

INSPECTION REPORT

PORTSLADE INFANT SCHOOL

Portslade, Brighton

LEA area: Brighton and Hove

Unique reference number: 114413

Headteacher: Mrs J Langthorne

Lead inspector: Mrs M Gough

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th September 2004

Inspection number: 267507

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 –7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	342
School address:	Locks Hill Portslade Brighton East Sussex
Postcode:	BN41 2LA
Telephone number:	01273 418850
Fax number:	01273 430240
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs V Snowden
Date of previous inspection:	February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the outskirts of Brighton and Hove and serves the local area. The pupils' backgrounds are mixed, but the area has been designated within the LEA as one of high social deprivation. There are currently three hundred and forty two pupils on roll between the ages of four and seven. The majority of pupils are of white ethnicity, but about fifty of the pupils are from other ethnic groups. Eleven pupils have English as an additional language, and a small number of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Eighty nine pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. This represents 26% of the school population and is above average. Five pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The school has received a number of awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools Award, the Investors in People Award and an ECO Bronze Award. The children's attainment when they start school is well below the level expected for their age, and their language skills are often poor.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22361	Mrs M Gough	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, music, physical education, English as an additional language
16472	Mrs C Stormonth	Lay inspector	
19830	Mr G Storer	Team inspector	Mathematics, religious education, art and design, special educational needs
16403	Mr N Sherman	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology, design and technology
20893	Mr D Curtis	Team inspector	Science, geography, history, personal, social and health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited

102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school that has some excellent features to its work. Standards are at the expected level in reading, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave school at the age of seven, although standards in writing and speaking continue to be below average. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well. Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. Leadership and management are good overall, and the headteacher's leadership is very good. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Although pupils achieve well, because of their low starting point, standards in writing and speaking are still below the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, enabling these pupils to make very good progress towards their individual targets.
- Teaching is good, enabling all groups of pupils to achieve well, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
- The school provides excellent levels of care and guidance for the pupils, and has developed excellent links with parents.
- The school provides a very good range of additional learning experiences, which significantly enhance the pupils' personal and social development.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Behaviour is good, and pupils have very positive attitudes to work and to school.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school and enjoys the support of a hard-working and committed staff and a very effective governing body.
- Attendance is poor.
- Although the Key Stage 1 curriculum is satisfactory, there is too much variation in the time allocated to the different subjects from class to class.
- In science and the foundation subjects, there is no whole-school system for assessing, tracking and monitoring the pupils' progress and attainment.

The school has improved well since the last inspection. Standards in mathematics and science have improved, and the school has worked hard to raise standards in English. The many strengths described in the last report have been maintained and, in some areas, further improved. There has been excellent improvement in terms of the accommodation. Although some improvements have been made, there is still more to be done in developing assessment systems in the foundation subjects.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 2 results

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

*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.*

Overall, the pupils' attainment is at the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1 in most subjects. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve **well**.

On the basis of the 2004 end of Key Stage 1 national test results, the pupils' attainment is in line with the national average in reading and mathematics and below the national average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is well above average in reading, above average in mathematics and average in writing. The teacher assessments for science show that the pupils' attainment is well below the national average, and that their performance in comparison with similar schools is well below average.

The inspection findings indicate that the pupils' attainment in reading, mathematics and science is in line with national expectations, and that in writing and speaking their attainment is below national expectations. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress from their sometimes very low starting points. The discrepancy between the inspection findings and the teacher assessments in science reflects the recent improvements that have taken place.

In information and communication technology, physical education, and geography, the pupils attain the expected level by the end of Key Stage 1, and achieve well. In religious education, the pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and their achievement is good. In music, pupils achieve well, and their attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2.

The children's attainment on entry to school is well below the expected level, and their language skills are often poor. Standards at the end of the Reception year are below the expected level in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, and well below the expected level in communication, language and literacy. In creative development and physical development the children's attainment is at the expected level for their age, and in personal, social and emotional development, the children attain beyond the expected level. Reception children make good progress and achieve well, although the youngest children who have only one full-time term in school before transferring to Year 1, are not able to cover the same amount of work as older Reception children who have benefited from a full year of full-time education before starting Year 1.

Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning are very good. The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. Attendance is poor but is rapidly improving. Punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education for pupils of all ages. Teaching and learning are **good**, and assessment is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory for Key Stage 1 pupils and good for children in the Foundation Stage. The school is very effective in the way in which it enriches pupils' learning. The accommodation and resources are good. The school provides excellent levels care for pupils, is very effective in the way in which it seeks their views, and supports and guides them well. Links with parents are excellent, links with the community are good, and links with other schools are very good. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and good provision for pupils with English as an additional language.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher provides very good leadership, and is very well supported by a very competent deputy headteacher. The governing body is very good, and takes an active role in school development and in monitoring the school's work. The leadership by subject co-ordinators and other key staff is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and are very appreciative of its 'open-door' policy. They are welcome and frequent visitors. Pupils speak very highly of their teachers and of the activities that are provided for them and are very keen to come to school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue to improve overall standards in writing and speaking;
- improve the rate of whole-school attendance;
- devise and implement a whole-school system for assessing, tracking and monitoring pupils' progress and attainment in science and the foundation¹ subjects;
- ensure that there is more balance in the curriculum for Key Stage 1 pupils.

¹ Foundation subjects are subjects other than English, mathematics and science

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are broadly **in line** with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve **well**, often from a low starting point.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school caters well for pupils of different abilities, enabling them to achieve well.
- There has been good improvement in standards in recent years, although there is still more to be done in terms of raising standards in speaking and writing.
- The provision for special educational needs is very good, enabling these pupils to make very good progress towards their individual targets.
- The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good, and these pupils often attain similar standards to their classmates by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Standards in music are above the nationally expected level by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Pupils make good use of cross-curricular skills of literacy and numeracy in their work in other subjects.

Commentary

1. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well, often from very low starting points. The school has worked hard to raise standards over recent years, and has been most successful in mathematics and science. Although standards in reading are rising well, standards in writing and speaking are still poor for some pupils, and overall are below national expectations. The test results do not always show the improvement in standards because of sometimes significant differences between the natural ability of the pupils in the different cohorts. The school's tracking shows that the youngest pupils, who have only had one full-time term in Reception prior to transferring to Year 1, typically do not perform as well as the older pupils, although they make good progress and achieve well in relation to their ability. Although there is no significant difference between the achievement of the boys and girls, there is a difference in their attainment as demonstrated by the 2004 national test results. This is because a higher percentage of boys than girls had special educational needs, and, the majority of the youngest children were boys.

Foundation Stage

2. The children's attainment when they join the Reception classes is well below the expected level overall, and their language skills are often poor. By the end of the Reception year, their attainment is well below the expected level in communication, language and literacy, below the expected level in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, at the expected level in physical development and creative development, and above the expected level in personal, social and emotional development. Although children of all abilities achieve well across all areas of learning, the attainment of the older children is often better than that of the youngest children because they have had more full-time experience of school and of learning.
3. The school is very supportive of children with special educational needs, and is quick to identify them so that their needs can be met. As a result, these children achieve

well, and often only need some short-term intervention and support. Children with English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates, and attain similar standards. They benefit from the very structured approach to teaching phonics and from the regular opportunities to take part in good quality discussions with their teachers and classmates.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average points score in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.59 (14.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.48 (13.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.13 (16.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 104 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The 2004 test results show that the pupils' attainment is in line with the national average in reading and mathematics and below the national average in writing. The teacher assessments for science show that the pupils' attainment is well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools the pupils' performance is well above average in reading, above average in mathematics average in writing, and well below average in science.
5. The inspection findings show that standards in reading, mathematics and science are in line with national expectations, and that standards in writing and speaking are below national expectations. In mathematics, there has been steady improvement in recent years with the school effectively meeting the needs of the lowest attaining pupils, and successfully challenging the highest attaining pupils. The school has effectively improved standards in reading, but is still finding ways of raising standards in writing and speaking, which continue to be below average. Recent improvements in science, including a more focused approach to investigative work, account for the discrepancy between the inspection findings and the 2004 teacher assessments. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make good use of cross-curricular skills of literacy and numeracy and satisfactory use of information and communication technology.
6. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology, physical education and geography are at the nationally expected level, and standards in music are above national expectations. There are particular strengths in dance in physical education, and in singing in music.
7. Pupils of all abilities achieve well from their different starting points. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and quickly become confident users of the English language. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their individual targets, and achieve well overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning are **very positive**. Their behaviour is **good**. The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. Attendance is **poor** but is rapidly improving. Punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about all aspects of school life, and enjoy coming to school.
- Good behaviour in lessons enhances pupils' learning.
- The pupils' have a very good sense of morality and their social development is very good.
- Pupils are boisterous at playtimes and this leads to many minor accidents.
- Attendance is well below the national average and is poor overall.

Commentary

8. There has been good improvement in this aspect of the school's work since the last inspection.
9. The pupils' attitudes to school and to work are very good overall. The pupils usually work hard and are proud of their achievements. They show good levels of maturity, and when taking part in discussions, answer questions in a sensible and well-considered way. Pupils of all ages show good levels of independence and are keen to take responsibility for jobs and for aspects of their learning. Pupils work very well with one another on shared tasks, and there are many acts of kindness as the pupils help one another.
10. The pupils' behaviour is good overall, although a small number of pupils are very challenging. The vast majority of pupils are helpful, friendly and polite. Pupils consistently behave well in class, enabling lessons to proceed smoothly and without undue disruption. Playtimes are lively and pupils amuse themselves well. However, there is often a great deal of boisterous play, with the result that there is a high number of minor accidents. Bullying and other forms of harassment are rare, and are dealt with quickly and effectively. Both pupils and parents are pleased with the way in which the school responds to any concerns about behaviour. There have been two fixed-term exclusions in the past year, which were fully justified.

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	294	2	
White – Irish	3		
White – any other White background	8		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3		
Mixed – White and Black African	3		
Mixed – White and Asian	8		
Mixed – any other mixed background	5		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4		
Black or Black British – African	1		
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group	1		

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

11. The pupils' personal development is fostered very well. Spiritual development is good, especially when pupils have the opportunity to explore and understand values, beliefs, feelings and emotions. Pupils express these elements well in religious education, assemblies, 'Circle Time', art and science and in their writing. Constant positive reinforcement of care for others, kindness, trust, bravery and a good work ethic and high moral standards are real strengths. The youngest children achieve very well in personal and social development and use their kindness tree to show the benefits to others of being kind. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and mature into confident individuals with good levels of self-esteem. They conscientiously carry out their roles as playground pals, school council representatives, ECO councillors and house officials. Social awareness is promoted very well, and through their charity work, the pupils gain a very good understanding of the plight of those less fortunate than themselves. High participation in the many extra-curricular clubs extends the pupils' personal development very well. There are many good opportunities for cultural development which successfully extend and enrich the pupils' learning. Pupils are actively involved in local events and learn much about local traditions. The school effectively promotes the traditions of other cultures through a wide range of lessons and activities.
12. The school does all it can to improve attendance levels. In the past year, attendance has improved markedly, and the rate of unauthorised absence has dropped significantly. Attendance, however, is still well below the national average. A large amount of absence is attributable to families taking holidays in term time, despite the school's best efforts to discourage this. Punctuality is good and most pupils arrive on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	9.2	School data:	0.6
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education for pupils of all ages. Teaching and learning are **good**, and assessment is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** for Key Stage 1 pupils and **good** for children in the Foundation Stage. The school is **very effective** in the way in which it enriches pupils' learning. The accommodation and resources are **good**. The school provides **excellent** levels care for pupils, is **very effective** in the way in which it seeks their views, and supports and guides them **well**. Links with parents are **excellent**, links with the community are **good**, and links with other schools are **very good**. The school makes **very good** provision for pupils with special educational needs and **good** provision for pupils with English as an additional language.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall, and **good** in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is well managed in most classes and there are high levels of mutual respect between pupils and adults.
- Learning support assistants are used very well to work with individual pupils and groups of pupils who need additional help.
- Good use is made of ongoing assessment in the Foundation Stage, enabling staff to quickly identify children with special educational needs.
- Teaching takes good account of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, and promotes very good levels of inclusion.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and take a full and active part in all activities.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers share learning objectives with pupils at the start of lessons and encourage pupils to evaluate their own learning.
- Although teachers plan well together in Key Stage 1, individual teachers allocate different amounts of time to the different subjects, and as a result there is an imbalance in the curriculum.
- The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and attainment in the foundation subjects are in the very early stages of development.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	12 (27)	24 (54)	9 (19)			

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.

13. Teaching is good overall, and a high percentage of teaching seen during the inspection was very good. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection and teachers are now very effective in the way in which they meet the very diverse needs of the pupils in their classes.
14. The teaching of the Reception children is good overall, and has some very good features. Good joint planning ensures that children in the different classes receive the same wide range of exciting learning experiences. There is a good balance of teacher directed activities and those that the children choose for themselves, and all adults are very effective in promoting independent learning skills. Teachers and support staff work hard to develop speaking skills, which for many children are poor. Basic language and number skills are well taught in a fun way, which makes learning interesting for the children, and resources are used well to enliven both teaching and learning.
15. In Key Stage 1, teachers have a secure subject knowledge and, when they teach their specialist areas, such as dance and music, often show very good levels of confidence and enthusiasm. Teachers plan well together, and this is effective in terms of maximising their expertise across year groups. However, individual teachers do not allocate the same amount of time to all subjects, and this leads to an imbalance in the curriculum. Teachers throughout the school cater well for the pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Support staff are used very effectively to work with small groups of pupils, and they have a very positive impact on the learning of those who find learning difficult.

16. Teachers use resources well to capture and maintain the pupils' interest and attention, and to illustrate new teaching points. Lessons are often lively affairs, and pupils are encouraged to take an active part in discussions. Teachers provide a good range of practical activities which motivate the pupils well, and use a good range of different teaching styles and strategies to maximise the pupils' interest and concentration. In almost all classes, teachers are very effective in the way in which they manage the pupils' behaviour, although in a small number of lessons seen during the inspection, teachers were not sufficiently firm with the most challenging pupils.
17. The pupils' learning is good. Pupils of all ages have positive attitudes to work, and try hard in lessons. They generally maintain good levels of concentration and respond well when their teachers give them praise and encouragement. In those lessons where teachers share learning objectives with the pupils at the start of lessons, pupils have a good understanding of what is expected of them. Where teaching is most effective, teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their learning at the end of the lesson, and to consider whether they have achieved the stated learning objectives. This good practice is not consistent throughout the school, however. Teachers are highly effective in the way in which they encourage the pupils to be independent in their learning and, as a result, pupils gain in maturity and confidence as they move through the school.
18. Assessment is good in the Foundation Stage where ongoing assessments are used well to inform future planning, and to ensure that work is closely matched to the children's needs. In Key Stage 1, assessment is good in English and mathematics, where test data are used well to identify whole-school areas for development. Assessment systems for science and the foundation subjects are in the very early stage of development and are not yet providing staff with enough information about the pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** for Key Stage 1 pupils and **good** for children in the Foundation Stage. The school is **very effective** in the way in which it enriches pupils' learning. The accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good.
- In Key Stage 1, there is too much variation in terms of the time that individual teachers allocate to the teaching of the different subjects.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, all of which are very well attended.
- The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, and the provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- The Secret Garden is a very good and imaginative resource.
- There is some time slippage at the start and end of the day in some classes.

Commentary

19. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for teaching the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There has been satisfactory improvement in the curriculum provision for Key Stage 1 pupils since the last inspection, and good

improvement in the Foundation Stage curriculum. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is now good, and there is a good balance of activities that the children choose themselves, and focused tasks which are led by an adult. Although the school provides a satisfactory curriculum for Key Stage 1 pupils, it could be even better. Currently, there is too much variation in terms of the time that individual teachers allocate to the teaching of the different subjects. In some classes, lessons do not get off to a sufficiently brisk start. The school's programme of personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good, and makes a significant and positive contribution to the pupils' personal development.

20. The school makes very good provision for those pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils who are experiencing difficulties are quickly identified so that additional support can be provided. Individual education plans are used well to show the targets the pupils are working towards, and the very good use of support staff enables pupils with special educational needs to take a full and active part in all lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good levels of additional support, enabling them to achieve well and to make good progress. They are well supported in class, and show good levels of confidence when working with their classmates.
21. The school provides a very impressive range of extra-curricular activities which considerably enrich the pupils' learning and their personal and social development. The school makes good use of a wide range of visits and visitors to support pupils' learning across the curriculum, and to broaden their experience of the local and wider locality.
22. The school's accommodation and resources are good, and have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection when the school had some temporary classrooms. The library is well resourced, attractive and well used. The outside play area for the Foundation Stage children is a very good resource which significantly enhances the children's physical development. The Secret Garden is the link between the two main buildings, and provides a very stimulating natural environment where pupils can sit and reflect on their surroundings. The vegetable plot is well used by all pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **excellent** care of pupils and provides them with **good** guidance and support. Pupils' views are highly valued and their involvement in school life is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's systems for ensuring the pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent.
- The very good monitoring of the pupils' personal development ensures their happiness and helps them to flourish.
- Pupils' views are actively sought and acted upon as an important part of school improvement.
- Although satisfactory, the use of ongoing assessment to support pupils' academic development varies from teacher to teacher.

Commentary

23. This aspect of the school's work has improved still further since the time of the last inspection.

24. The school has a fully inclusive approach to helping others in a very supportive and caring community. Pupils feel they would always have someone to turn to if they were ever worried or troubled. Staff know their pupils very well, and any issues or difficulties in learning are detected quickly and effectively addressed. The nurture groups, school counsellor and school nurse provide excellent support arrangements for individuals, groups and families.
25. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of their own learning targets. The use of day-to-day assessments and other assessment information is used adequately to guide pupils and to raise standards, although practice is not always consistent from class to class. Pupils' personal development is tracked very closely and they receive constant guidance on developing good social skills, a healthy lifestyle and developing greater maturity. The arrangements for child protection and for children in public care are excellent and all requirements are fully met. Pupils who are vulnerable are sensitively monitored and fully supported.
26. Pupils with a range of medical needs are catered for very well. The individual care plans for pupils with conditions such as epilepsy and severe allergies are excellent. When pupils are ill or injured they receive a high level of care and attention. All of the risk assessments and routine checking systems for health and safety throughout the school are thorough, and issues are addressed swiftly. The security arrangements for the two sites are good.
27. The induction arrangements are very good. Pupils settle and adapt very quickly to the routines of their new school. Pupils have a definite voice in school. The School Council has a tremendous impact on school improvement, such as the buddy benches, achievement board and even new cloakroom pegs. The ECO Council has put into practice many good recycling schemes which are run by pupils. Pupils talk openly and easily to their teachers and classmates, and feel very confident about putting forward ideas and opinions. Pupils believe that the school values their views and acts upon their suggestions where appropriate and realistic.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **excellent**. The school is popular and is held in very high regard by the parents. Links with the local community are **very good** and links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very strong partnership between home and school has a very positive impact on the pupils' learning, and on their well-being and happiness.
- The school actively seeks parents' views and reacts quickly when appropriate to ensure the highest possible levels of parental satisfaction.
- The quality of information about the school and pupils' progress is outstanding.
- Workshops and family learning courses are well attended and popular with parents.
- Very good community links help to enrich the pupils' learning and to support their personal and social development.

Commentary

28. The school has worked hard and successfully since the last inspection to further strengthen the links with parents and to develop further links with the local and wider community.

29. Parental support for pupils' learning and for the wide range of school activities is outstanding. Parents feel they have a true partnership based on excellent two-way communications and mutual trust. The parents who responded to the questionnaire, attended the parents' meeting and who were spoken to during the inspection, expressed great confidence in the school across all aspects of its life and work. Parents are especially pleased with the school's 'open-door' policy and with the way in which the school responds to issues they raise.
30. Many parents volunteer to help in school and on school visits and provide very high quality help and support for the pupils' learning. The workshops and the family learning courses are very successful and have helped parents to support their children's learning very effectively. The parents of pupils who have special educational needs are very supportive of their children. All attend the annual reviews, and know they can meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator whenever they have a concern. The school makes a good effort to communicate effectively with parents of pupils who have English as an additional language.
31. Home and school liaison is excellent and the school works very hard to ensure that parents are kept fully in touch. The school is very approachable and parents find it very reassuring to be able to pop in and talk to staff whenever the need arises. Formal consultation arrangements are excellent and those few parents who do not attend parents' meetings are followed up very effectively. School reports are very well written and contain detailed individual information about progress and very useful advice for improvement. The quality of other information, such as newsletters, 'Green News' from the ECO Council and curriculum planning information, is also very good. The Parents' and Friends' Association is very active, offering a busy social calendar and fundraising large sums to benefit learning and improve the quality of school life.
32. Links with the local community are very good. The school has many visitors who make learning more exciting, such as Indian dancers and theatre groups. Pupils explore the art, history and geography of the local area and are frequent visitors to the church, museum, Portslade Old Village, the art gallery, Royal Pavilion and parks. The school plays an active role in local events like the Arts Festival and Brighton Festival and the deputy headteacher has initiated and organised the very successful annual "Dance at the Dome", celebrating dance from thirty local schools. The school is very enterprising in the way it successfully enlists the help of local businesses to sponsor many school activities.
33. Links with other schools are good. Links with the many main pre-school groups help new pupils transfer to infant school smoothly and, as a result, these young children settle quickly. The transition links with the two main receiving junior schools are well established, although even more could be done to develop curricular links. There are good links with local infant schools where best practice and resources are shared. There is a special link with the Swedish School who come and perform their St Lucia celebrations each year. The school regularly welcomes student teachers on placement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides **very good** leadership for the school and is supported well by her colleagues. The management of the school is **good**. The leadership and management of other key staff are **good**. The governing body provides **very effective** support and fulfils its statutory responsibilities very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership, and has a very clear sense of how the school can develop still further.
- The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good.
- The governing body is very effective and has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The role of the co-ordinator has improved very well since the last inspection.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.
- The monitoring of the Foundation Stage, and of English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 1, is good.
- Currently there is no-one who has responsibility for monitoring the whole-school curriculum.

Commentary

34. Overall, the school is well led and managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership, and as a result of her clear sense of educational direction, there has been good improvement overall since the last inspection across almost all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the need to continue to raise standards, and has been successful in this to a large extent, although there is still more work to be done in English. The headteacher has forged excellent links with the parents, and the much improved partnership between home and school has had a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The headteacher enjoys the full support of the staff, the governing body and, in particular, the very competent deputy headteacher, whose leadership style very effectively complements her own. There is a very strong team spirit amongst staff, and a very purposeful ethos that is characterised by the happiness of the pupils.
35. The leadership and management of key staff are good. The monitoring of the school's work is good in the core subjects and in the Foundation Stage where there are rigorous systems for evaluating classroom practice and pupils' work. Good use is made of this information to highlight whole-school strengths and weaknesses. Although the monitoring of classroom practice is at an early stage for foundation subject co-ordinators, all co-ordinators have started compiling portfolios of levelled work, which are providing a good overview of pupils' work as they move through the school. The role of the curriculum co-ordinator has developed well since the last inspection, and co-ordinators take a clear lead in developing their area of responsibility, and in supporting colleagues in their planning. Currently, there is no curriculum co-ordinator, and as a result, some whole-school issues, such as the balance within the Key Stage 1 curriculum have not been identified. The leadership and management for special educational needs are very good, and the special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with the assigned governor to ensure that all requirements are met.
36. The governing body is very effective. The chair of the governing body is a frequent visitor to the school, and the headteacher and chair meet regularly to discuss emerging issues so that they can take a good lead in school improvement. The governing body and staff regularly interact and, as a result, the governors are very well informed about school life. The expertise and interest of individual governors are used well. The governing body fulfils its legal responsibilities very well, with many of the governors taking on the role of overseeing and monitoring provision in individual curriculum areas. Governors regularly review and evaluate the provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language and use the available

funding well to support pupils who have specific needs. Governors fulfil their role of 'critical friend' to the headteacher very well, and important decisions are thoughtfully made after a period of rigorous debate.

37. The day-to-day management of the school is good, although in some classes there is some time slippage at the start and end of the day. The school's strategic development is carefully planned and reflects the evidence that is gathered through monitoring exercises. Procedures to monitor the performance of all staff are secure. The school has a very strong philosophy on inclusion, and day-to-day practice within the school reflects this fully. The day-to-day management of the budget is good. The work of the administration staff is highly valued by the headteacher and careful consideration is given to the principles of securing a high quality return for planned expenditure. Extreme care and attention are paid to ensure that planned expenditure matches the school's income. The overspend in the budget in the past year is attributable to the high level of unforeseen expenditure on staffing that occurred. The school gives good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	727 752	Balance from previous year	4 857
Total expenditure	745 489	Balance carried forward to the next	(12 880)
Expenditure per pupil	2 180		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good throughout the Foundation Stage, enabling children of all ages and abilities to achieve well.
- The early identification of children with special educational needs enables swift intervention.
- Teachers make good use of ongoing assessments to ensure that the work meets the needs of all children.
- Throughout the Foundation Stage staff are very effective in the way in which they promote the children's personal, social and emotional development.
- The Early Years co-ordinator provides good leadership.
- The school has developed excellent links with parents which enable the children to have a smooth start to their education.
- The outdoor provision is very good and very effectively promotes the children's physical development.
- Classrooms are small, and this makes it difficult for teachers to offer the full range of activities when the outside areas are not in use because of inclement weather.

Commentary

38. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is good, and this represents very good improvement since the last inspection. The children's attainment when they start school is well below the expected level overall, and some of the children have poor social and language skills. In line with the policy of the LEA, Reception children attend on a part-time basis until the term in which they are five, when they start coming to school on a full-time basis. This means that the youngest children in the Reception year have only one term of full-time education before transferring to Year 1. Although all children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, the attainment of the youngest children is lower than that of the other children because they have less time in school.
39. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children's attainment is well below the expected level in communication, language and literacy and below the expected level in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In physical development and creative development the children's attainment is at the expected level, and in personal, social and emotional development, the children's attainment is above the expected level.
40. Teaching is good, and teachers and classroom assistants take good account of the needs of different groups of children. They cater especially well for children who have special educational needs, and early identification enables the school to quickly intervene and to provide additional support where this is necessary. Children with English as an additional language are very well integrated into all activities, and their progress is carefully monitored. The school provides a good curriculum for the Foundation Stage children, and children have access to a wide range of stimulating activities. The outside play area and shaded verandas are very good resources which are used well. However, classrooms are small, and when the outside areas are out of

commission because of inclement weather, the working conditions are a little cramped. Good use is made of ongoing assessment to track the children's personal and academic progress and attainment, and very good analysis of the Foundation Stage profiles provide a good and accurate basis for Key Stage 1 teachers.

41. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the Foundation Stage and sets a very good example through her own classroom practice. Joint planning across the four classes ensures that all children have equality of opportunity, and makes best use of the resources that are available. Links with parents are excellent, and help the children to quickly settle into the routines of school. The co-ordinator works hard to forge good links with the many pre-school settings from which the Reception children are drawn, and makes excellent use of the information she gleans to ensure that the needs of all children are met. All adults in the Foundation Stage are very vigilant of the children in their care, ensuring that the children's learning environment is safe, secure and happy.

Personal, social and emotional development

The provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults use every opportunity to reinforce the children's personal and social skills.
- The children's behaviour and attitudes are good.
- Children settle very quickly into the routines of school.
- Most children show good levels of independence in their learning.

Commentary

42. By the end of the Reception year, most children attain or exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning, and their overall attainment is above the expected level. Children of all ages and abilities achieve well and make significant gains in terms of developing their social skills. Teaching is good, and staff take every opportunity to promote the children's personal and social skills, by encouraging them to take turns, share resources, and to become as independent as possible in their learning. Where teaching is at its best, adults share their own feelings with the children thereby encouraging them to feel empathy for others and to begin to understand emotions of happiness and sadness. The children settle quickly into the routines of the school, and have a good understanding of how to behave in class and at play. They show good levels of independence when getting changed for physical activities, and in attending to their personal hygiene. Behaviour throughout the Foundation Stage is good, and the vast majority show good levels of interest, motivation and confidence.

Communication, language and literacy

The provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Role-play is used well in all classes to promote children's language and social skills.
- The school makes very good use of additional support to develop the children's spoken language.
- The children make good use of information and communication technology to support their learning.

- Teachers create a good balance between emergent writing, and more formal letter formation and phonic activities
- Resources are good.

Commentary

43. Despite making good progress, and achieving well in relation to their sometimes very low starting point, the children's attainment in communication, language and literacy at the end of the Reception year is well below the expected level. When they start school, a significant number of children have poor spoken language skills, and the school has been very proactive in securing additional support from within the LEA to help to address these weaknesses. Teaching is good, and all of the adults who come into contact with the Reception children constantly engage them in discussion about their work so that the children extend their vocabulary. In most classes, teachers make good use of jingles, rhymes and songs to encourage the children to articulate sounds to a given rhythm. However, not all teachers demand the full participation of the group, with the result that a small number of children 'opt out'. Role-play activities in all classes effectively develop the children's speaking and listening skills and also are most effective in supporting the children's personal and social development as they learn how to work co-operatively with others.
44. Teachers effectively promote reading as a pleasurable activity. The children have access to a good range of books, and frequent opportunities to share them with adults and friends. They achieve well, but only a small number are reading at the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children of all abilities make good use of listening centres, and are keen to take part in sound games on the computers. Emergent writing is well promoted, and a good balance is achieved between free-writing activities, and more formal and structured opportunities where the children learn to form letters correctly, and practise spelling simple words. Teachers provide many good writing opportunities for the children, enabling them to understand that writing has different purposes and styles.

Mathematical development

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are strengths in the children's knowledge of shape, but weaknesses in their knowledge of number.
- The children's learning is supported by a good range of resources which help to make their learning stimulating.
- Structured play activities provide a good context for much of the children's learning, and are very effective in promoting their mathematical vocabulary.

Commentary

45. By the end of the Reception year the children's attainment is below the age expected level overall. Children of all ages progress well and their achievement in relation to their low starting point is good. Teaching is good, and teachers make good use of assessment information to match work to the children's abilities. However, by the end of the Reception year only a small number of children have a sufficiently secure knowledge and understanding of number. Few can confidently and accurately count beyond twenty, and the majority of children are only confident when working with

numbers less than ten. Teachers provide many good counting opportunities throughout the day, for example during registration, or at snack time, and the children know a good variety of counting rhymes and songs.

46. The children's knowledge of shape is much more secure than their knowledge of number, and most children recognise and describe simple two-dimensional shapes such as triangles, squares, and circles. A small number of high attaining children recognise more complex shapes such as hexagons and some three-dimensional shapes such as cubes and spheres. Adults effectively promote the children's mathematical vocabulary through structured play activities, and where teaching is at its best, classroom assistants are given very clear guidance about the questions they might use in the sand and water play areas to draw out the children's ideas and to help them to learn new concepts.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

The provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good variety of first-hand learning experiences that capture the children's attention and interest.
- Adults effectively engage the children in discussion about their work and help them to extend their vocabulary.
- The children make good use of a range of information and communication technology to support their learning.
- The children's knowledge of the world in which they live is very limited, and their historical understanding is very weak.

Commentary

47. By the end of the Reception year, the children's attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is below the expected level, although children of all abilities achieve well. Teaching is good, and adults are especially effective in the way in which they work with the children and extend their vocabulary. Teachers provide a good range of first-hand learning experiences which capture the children's interest and make them more aware of their surroundings. For example, the children learn early mapping skills by taking a walk around the school. Very good use of questions helps to extend the children's thinking and to challenge the highest attaining children.
48. A relative strength of the children's learning is their competence in using information and communication technology to support their learning. The children confidently use listening centres, and show good levels of interest and good control of the mouse when using class computers or working in the computer suite. The school meets the requirements of teaching religious education to those children who are five, but the children have difficulty in retaining their learning. The children's knowledge of animals and wildlife is limited, and their understanding of the past is very weak. Through structured play activities the children have good experience of building models and structures, and they learn well through a process of trial and error about the need for structures to have secure foundations.

Physical development

The provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- From an early age the children show a good sense of rhythm and dance well.
- The children benefit from access to a secure and well equipped outside play area.
- Teachers provide a good range of daily activities that effectively promote the children's physical development.
- The children make good progress in developing control of small tools such as pencils and paintbrushes.

Commentary

49. The children achieve well and attain the expected level by the end of the Reception year. Teaching is good, and there is a good mix of more formal activities, such as physical education lessons in the hall, and free-choice play activities. The children have daily opportunities to take part in physical activities. They show good levels of effort and generally have a satisfactory spatial awareness. They are particularly enthusiastic about dance lessons where they show a natural sense of rhythm. As they move through the Reception year, the children become increasingly adept in controlling small equipment such as pencils, scissors and paintbrushes. Teachers provide many opportunities for the children to manipulate dough and to use cutting tools which they do with increasing dexterity.

Creative development

The provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have good opportunities to take part in role-play activities.
- Computers are used well to support the children's artwork.
- The children's drawing skills are immature, although they make good progress in this aspect of their work.
- There are not enough daily opportunities for the children to make music and to sing rhymes and jingles.

Commentary

50. The children's attainment is at the expected level overall, and their achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory, and has some good features. The children take part in a range of art and craft activities, but their drawings are often immature. The children use computers well to make drawings, and good links are made with other areas of learning as they make collages using two-dimensional shapes. In all classes there are good opportunities for the children to take part in role-play activities, and higher attaining children show good levels of imagination in their work. Although children regularly sing songs to accompany their outside class games, there is not enough opportunity for them to make music on a daily basis. The practice of children singing rhymes and jingles throughout the day varies from class to class, but more use could be made of singing to support the children's language development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils throughout the school achieve well.
- The procedures to assess the pupils' progress and attainment are good.
- Standards in writing are too low.
- Good use is made of learning support assistants who work with pupils who are experiencing difficulties.
- There is inconsistent use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

51. The 2004 end of Key Stage 1 national test results show that the pupils' attainment is in line with the national average in reading, and below the national average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is well above average in reading and average in writing. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, especially in reading, and in terms of ensuring that the higher attaining pupils achieve their potential.
52. The inspection findings indicate that overall, the pupils' attainment is below national expectations. Although overall standards are at the expected level in reading, standards of speaking and writing are below national expectations, and are often very low for the lowest attaining pupils. Pupils of all ages, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs, achieve well from their different starting points. However, typically, the attainment of the youngest pupils, who have only had one full-time term in Reception before joining Year 1, is not as high as that of the oldest pupils. Although the performance of the girls in the 2004 national tests is higher than that of the boys, this does not point to under-achievement by the boys. The discrepancy in the attainment occurred because the majority of the youngest pupils were boys, and the majority of pupils with special educational needs were also boys. Both of these groups achieve well.
53. The school places good emphasis on helping the pupils to develop their speaking skills, and is currently benefiting from the targeted support by the LEA. Role-play areas in all classrooms are having a positive impact on the pupils' learning, but there is still more to be done to ensure that pupils' speaking skills are further improved. Reading skills are well taught, and the additional strategies, such as 'Family Learning' have contributed to the improving standards in this area of the English curriculum. In the main, pupils are more secure in decoding text than they are in understanding its meaning, and adults monitor pupils closely to ensure that they have understood what they have read. Basic skills of grammar and spelling are well taught and in the main the pupils' writing is technically correct. However, many pupils have difficulty in writing all but the shortest pieces of text, and very few pupils are able to sustain and develop their ideas. Most pupils use only a limited vocabulary to express their ideas, although the writing of the small number of higher attaining pupils is often lively and imaginative.

54. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide pupils with challenging tasks that promote their interest and spur them on to produce work that is a good reflection of their ability. Reading and writing skills are taught in a direct and systematic manner, and assessment information is used well to ensure that new skills build progressively on the pupils' previous learning. Teachers make good use of the learning support assistants who work sensitively with small groups of pupils who are experiencing difficulties with their work, building up their self-esteem and confidence in themselves as learners. Where teaching is at its best, pupils are encouraged to use word-processing programs for editing and drafting their written work but this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Teachers often share learning objectives with the pupils so that they know exactly what is expected of them. Where the best practice occurs, teachers encourage pupils to reflect on the extent of their learning at the end of the lesson. Although lessons are well paced, at times they get off to a slow start, especially if they are at the start of the day.
55. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Although only recently appointed to the role, the co-ordinator has a good idea of the work that still needs to be done in order to raise standards further. The role of the co-ordinator has been developed well since the previous inspection. Monitoring of teaching and learning is regular, with the information gained from this used to guide the planning of further educational developments. Resources to support learning have been steadily improved since the previous inspection and they are used well to support the children in their learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. The pupils' use of language and literacy skills in their work in other areas is good. Teachers provide a good range of speaking activities in other subjects, and encourage pupils to find information from books.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well from a low starting point and attain the standards of which they are capable.
- The teaching of mathematics is good, and pupils respond with enthusiasm to the well structured and well paced lessons.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support enabling them to make good progress towards their individual targets.
- Pupils' learning is effectively enhanced by the good opportunities that are provided for them to take part in practical first-hand activities.
- The leadership of the subject is very effective.

Commentary

57. The 2004 end of Key Stage 1 national test results show that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average, and that the pupils' performance is above average in comparison with similar schools. Standards have improved well over recent years with more pupils attaining the higher levels in the tests than previously. This demonstrates

that the school has successfully tackled the issue arising from the last inspection relating to the under-achievement of higher attaining pupils.

58. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and that pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities. Good emphasis is placed on the pupils learning through first-hand experience, and practical activities help to strengthen the pupils' understanding of new concepts, and provide a good and meaningful context for their learning. Pupils have regular opportunities to manipulate numbers, both mentally and on paper, and as they move through Key Stage 1, most become increasingly agile and competent. However, lower attaining pupils struggle to make accurate calculations and have difficulty in working with two digit numbers. Pupils generally have a secure understanding of aspects of shape, space and measure and use information and communication technology to good effect to create charts and graphs when carrying out data handling exercises.
59. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. They set tasks at challenging levels and, together with learning support assistants, provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs. Where teaching is at its best, teachers use questions skilfully, and give pupils time to formulate their answers. Pupils respond eagerly because they are stimulated and really want to do well. Teachers use assessment information well to match tasks closely to the different levels of ability within the class, and to build securely on the pupils' previous learning. All adults are sensitive to the pupils' needs and do their best to raise the pupils' self-esteem through the good use of praise and encouragement.
60. The leadership and management of the subject are good and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Monitoring, evaluation and planning for improvement are all more rigorous than they were at the time of the last inspection, and have led to the clear identification of areas for whole-school development. The tracking of pupils' progress, the analysis of pupils' performance in tests and the observation of teaching and learning all effectively inform the school's ongoing programmes of curriculum development and in-service training for teachers. Resources for learning are good and they are used well to enhance teaching and learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The school provides good opportunities for the pupils' to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in other curriculum areas. For example, pupils take measurements in science, and weigh ingredients in food technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well from a low starting point.
- Pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills to support their work in science.
- Good use is made of support staff.
- The curriculum lacks balance, and different classes within the same year group receive a different amount of time.

Commentary

62. The 2004 teacher assessments show that the pupils' attainment is well below the national average, and well below average in comparison with similar schools. The inspection findings paint a much more positive picture and show that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. The difference between the teacher assessments and the inspection findings reflects the recent good improvements that have been made, and the increased emphasis that teachers are placing on investigative and experimental work.
63. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well, although fewer of the youngest pupils, those that have only one term in full-time education in the Reception class before transferring to Year 1, attain the higher Level 3 on the basis of the teacher assessments. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve at the same rate as their classmates, and benefit from the good support of learning support assistants and from the many opportunities for them to take part in practical activities.
64. By the end of Year 2, pupils show satisfactory skills in investigative and experimental work, including a developing understanding of how to carry out a fair test. Pupils know that materials can be classified as natural or manufactured, and they understand that materials can be changed by heating and cooling. Most know how to make a circuit that will light a bulb. Pupils' work shows that they use their literacy skills successfully when writing accounts of experiments, and labelling charts and diagrams. In investigations, pupils make good use of their numeracy skills, especially when making accurate measurements. The work of the highest attaining pupils is of especially good quality both in terms of content and presentation.
65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and some very good teaching was seen during the inspection. In the best lessons, introductions are short and teachers challenge pupils with effective questioning which makes them think scientifically. Teachers show good subject knowledge and demonstrations are clear and engage pupils' interest. Clear targets are given to pupils in terms of how long they have to complete work, and there are opportunities for pupils to evaluate how much they have learned. However, whilst some lessons are timetabled for an hour, others are timetabled for the whole afternoon. These lessons are far too long and pupils, especially the lowest attainers, start to lose concentration and interest.
66. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has produced a good-quality portfolio of pupils' work which shows that the subject is taught to the full requirements of the National Curriculum. It shows that pupils make good progress in knowledge, skills and understanding as they move up through the school. The co-ordinator has carried out an extensive programme of monitoring of classroom practice and the scrutiny of pupils' work, but has not identified and addressed the issue of curriculum imbalance. She has recognised that there is still more work to be done in terms of developing whole-school assessment systems so that pupils' progress can be tracked as they move through the school. The annual science workshop is a very popular event which is well supported by parents and which gives them a very good insight into what their children are learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to enliven their teaching and to enhance the pupils' learning.
- Children achieve well across all aspects of the subject.
- The school has a good computer suite which is used well by all classes.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning.
- There are missed opportunities in some lessons for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their work in other subjects.
- Ways to monitor and assess the pupils' progress in information and communication technology are under-developed.
- The experienced co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject and good support for colleagues.
- There has been good improvement in the provision for information and communication technology since the last inspection.

Commentary

67. The pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The subject now has a high profile in school and is enhanced by the good quality computer suite, and the introduction of interactive whiteboards in a number of classrooms.
68. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how to log onto the school's computer network, and change font sizes and colour when using a word-processor. They know how to save and send the work to the printer. Many pupils show good mouse control and use paint programs well to produce work in the style of different artists. Pupils use a range of software to promote their learning in different subjects, although their skills in using the Internet to locate and retrieve information are not yet sufficiently well developed. The pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how to control external devices such as programmable toys, but their understanding of the use of information and communication technology in the wider world is very limited.
69. Teaching and learning are good across the school. The systematic teaching of new skills steadily builds on the pupils' previous learning. Teachers' subject knowledge and expertise have improved well since the last inspection, and teachers show good levels of confidence and expertise in lessons. Teachers place good emphasis on the pupils developing independent learning skills, and encourage them to think for themselves. In classrooms, good use is made of interactive whiteboards to emphasise particular teaching points, and to enliven the pupils' learning. Where teaching is at its best, good ongoing use is made of class-based computers, and pupils are given regular opportunities to practise newly learned skills. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and work very well with one another on shared tasks. They take turns well and try hard to help one another.
70. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A clear and effective lead has been provided by the co-ordinator towards improving the quality of provision in the subject. There are plans for the installation of interactive whiteboards in all classrooms to further enhance teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are currently being

revised with a view to providing a more consistent whole-school picture of pupils' progress and attainment.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to use art packages as part of their art and design work or simple charting programs as part of their work in mathematics, but there are not always enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to edit and draft their written work.

HUMANITIES

The inspection focused on **religious education** and **geography**. Not enough evidence was collected to make judgements about the quality of provision, standards, teaching and learning in **history**. However, the sampling of teachers' timetables and planning indicates that teachers do not all allocate the same amount of time to history during the course of the year.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, and children achieve well in relation to their starting point.
- Pupils' learning in religious education makes a positive contribution to their overall personal development.
- Formal assessment procedures in religious education are in the early stages of development.
- The school's monitoring of the provision in religious education is not sufficiently rigorous.
- The school has a good range of resources which are used well to enhance teaching and to enliven learning.

Commentary

72. Pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well. Standards are broadly the same as they were at the time of the last inspection, although the quality of whole-school planning has improved well.
73. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know about aspects of Christianity. They retell the Christmas story and recount events that Christians remember at Easter. They know why Christians celebrate these events and describe what happens in churches at these times. They explain why Jesus was 'a good man' and describe some of the things that He did and the stories that He told. They know about other sacraments, such as baptism and marriage and, in their own simple words, describe the significance of these rituals. Pupils also learn about other religions. They make a particularly detailed study of Judaism, as well as touching on festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Pupils also gain basic knowledge and understanding, such as the importance of the family, respect for others and the importance of caring, that

underpin moral thought and action. Consequently, religious education makes a significant contribution to the pupils' wider personal and social education and in particular to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

74. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers successfully establish good patterns of behaviour and a sensible approach to work, with the result that pupils are attentive, make sensible comments and handle artefacts with care and respect. Teachers make very good use of the school's resources to arouse pupils' interest and to illustrate their teaching. For example, in very effective lessons about the Jewish Shabbat, teachers used correct Hebrew terms and demonstrated respect when handling and describing artefacts. Teachers organise visits to local churches and invite clergy to school, for example, to perform a mock christening and to explain its significance. Such worthwhile experiences significantly improve the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers and classroom assistants sensitively support pupils with learning difficulties and sometimes plan extension activities for pupils who complete their tasks.
75. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has improved the overall quality of planning for religious education by providing detailed guidance for staff. She has also improved the range and quality of the school's resources. However, current arrangements do not allow the co-ordinator to monitor the quality or consistency of provision throughout the school. Consequently, there are some differences in the time given by individual teachers to the direct teaching of the subject, and differences in the way in which teachers organise their lessons. The school has begun to develop a system of assessing pupils' progress and attainment but it is at an early stage of development and has yet to have a full impact.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils make effective use of their information and communication technology skills to support their work in geography.
- Lessons are enjoyable and pupils work hard.
- The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped, and there is as yet no whole-school system of tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school.

Commentary

76. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations, and achievement is good for all groups of pupils. Standards have been satisfactorily maintained since the previous inspection.
77. Pupils develop a good understanding of the wider world through following the adventures of 'Barnaby Bear' as he travels to different countries. Through visiting the 'Barnaby Bear' website, pupils make good use of their information and communication technology skills in answering questions and doing puzzles to widen their understanding. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to compare different places when they compare Brighton with the fictional Isle of Struay. Good links are made with literacy as the pupils read and enjoy the 'Katie Morag' stories. Pupils show

good skills in early map making and understand how three-dimensional buildings can be represented on a two-dimensional plan.

78. Teaching and learning are good and as a result all groups of pupils achieve well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and deliver lessons with high levels of interest and enthusiasm. Demonstrations and explanations are clear and hold the pupils' attention. Pupils enjoy lessons and work successfully in pairs or small groups. Teaching is most effective in lessons which are timetabled for no longer than an hour, as in longer sessions some pupils have difficulty in maintaining good levels of concentration.
79. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has produced a good portfolio of pupils' work which shows good progress in key skills, knowledge and understanding as pupils move up through the school. Little monitoring of classroom practice has been carried out, and the school does not yet have a robust system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school. The curriculum is good. In addition to geography work over the year, the annual geography unit that has been designed by the school makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As part of this unit of work, pupils study China, France, Canada and Brazil, and make good cross-curricular links, for example by making Chinese dragons in art and design.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology were not main foci for the inspection and not enough evidence was collected in these subjects to make firm judgements about the quality of provision, or the quality of teaching and learning. However, general discussion with pupils, and the scrutiny of displayed work indicate that pupils take part in a suitably broad range of learning experiences, and attain appropriate standards for their age. The school provides a good range of additional activities that successfully extend and enrich the pupils' learning in art and design and design and technology, and displays of the pupils' work positively enhance the learning environment. The allocation of time to art and design and design and technology varies from class to class. **Music** and **physical education** were inspected in depth.

Music

The provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and the standard of singing is especially high.
- The pupils are very confident performers who show very high levels of interest in all aspects of the music curriculum.
- The school provides a very good range of additional learning experiences which very effectively support the pupils' personal and social development.
- Formal assessment systems are in the early stages of development.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good, and have led to good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

80. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in music is above national expectations. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well, and show high levels of enthusiasm for the subject.
81. The subject is taught regularly in all classes, and teachers provide a good range of activities within lessons covering all aspects of the music curriculum. From an early age pupils demonstrate a good sense of rhythm, and confidently perform clapping patterns which they often transfer onto instruments. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress in singing, and by the end of the key stage perform difficult songs with ease. Pupils show a good appreciation of music, and listen carefully to pre-recorded music, picking out individual instruments and describing the mood the music creates. The pupils' appreciation of music is very effectively enhanced through dance sessions where the pupils have the opportunity to freely express their response to the music through movement.
82. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons well so that they are lively and interesting. Where teaching is at its best, pupils are fully involved in all activities, and lessons move at a brisk pace, helping to maintain the pupils' interest and concentration. Very good support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to fully join in with all activities. Teachers provide good opportunities for the pupils to evaluate their learning, and the most effective teachers provide good instruction and guidance to show pupils how they can improve their performance still further. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject, and enjoy their music lessons. They participate fully, and work well together in pairs and small groups.
83. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management for the subject and there has been good improvement since the last inspection in respect of developing curriculum planning and improving the confidence of staff. However, there is still more work to be done in developing whole-school assessment systems. The curriculum is very well enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities that very effectively promote the pupils' personal and social development, and very good opportunities for pupils to take part in concerts and other performances significantly raise the pupils' levels of self-esteem.

Physical education

The provision for physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in dance are well above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The school provides a very good range of additional learning opportunities that have a very positive impact on the pupils' personal and social development.

Commentary

84. During the inspection lessons were seen in dance and games. In these aspects of the physical education curriculum standards are at the expected level in games, and well above the nationally expected level in dance. Pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily overall, and achieve well in dance.
85. Pupils generally show satisfactory levels of hand to eye co-ordination, and reasonable control of their bodies as they carry out warm-up activities. They throw and catch over short distances, and satisfactorily control balls with bats. In dance, many of the pupils

show a very good innate sense of rhythm, and respond very sensitively to different types of music, matching their movements to the mood of the music they hear.

86. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and the teaching of dance is good. The school makes good use of external expertise to support teachers who lack confidence or who are at an early stage of their teaching career, and this additional support has a positive impact on the overall quality of provision. Where teaching is at its best, teachers make good use of pupil demonstration to highlight ways in which pupils might improve their performance, and encourage the pupils to evaluate their own learning. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, and take an enthusiastic part in all activities.
87. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school provides a very good range of additional learning activities that very effectively support the pupils' personal and social development. Of particular note is the pupils' participation in the annual Brighton Dance Festival. This provides an excellent opportunity for the pupils to hone their performance skills as they dance in front of large audiences, and has a very positive impact on their self-esteem.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a very good programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- Teaching is good, and very good relationships between pupils and staff create a very positive learning environment.
- The school provides a very good range of additional learning experiences that enhance the formal taught programme.
- The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator.

Commentary

88. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment in this aspect of their work is above the nationally expected level, and pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well. The school provides a very good formal programme of lessons which is very effectively enriched by a wide range of additional activities, such as the School Council, and the 'Muddy Boots' Club. The subject has a high profile in the school, and staff take every opportunity to enhance the pupils' learning through the pick-up of incidental opportunities that arise during the course of the day.
89. Teaching and learning are good. Very good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils are confident about sharing their joys or concerns, and all issues are dealt with sensitively and respectfully. Pupils work well together, and understand and observe the routines of Circle Time. Teachers often make good use of resources to enliven their teaching and to enhance the pupils' learning, and pictures and stories especially often provide a good starting point for a discussion.
90. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and provides good leadership and direction for other staff.

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	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	6
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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