ensure that teachers' workloads do not become excessive. Good use is made of the expertise of part-time staff, for example in teaching music throughout the school, and the school employs an external coach to teach physical education. This provides time for teachers to undertake other tasks and reduces the need to prepare lessons in two subjects. It also ensures that pupils receive good quality teaching and a clear progression in both subjects. However, the teacher co-ordinating special educational needs has several other significant responsibilities, and she does not have sufficient time to monitor the provision for and progress of pupils with special needs as well as her other responsibilities. One result is that documentation is often incomplete or out-dated.
31. The decision for pupils to remain with the same teacher for their two years from ages 5 to 7 has some positive features. It enables them to settle quickly into Year 2 with a familiar teacher who knows the level they have reached. However, the school has not taken variations in teachers' expertise sufficiently into account. Although there is a good correspondence between the programmes in parallel classes because teachers plan together, their varying skills and expectations mean that some pupils experience better teaching than others for the whole of this lengthy period. This has the potential to result in fluctuating standards and achievement by the end of pupils' time in the school.

32. Most members of the governing body have been appointed relatively recently. They have engaged readily in a steep learning curve and work hard to support the work of the school. They challenge existing practices well and suggest improvements, but have not yet adopted an active role in setting the strategic direction of the school. Some policies they have approved fail to reflect up-to-date practice, and there are gaps in the information that they are required to provide to parents. Their role in monitoring the work of the school requires improvement. They do not check closely enough that the policies they have approved are fully implemented within the school, such as that in relation to the provision of a daily act of collective worship.

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR APRIL 2003 TO MARCH 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	700 294	Balance from previous year	3 113
Total expenditure	716 989	Balance carried forward to the next	(13 582)
Expenditure per pupil	2 768		

33. Financial resources are managed efficiently. The overspend in the last financial year arose as a result of falling rolls, but the situation has now stabilised through prudent management. The finance committee of the governing body works closely with the headteacher and the school's administrative staff to ensure that money is spent wisely with best value principles appropriately taken into account, and that accounting procedures are effective. The school put into effect rapid improvements to those procedures and practices found to be incorrect in the most recent external audit.

## 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 **good**.

#### MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES:

- Excellent induction procedures ensure children start school confidently and eagerly.
- Children achieve well and make good progress to reach expected standards from attainment on entry which is below expectations.
- Highly effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants results in consistently good and very good teaching and learning.
- The manager provides very good leadership and management.
- The Foundation Stage environment is rich, and matched very well to the needs of these young children through comprehensive and detailed assessment.

#### Commentary

34. At the time of the inspection, children in reception were experiencing their first half days of school, with many observations being of the very first sessions for different groups. Judgements relating to overall standards and achievement in relation to the early learning goals, therefore, are based on the available evidence from children who were in reception last year. These children entered school with below average attainment, being well below in relation to communication, language and literacy, but closer to expectations in mathematical development. It is clear from the evidence, including comprehensive and detailed assessment, that children made good progress and achieved well over the year, through a range of interesting and interrelated activities, with a strong emphasis on the core skills in **communication, language and literacy** and **mathematical development**. In these important areas of learning, almost all children were meeting the early learning goals by the end of the year.
35. Provision for children's **personal, social and emotional development** has a very high priority, and is very good. It is a measure of the excellent induction procedures that children came happily into their new environment and there were no tears! Teachers have already made a careful analysis of the assessments from pre-school providers, as well as home visits, so that they have a clear knowledge of the needs and abilities of their new charges. This information shows that attainment on entry is again below average in core skill areas. The majority of sessions seen during the inspection were focused on settling the children into their new environment and familiarising them with the routines and expectations. Morning sessions for the oldest children and afternoon sessions for those with spring and summer birthdays were characterised by warm, welcoming relationships and careful involvement of all children in all available activities. Teaching by both class teachers and learning support assistants was consistently good, and children responded positively and enthusiastically to everything on offer. Already, they are beginning to learn where things are kept, tidy up efficiently ready for the next activity and change with reasonable independence for physical activity. The confident and highly effective teamwork between all working in the reception classes was clearly evident as shared responsibility for 'playground', 'toilet' and 'tour of the school' duties kept everyone busy! From last year's evidence, children are meeting the goals in this area of learning.

36. Three very good lessons with direct teaching were seen. In the ICT suite, children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** was developed very effectively, as they were encouraged to explore the functions of a graphics program, which they did with impressive skill. Reception children benefit to the same extent as the rest of the school from the expertise and enthusiasm of specialist teachers in music and games. Children's **physical development** was enhanced by a very good games session, in which the sports coach established very good relationships with the children and very effectively shared his enthusiasm so that they concentrated and achieved very well. Equally, very good relationships were quickly established with the specialist music teacher, and in a very good **creative development** session, children sang familiar songs with gusto and reasonable tunefulness! Evidence from the work done by children in reception last year shows attainment in these three areas of learning to be meeting expectations in the early learning goals.
37. The good provision for reception children noted in the last inspection has been maintained. Despite the very early stage in the term, it is abundantly clear that the reception environment is a rich and stimulating one in which children thrive. All staff are equally adept at interacting with children as they work, questioning effectively and encouraging children very well to think and talk about what they are doing. Provision is led and managed very well by an experienced and enthusiastic leader, who values highly all her colleagues and the cohesive teamwork which exists between the three reception classes. Work is planned around all six areas of learning in interesting topics, which cover all required elements in an interesting and stimulating way.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

#### Modern Foreign Languages

38. The school has just begun to provide **French** and **Spanish** to Years 1 and 2 respectively, but as the week of the inspection saw the first session in both age groups, it is too early to judge provision, teaching and learning or standards. Lessons are based appropriately on a commercial scheme specifically designed for very young children. In both sessions seen, pupils were engrossed in watching the cartoon characters, although the quality of spoken language in the Spanish programme was not as good as in the French one. At the end of both, pupils were given the key vocabulary 'hello' and 'thank you' in each language to practise for the following week, and this was heard in corridors and classrooms throughout the following days!

#### English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils achieve well in reading, speaking and listening.
- Standards are not high enough in writing.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- Marking does not always give pupils a clear idea of how well they are doing or how they can improve.
- Resources to teach English are good, but books are not prominently displayed in classrooms and around the school.

## Commentary

39. Results in the 2004 national tests showed a considerable improvement on those of 2003, when standards in reading were below average and in writing well below average. In 2004, pupils in Year 2 are likely to have attained average standards in reading and writing, both when compared with all schools and when compared with similar schools. This represents good achievement as these pupils entered the school with below average skills in literacy. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress with the help of experienced learning support assistants. Most pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers. Those new to learning English receive effective support and make good progress in language acquisition. Standards across the school are broadly similar to those at the time of the last inspection, when they were average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Provision has been maintained since the last inspection.
40. Pupils currently at the beginning of Year 2, however, are not as far advanced as the corresponding group last year. Nevertheless, they are likely to reach average levels in reading, speaking and listening by the end of Year 2. Through its good systems of assessment, the school is aware of the difficulties some pupils are experiencing and has plans to provide extra support where necessary. In writing, attainment is likely to remain below average because a large group of pupils have made only limited progress through Year 1 and so have too much to catch up in Year 2. Overall, the achievement of pupils in Year 2 is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is the most significant factor explaining variations between the results of successive cohorts.
41. Pupils enter Year 1 with average speaking and listening skills. By Year 2, they use clear voices to speak in complete sentences, listen attentively to their teacher and usually to other pupils. Opportunities to develop these aspects of English are too variable. In some classes, for example, teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to discuss their answers in pairs before responding to a question, but in others, this strategy is rare. The school has no scheme of work to ensure pupils receive consistent teaching in this area, but intends to make improvements using new national guidance.
42. The teaching of reading is more consistent. All teachers give good attention to this aspect, ensuring that pupils acquire good skills in phonics and read regularly at school and at home. As a result, pupils read confidently, often with good expression. The school has good resources for reading, including a large collection of fiction and non-fiction 'big books' and a well-stocked library. Annual Book Weeks, with visiting authors, enhance pupils' appreciation of literature effectively. There are areas in each classroom for pupils to 'curl up with a book'. However, books are not displayed attractively in these areas, nor are specific authors featured, to promote greater enthusiasm for books.
43. The school has worked hard to improve the standard of writing. To help pupils structure their work and improve its content, it has successfully introduced features such as the 'story mountain'. As a result, these aspects of writing are relatively strong. Pupils are taught to join letters early in their school career. By the end of Year 2, many have developed a reasonably fluent, joined style. Others, however, show little progress in handwriting. It is in pupils' writing that the variation in the quality of teaching is most apparent, because teachers' expectations are too variable.
44. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, and much in Year 1 is good. Throughout the school, teachers manage their classes well. Although there are occasional

instances of unacceptable behaviour, these are dealt with in such a way that delays to learning are minimal. In good lessons, teachers use resources effectively to interest pupils and give very clear teaching input. Teachers' skills in assessing the levels their pupils have reached are variable but improving. Weaker features sometimes present are a failure to match tasks well to the level reached by individual pupils and expectations that are too low about the quality or quantity of work. Thus, some lower-attaining pupils struggle with unsuitable and often uninspiring tasks whilst other pupils fail to improve the presentation of their work. Marking is insufficiently rigorous. It does not tell pupils what they have achieved or how they can improve, nor does it provide strong motivation for them to do so.

45. Leadership and management by the co-ordinator are good. She has a good knowledge of the subject's strengths and weaknesses and keeps a close eye on the attainment of pupils. Pupils' performance is monitored effectively through the analysis of data, examination of pupils' work and direct observation of teaching.

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

46. The school is developing this aspect well. Opportunities are taken to use literacy skills in a wide range of subjects. Teachers help to increase relevance by introducing stimuli from other subject areas into the daily literacy hour. For example, during the inspection, a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 2 took place in a local park, linking scientific observation with the development of vocabulary.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

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

- The co-ordinator is a good role model and leader.
- There are very good resources.
- Many pupils' limited mathematical vocabulary and ability to express themselves has a negative impact on their achievement.

## **COMMENTARY**

47. Results from the 2004 national tests in mathematics show a good improvement in the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2B and above when compared to that attained in 2003, when standards were below average. These results, and evidence from last year's work, show that standards in mathematics are average by the end of Year 2 and, overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This appears to be a decline since the last inspection report, when standards were judged above average. National test results over the past four years, however, have varied. Assessments at the end of Year 1 for current Year 2 pupils indicate that they will achieve average standards at the end of the school year. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants. As a result, they make sound progress and attain standards in line with their capabilities.



48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, and that seen in Year 1 was good or very good. The very good teaching is well organised, brisk, and makes good use of mathematical resources. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work and make learning fun. As a result, pupils rise to the challenges set and enjoy their work, for example, making up and recording their own sums. However, in some classes in Year 2, pupils sit for too long on the carpet and the slower pace of lessons allows their concentration to lapse and they become too noisy. This restricts their progress. All teachers plan work together to ensure that pupils of the same age-group receive the same mathematical topics. The co-ordinator monitors the curriculum closely to ensure that a broad range of mathematical activities are provided. Assessments are carefully analysed to identify weaknesses in attainment. As a result, the school is fully aware that many pupils' ability to express their mathematical ideas and thinking are not well developed, and this has become a focus for action in mathematics. Assessment procedures in mathematics are good and enable teachers to track pupils' progress and set targets for their future attainment. Pupils are becoming involved in assessing their own learning and they are beginning to use systems such as 'traffic lights' to say whether they succeeded or not in their task.
49. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and is fully aware of the strengths and weakness in the subject. She is a very good role model for the rest of the staff, which places her in a strong position to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. Resources are very good and well organised in most classrooms. However, the lack of storage space in the school makes some areas seem a little cluttered.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. Displays of mathematical vocabulary indicate that teachers plan to take opportunities to reinforce it whenever they can as topics progress. Similarly, teachers are beginning to use every opportunity, such as register time, to pose simple mental arithmetic problems. However, because of the early stage of the school year, there were few examples of mathematics being used across the curriculum to be able securely to judge this aspect.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils gain satisfactory levels of knowledge and understanding, but there are insufficient opportunities to develop practical skills.
- Teachers link work in science well to that in other subjects.
- Higher-attaining pupils are not provided with enough activities at a higher level to enable them to progress well.

## Commentary

51. Standards in science are average by the end of Year 2, as they were at the last inspection. Pupils have acquired satisfactory knowledge of life processes, materials and physical processes. However, their ability to use and apply the science they learn is below that expected. This is because there is insufficient provision for this aspect. It was noted at the previous inspection that pupils' progress was limited by a lack of investigative activities, and this remains true. A scrutiny of pupils' work reveals very few such activities, but indicates that pupils are beginning to develop acceptable recording procedures. Most classrooms include science displays, but do not include interactive elements to enable pupils to explore or seek the answers to carefully posed questions.
52. Pupils' overall achievement through the two infant years is satisfactory. However, the achievement of some higher- and lower-attaining pupils is not as good as it might be. This is because teachers nearly always provide identical activities for every pupil in the class. They do not use the information they have acquired through assessment to provide more challenging work for higher-attaining pupils. Occasionally lower-attaining pupils struggle with activities that are too difficult. Where, for example, they have limited reading skills, their level of involvement in mixed-ability groups working together on a task is low.
53. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Most teachers provide a good range of interesting activities to maintain the interest of pupils. These often incorporate other areas of the curriculum, such as literacy or art. For example, work on sound in the Year 1 classes built well upon pupils' experiences in a preceding music lesson. Teaching input is usually clear, and pupils are often engaged successfully in useful discussions that advance their learning well. However, some lessons are uninspiring and fail to hold pupils' attention, and the school is aware of the potential to use recently installed interactive whiteboards to provide more stimulating resources. One problem noted in the Year 2 classes related to timetabling – because all three classes have science lessons at the same time, resources are too thinly spread, and consequently one class lacked these.
54. In the temporary absence of the science co-ordinator, the subject is being led and managed satisfactorily by the headteacher. The co-ordinator monitors the subject well, ensuring that pupils build steadily upon their knowledge and understanding, and that pupils in parallel classes receive an equivalent programme of study.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good leadership and management ensure that ICT is fully embedded in the curriculum.
- The computer suite is not used to maximum effect, which is a wasted resource.
- The installation of interactive whiteboards in all classes means resources are good overall.

## Commentary

55. Planning and evidence from work completed last year show all aspects of the subject are covered fully and that standards in ICT meet expectations by the end of Year 2. This maintains the position reported at the last inspection, and in fact represents an improvement, since expectations have changed significantly since that time. Pupils enjoy using computers, and have a satisfactory understanding of the value of ICT to support their learning. They work hard and concentrate well in sessions in the suite. All pupils have equal access to these sessions, and those learning English as an additional language are supported sympathetically, so that they achieve as well as their peers. Specific programs are used appropriately to support learning for pupils with special educational needs in core literacy and mathematical skills. As a result, all pupils achieve satisfactorily and make steady progress. However, sessions in the suite only take place once every three weeks. These lessons are designed to promote skills development, in line with the school's policy. Planned activities using classroom computers then support these skills and extend them to work in different subjects. However, this does mean that the suite is not fully utilised, which is a waste of a valuable resource, and means that the development of pupils' skills is dependent on individual teachers facilitating classroom use.
56. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Sessions in the suite are well planned and paced, and the quality of learning is positive as a result. Computers in the classrooms are used satisfactorily, but some teachers admit that they do not always maximise this potential. All teachers are eager to explore the potential of the interactive whiteboards which were installed in all classrooms over the summer holidays, with training in the use of these planned in the near future. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic and experienced co-ordinator. She has worked hard to improve the level of resources and their use, and to inspire her colleagues with enthusiasm for ICT, with marked success. Assessment procedures provide teachers and the co-ordinator with a clear picture of individual pupils' attainment and achievement.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. The school has made good efforts to ensure pupils use their ICT skills to support work in subjects across the curriculum. Data-handling, for example, is used effectively to produce graphs, such as of traffic surveys, to support work in mathematics, science and geography. In history, pupils in Year 2 have used the internet to find information about Florence Nightingale, and edited text about Guy Fawkes, supporting both literacy skills and historical knowledge.

## HUMANITIES

58. There was insufficient evidence during the inspection to make secure judgements about provision, pupils' achievements or the quality of teaching and learning in either **geography** or **history**. Topics in the two subjects are taught alternately; evidence from planning indicates that all requirements are met and that standards are likely to meet expectations. Evidence from talking to pupils and an examination of their work indicates clearly that pupils are interested in both subjects. Visits to local places of interest make an important contribution to the development of pupils' geographical skills as they investigate the local environment and shopping areas and compare these to a different, nearby locality. Good use is made of local historical connections to learn about famous people in the past, such as Nelson.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum.
- Some teaching is weak because it lacks stimulation.

## COMMENTARY

59. Standards in religious education meet expectations, which maintains the position at the last inspection. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus, which the co-ordinator has adapted to meet pupils' needs and to give sound guidance and support to other teachers. In most classes, teachers work hard to ensure boys and girls of all abilities are fully included in discussions, achieve satisfactorily and make satisfactory progress.
60. Teaching in religious education is satisfactory overall, but ranges from good to unsatisfactory. Most teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject and use this to explain concepts such as symbols in a way in which their pupils can understand. Good lessons are interesting, and use a wide range of resources and strategies to include all pupils and encourage them to contribute ideas. In lively lessons, pupils have a good attitude towards their work. They are interested and are beginning to share ideas with one another confidently. As a result, they make good progress. However, teaching for some older pupils is weak, because it is not interesting, challenging or lively. As a result, pupils are not all fully involved or stimulated enough to join in and, consequently, they make little progress.
61. The school makes good use of themed weeks, visits and visitors to give pupils first-hand experience of various religious beliefs, for example, visits to a church for a baptism during Christian week, and the visit of Hindu dancers and musicians during Hindu week. These occasions also make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and their understanding of the need to show respect for others. There is a good range of books and artefacts to support work in religious education, but they are not always used efficiently in lessons. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She is a good role model for other teachers and has a very clear understanding of how religious education can be developed in the school.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. No teaching in art and design or design and technology took place during the inspection week, so it is not possible to judge provision in either subject. **Art and design** work on display shows pupils reach expected standards, using a good range of media, such as paint, pastel and fabric, to produce lively and attractive results in both two- and three-dimensions. The work produced during the 'Chinese Art Week', for example, is colourful and vibrant, and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development. All pupils participated in the project, with Year 1 creating large-scale collages of Chinese characters and tissue lanterns strung across the hall, and Year 2 retelling the story of the Willow Pattern Plate and making good attempts at Chinese calligraphy.

63. With less evidence of work in **design and technology**, it is not possible to judge standards, and the co-ordinator acknowledges the subject is less well developed than art and design. However, teachers' planning covers all elements of the subject satisfactorily. Photographic evidence shows pupils' enjoyment of different projects, such as designing and making mini-beasts in Year 1 and fruit salads and bridges in Year 2. These projects are linked effectively to work in other subjects, such as science, to make learning relevant.
64. The two lessons observed in **physical education** were insufficient to judge standards and achievement or the overall quality of teaching and learning. Both were games lessons taught by a sports coach who works regularly in the school, teaching all classes across the age-groups. His expertise and enthusiasm enable him to provide consistently high-quality lessons. Although class teachers were not present at these lessons during the inspection, there is the potential to enhance all teachers' expertise through observation of this good and very good teaching. The school is strongly committed to improving standards in physical education. It has ensured adequate time for the subject, has already gained an Artsmark Silver Award and intends to develop its dance provision to gain a higher award.

## MUSIC

Provision in music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The expertise of the specialist music teacher is a significant asset to the school.
- Teaching and learning are consistently very good.
- Music is very effectively linked to other curriculum areas, and enriched by many additional activities.

### Commentary

65. At this very early stage in the term, standards in music are meeting expectations, but are set to exceed expectations by the end of the year, which maintains the position found at the last inspection. This is because of the very good teaching by the part-time specialist music teacher, who leads and manages the subject and teaches throughout the school. Her expertise and infectious enthusiasm motivate the pupils, who work hard to meet her expectations and achieve very well as a result. Pupils sing tunefully from memory, and energetically add actions to their singing in assemblies and lessons. They competently match sound patterns and follow the teacher's lead closely, enjoying the opportunity to be the 'leader' as well. Very effective use of learning support assistants and of praise and encouragement ensures all pupils participate fully, but standards are not allowed to slip.
66. Very good leadership and management result from the co-ordinator's long association with the school and her very high expectations. She has devised her own scheme to encompass all elements of the curriculum and meet the needs of the school. She liaises closely with class teachers so that songs and music-making match other class topics. She has many contacts in the area and makes full use of these to enhance pupils' experience and enjoyment. During the inspection, for example, an invited musician provided a very good contribution to the Year 1 science topic on sound. Last term, during the Year 2 topic on the Victorian seaside, pupils thoroughly enjoyed listening to brass band music in the reconstructed bandstand! Pupils regularly participate in the Portsmouth Music Festival. The school has good

resources, including a range of music and instruments from different cultures, which are used well to promote pupils' cultural understanding.

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

67. Personal, social and health education, including citizenship is delivered through the PATHs programme, which is an American scheme, initiated by the local education authority. All classes have sessions timetabled, but insufficient lessons in this aspect of the school's work were seen to be able to judge provision securely. However, whilst staff know pupils well, value their opinions and views, and give them plenty of opportunities to take responsibility, their personal development is neither formally planned nor monitored. The co-ordinator agrees that both policy and effectiveness are due for review, and a new initiative related to Healthy Schools is in the planning stage. She is, however, not currently monitoring how lessons are taught to check quality and consistency. The school received the Healthy Schools Award in 2001, and pupils are fully aware of the value of drinking water and eating fruit.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

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

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3

The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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