

INSPECTION REPORT

LANGSTONE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Portsmouth

LEA area: Portsmouth

Unique reference number: 116213

Headteacher: Ilza Rudgley

Lead inspector: Peter Payne

Dates of inspection: 4th - 5th November 2003

Inspection number: 256694

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	315
School address:	Lakeside Avenue Copnor Portsmouth
Postcode:	PO3 6EZ
Telephone number:	023 9282 4138
Fax number:	023 9278 0018
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Richard Soutar
Date of previous inspection:	8 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a community junior school for boys and girls from 7 to 11, situated in the Copnor district of the City of Portsmouth. It is a large school housed in modern buildings. It is set in an extensive and attractive site which it shares with a separate infant school from which most of the pupils transfer. There are 315 pupils on roll, organised in 12 classes. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average. There are three parallel classes in each year group. Mobility is relatively high at 6.4 per cent, and many of these pupils are potentially higher attainers. Their departure is likely to have an effect on the school's overall performance. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (SEN), at 26.3 per cent, is above the national average. Four have formal statements of special educational need. Since the last inspection, the nature of the pupil intake has gradually changed and there is an increasing proportion of pupils with SEN, including a small but growing number of children of families seeking asylum, many of whom have no English language. Since the last inspection, nine teachers have left and nine new teachers have been recruited. The headteacher has been in post since January 2001.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12155	Peter Payne	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Information and communication technology; Art and design; Personal, social and health education.
12289	Susan Burgess	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
15023	Ali Haouas	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Music; Physical education.
18498	Denise Morris	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Geography; History.
10668	David Walker	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Design and technology; Religious education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school that provides a high standard of education. The leadership and management are very good. The curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning are good. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The good achievement and standards in English and mathematics.
- The broad and balanced curriculum with very good extra-curricular opportunities.
- The very strong philosophy and practice of inclusion and equal opportunity.
- The very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- The good partnership with the parents.
- The very good links with the community.

Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, staff and governors are now very good. The quality of teaching and learning has improved. The ten per cent of unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and teaching is now good. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT), which was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, is now very good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	C	B	A
mathematics	C	C	A	A
science	D	C	C	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The achievement of pupils is good. Pupils work hard and most are doing well, particularly in English, mathematics and ICT.

The results of the 2002 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 6 show an improvement in standards, with English above average and mathematics well above average. Standards in science were maintained at the national average. The preliminary results of the 2003 tests for Year 6 show a sustained level of high attainment in English and mathematics and a dip in science. In the other subjects, standards are above expectation in art and ICT, and as expected in design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.

The development of pupils' personal qualities is good. Provision for their moral and social development is very good, and for their spiritual development it is good. Pupils' experience of their own heritage and culture is good, but they do not have enough opportunities to meet, and understand the cultural traditions of those from other cultures. They have very good attitudes to school and behave very well. Their attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The range of learning opportunities is good and the opportunities for extension and enrichment through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities are very good. **Teaching is good** throughout the school, and about a fifth of it is very good. Because teachers' knowledge of subjects is very good, and because they question pupils and give explanations in skilful ways that suit the needs of individuals, pupils' learning is good. There is good provision for pupils with SEN and, where necessary, their teaching assistants provide effective support. Because of this, they achieve well.

The school cares for its pupils very well and ensures that they work in a healthy and safe environment. There are well-established systems of support, advice and guidance.

The school has a strong partnership with parents and the wider community. The school is an integral part of the community and the pupils greatly benefit from this involvement. The school's facilities are used by a variety of local organisations.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. She provides the dynamic leadership that has ensured the recent development of the school and is very ably supported by her deputy and other staff. The governing body is very effective. They play a very active part in school life and provide strong and highly committed support.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views about the school. They confirm that their children like school. They are particularly pleased about the ethic of hard work, the management of the school, the quality of teaching, the rich range of activities provided and the arrangements made for children when they start school. A minority have concerns about the information provided by the school about their child's progress. Inspectors found that the quality of information provided was very good and that the school had particularly effective procedures for enabling rapid access to teachers, including fortnightly 'drop-in' sessions.

The response from pupils revealed a very positive enthusiasm for their school and the experiences that it provides. In discussion, they are eloquent advocates of their school, describe their work with enthusiasm and are very proud of their achievements and their school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In the context of its many considerable strengths, there are no major issues for the school to address. A small number of minor issues require attention, but all of these have been clearly identified in the school strategic plan and are already being actively addressed.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of pupils is good. Standards of work seen in the core subjects are above average in English and mathematics and are average in science.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Sustained good quality of achievement in English and mathematics.
- Considerable improvement in standards in ICT.

Commentary

1. The achievement of pupils throughout the school is good. Because of the good teaching and very high expectations, together with their own very positive attitudes and enthusiasm for learning, pupils work hard, make good progress and achieve well. They respond very well to challenge. As they progress through the school they become increasingly confident at expressing their own opinions, answering questions and solving problems.
2. The results of the 2002 national assessments for pupils in Year 6 show that standards have improved since the last inspection. Compared to all schools nationally, they were above average in English, well above average in mathematics and average in science. When pupils' progress was measured against their own achievement at age seven, the outcome was the same. However, when compared with similar schools to Langstone, pupils' achievement was well above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.2 (27.3)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.8 (26.3)	26.7 (26.6)
science	28.9 (28.2)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 87 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The preliminary results of the 2003 national assessments for 11-year-olds show a sustained level of high attainment in English and mathematics and a slight fall in science. In the other subjects of the curriculum, standards are above expectation in ICT and art and design. They are as expected in design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education.
4. The good quality of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills enhances their work in other subjects, particularly in geography, history, religious education and science. Their rapidly developing skills and strengths in ICT support work across most of the other subjects. Because of their teachers' high expectations and because of their own motivation, pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable.
5. Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well. This is due to some very good identification processes and the specific support organised by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) in liaison with the class teachers and teaching assistants. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. As a result, these pupils often achieve higher than the expected standard, particularly in Year 6.
6. The majority of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), including asylum seekers, achieve well against their prior attainment. They are highly motivated and well supported. Those

who are in the early stages of learning English benefit from the support of bilingual teaching assistants who are often matched to the pupils' first languages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their personal development is good, and provision for social and moral development is a particularly strong feature. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' attitudes to their work and enthusiasm for activities.
- Pupils' relationships with others.
- Behaviour, both in lessons and around the school.
- The school's efforts to promote good attendance.
- Provision for personal development.
- A relative weakness in provision for multi-cultural awareness.

Commentary

7. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that their children liked coming to school, and this was confirmed during the inspection in interviews with pupils. In general, pupils are very interested in their work and try hard to complete what they have been asked to do. Their response is very positive in lessons where teachers inspire pupils' interest and enthusiasm. They become totally engrossed in their tasks and respond with maturity and thoughtful insight in class discussions. They enjoy the very good range of clubs and activities on offer and willingly undertake responsibilities, for example as mediators for their peers, school councillors, hall monitors and litter-pickers. Pupils are polite and confident with adults, and are happy to talk about their work and their views of the school. Pupils with EAL mix well with their peers, whatever their background, and are very keen to participate fully in activities and school events.

8. Behaviour in class, in assemblies, at lunchtime and around the school is very good. Pupils get on very well together with no evidence of bullying or racism. Inspectors agree with the view of pupils who thought their school was 'very civilised' at breaktimes. Teachers and support staff work well as a team to provide good role models and bring out the best in pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are very good. Adults consistently expect pupils to respect a simple code of conduct that is summarised in just three rules, and to show consideration for others. As a result, pupils have a very clear idea of right and wrong and of how they are expected to behave. Well-established support systems, including anger management counselling, are in place for the few pupils with identified behavioural difficulties. These systems have usually proved successful in creating more positive attitudes and behaviour.

9. Two pupils accounted for the six fixed-term exclusions in the last academic year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
315	6	0

10. Attendance, at 94.8 per cent, is satisfactory. However, as at the time of the last inspection, most of the recorded absence is due to parents taking their children on holiday during term time. This is something that the school tries hard to discourage because of the effect that these absences have on the continuity of pupils' learning. With the close involvement of the education welfare officer, the school has developed very good monitoring systems to identify patterns of absence, and has introduced good attendance awards both for classes and individuals.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.2	School data :	0.5
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

11. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through aspects of personal and social education, circle time and assemblies, pupils are encouraged to reflect on ideas and principles such as negotiating skills, the value of compromise and the need to reconcile differences. Teachers are skilled in relating these themes to pupils' own experiences, making the most of opportunities for discussion and developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Once a week, local churches take it in turns to lead assemblies, giving pupils a wider experience of Christian teaching and values. The behaviour code promotes the message that pupils can make choices about their own behaviour and that their actions have an impact on others. Good behaviour, attitudes and work are celebrated in a variety of ways which boost confidence and self-esteem. Social development is enhanced by residential visits to a variety of study centres. Pupils' experience of their own culture and heritage is promoted well by visits to local places of interest but the school does not create enough opportunities for pupils to experience today's multicultural society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good and pupils are learning well. The progress that pupils make is assessed carefully, so that teaching can be closely matched to pupils' needs. This, together with the support they receive from teaching assistants, enables pupils with SEN and EAL to make good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is effective throughout the school.
- Teachers plan what they intend to teach very well, so that lessons are interesting, lively and exciting.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very effectively in the majority of lessons.
- Highly effective classroom routines underpin high standards of behaviour and develop the pupils' capacity to work both independently and collaboratively.
- Homework is used very well to encourage independent learning.

Commentary

12. Nearly three quarters of the lessons seen were good or better and more than one in five was very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory in nearly one tenth of lessons.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7 (22%)	16 (52%)	8 (26%)	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.

13. The quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy is good, and this enables the pupils to make good progress in these subjects. Lessons are very well planned, resulting in well-structured teaching that matches the needs of individual pupils. Teachers' questioning is clearly focused and this enables pupils to recall what they already knew and what they have learned, as well as promoting their speaking and listening skills. Activities are carefully chosen and interest the pupils in both written exercises and discussion. There is good support from teaching assistants for pupils with SEN or with EAL. They work as a team, and they ensure that all pupils, in every lesson, are actively involved as far as is possible. The relationship between staff and pupils is very good.

14. The teaching of ICT is good, and teachers offer very good role models by their routine use of it in lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants are confident and able to use their skills and understanding of programs. Pupils have good ICT skills and are confident in their use of computers and the Internet. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good, with teachers using ICT to stimulate their pupils and offer them a greater variety of potential resources. Teaching and learning are also good in art and music, and satisfactory in the other subjects of the curriculum.

15. The high proportion of good teaching is firmly based on good subject expertise and on the knowledge that teachers and teaching assistants have of the needs of their pupils. This knowledge enables them to plan securely for the progressive development of learning. Teachers have a good understanding of what they intend to achieve, and the objectives are shared with the pupils at the outset. Lessons are able to get off to a brisk start and pupils know what it is they are about to learn.

16. Teachers' management of pupils is very good. They foster the very good behaviour and highly positive attitudes shown by pupils. Teachers rarely raise their voices, exercise their authority courteously at all times, and obviously value the contributions of their pupils. As a consequence, relationships are both warm and constructive.

17. Teachers undertake informal assessments in lessons through focused questioning. They check at the end of lessons to see what pupils have learned. Marking of books is satisfactory. Formal assessments are made frequently in literacy and numeracy, and at the end of modules in other subjects. Pupils are given targets in literacy and numeracy so that they know how much progress they have made and what they still have to do. Homework is set regularly and is used both to consolidate what the pupils have been taught and to develop their ability for independent learning.

18. The quality of support provided by the EAL bilingual assistants is good. Much of the support is organised in partnership with the class teachers. Learning activities are closely linked to the mainstream curriculum. In the two instances of one-to-one support that were observed, pupils were fully involved because they were able to communicate with their assistant in their first language. Good use is made of initial assessments to pitch the demands of the activities to pupils' individual needs.

The curriculum

There is a good curriculum at the school. It is broad, balanced and relevant, providing an interesting range of activities. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Agreed Syllabus for religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Curriculum planning is good.
- Equality of opportunity is a very high priority.
- Opportunities for enrichment through the arts, sports and clubs are very good.
- The programme for ICT is particularly good and is a rapidly developing strength.
- However, the use of ICT in some subjects, such as history, is still relatively limited.

Commentary

19. The curriculum is well planned. It provides a clear overview to ensure that pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Good links have been established between subjects. The use of literacy and numeracy and, in particular, of ICT across the curriculum, is a rapidly developing strength. The National Strategies have been implemented effectively in all classes, with good additional support provided where necessary. The school is positively committed to inclusion and promotes pupils' equality of opportunity very well. Staff work hard to ensure that each pupil has access to all the activities on offer.

20. Whilst pupils with EAL benefit greatly from interacting with bilingual assistants in their own languages, the school does not actively draw upon pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds to enhance their insights into other cultures and languages. Good use is made of book loan services to enable pupils to have access to dual language materials.

21. Opportunities for enrichment through sports, arts and music are very good and are a major strength of the school. The wide range of clubs, visitors and visits, including residential experiences, is widely appreciated and promotes both independence and very good social skills.

22. The planned programme for ICT is exceptional. Excellent resources encourage staff and pupils to make very good use of both the ICT suite and the class sets of laptop computers to enhance their work. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well in almost all subjects, although its use in history is still rather limited.

23. The accommodation at the school is very good. Classrooms are spacious and well presented. Additional rooms for the teaching of ICT and drama, and the bright, welcoming library, are major strengths. The outdoor accommodation is good and provides opportunities for sport, play and care of the environment. Resources are good. They are particularly good in ICT, and the major investment in this area has enabled increasingly high standards to be attained in the subject.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It offers them very good support, advice and guidance and involves them fully in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school provides an attractive and secure learning environment in which pupils feel safe and confident.
- There are well-established and very effective systems of support, advice and guidance.
- Induction and transfer arrangements are very good.
- Pupils' views are taken into account and their ideas are valued.
- Healthy eating is not always promoted effectively.

Commentary

24. Health, safety and security are given a high priority by the school. The vigilance of staff, especially the site manager and the headteacher, ensures that pupils are well looked after. The attractive and interesting grounds are kept tidy and litter-free, and pupils clearly enjoy the amount of space that they have.

25. Appropriate child protection arrangements are in place and training is up to date. Pupils are confident they would know who to go to with a problem or concern, and the SENCO takes a prominent role in organising extra support for pupils who need it. Outside agencies are involved as necessary to offer help to families as well as individual pupils. The school plans to achieve 'barrier-free' status by September 2004 so that pupils with physical disabilities will be able to access all areas and take part in all activities. Staff work well as a team and know their pupils well. They maintain personal profiles for each pupil. This practice ensures that staff have a clear understanding of how pupils are progressing and that they are in a position to give effective guidance. The achievements and personal development of all pupils are regularly monitored.

26. Induction procedures are well managed, with a smooth transition arranged from Year 2 to Year 3. This is helped by a 'buddy' system for the youngest children when they start school. Parents are invited to join their children for a sample of activities and a tour of the school during an induction afternoon. Transfer to Year 7 is also carefully planned, with a developing programme of visits to the school by secondary school staff.

27. The school gives pupils abundant opportunities to be able to express their views and to learn to respect other people's beliefs and opinions. The school council is well established and pupils know that their suggestions are valued. However, some parents and some pupils are disappointed that the school has not kept to the idea of a 'healthy eating' tuck shop. Each year, pupils fill in a survey devised by Keele University to gauge opinion on a range of questions about school life, and this results in a very detailed analysis of what pupils think of their school. The results are studied and, if appropriate, acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are good links between the school, parents and other schools. The school is an integral part of its local community and pupils greatly benefit from this involvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There is a strong partnership between home and school which makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- Good links with other schools help to make transfer smooth for pupils.
- Links with the local community are very good and broaden pupils' experiences.

Commentary

28. The positive views of the parents reflect a high level of satisfaction with the work of the school. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting particularly praised the standard of ICT, the excellent range of clubs and the way the school handles queries or concerns. They were generally very pleased with their children's progress and felt that pupils had tremendous support from their teachers. However, some parents were not happy that the range of items on sale in the tuck shop no longer solely reinforces the idea of healthy eating. Inspectors support parents' positive views and agree that what is on offer in the tuck shop could usefully be reconsidered.

29. Information provided for parents about their children's progress is very good. This represents a big improvement since the last inspection, when the information provided about children's progress was found to be unsatisfactory. Annual reports are issued at Easter so that targets for improvement can be addressed in the summer term. These reports clearly indicate pupils' attainment and progress and also contain comments on personal development. In addition to the consultation evenings held each term, parents are invited into school for informal drop-in sessions on alternate Thursday afternoons. The school has good arrangements in place to survey parents and gain their views, which may then be fed into the school improvement planning process. Curriculum workshops and termly overviews ensure that parents are kept well informed about what their children are being taught.

30. The small PTA committee organises a range of social and fund-raising events that are well supported by parents. Nearly £3,000 was raised for the school last year, enabling the purchase of such items as portable cookers, library books, netball kit and a public address system.

31. The school plays a central part in the life of the local community by offering its premises to a range of organisations. There are particularly strong links with local churches whose representatives take assemblies on a regular basis. Some governors and other volunteers have been recruited as a result of these well-established connections. Links with secondary schools very effectively support the transfer of pupils at the age of 11. Very good links with the adjacent infant school mean that Year 2 pupils and their parents are familiar with the junior school before the children transfer at the start of the new school year.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school by the senior staff and governors are very good. The governors discharge their responsibilities very well. The leadership and vision of the headteacher are excellent. She is very ably supported by her deputy and colleagues.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Particularly strong leadership.
- A shared vision and sense of purpose.
- Very well organised and effective governing body.
- Total commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity by adults and children alike.

Commentary

32. The governing body is very effective. Governors play an active part in school life and they give strong and highly committed support. The committee structure is logical and well organised, with clear terms of reference. The governors receive good quality information about the school's performance and have a clear vision for the strategic development of the school. The minutes of their meetings are exemplary, and demonstrate that they fulfil their statutory duties. The educational priorities are established by staff and governors working closely together.

33. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. She provides the dynamic leadership that has ensured the recent development of the school. She is very well supported by her deputy and the other staff and governors, all of whom have a strong commitment to the development of the school and to the raising of standards. They share a clear sense of direction and purpose.

34. The school's aims and values are published widely. The respect, diligence and high quality relationships evident at all levels in the school demonstrate the commitment of pupils and adults alike to live up to them. The school is a particularly inclusive community committed to policies and practices which ensure that every pupil is included and is able to take part in all lessons and in all other activities.

35. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the core subject managers monitor the quality of teaching in classrooms by observing lessons and by evaluating the work of pupils. All subject managers monitor pupils' achievement and attainment through regular work-sampling. The school evaluates the performance data produced by national tests and its own internal testing. It makes very good use of this information to establish realistic and challenging performance targets for pupils in all classes, but particularly for the pupils at the end of the primary phase of their education in Year 6.

36. A comprehensive programme of performance management for teachers is in place. School and individual targets are agreed and reviewed. Continuing professional development is a strong feature, and priority is given to the needs of both the individual and the school. There is a very good induction process and programme of support for new staff.

Financial information

37. The financial management of the school is good. Analysis of the monthly monitoring statements provides the finance committee of governors with accurate information. Funds are directed to the priority areas and, when it is necessary, firm action is taken to avoid overspending. The governors' policy of achieving best value in their transactions is very effective.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	735,820.00
Total expenditure	680,139.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,166.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	87,273.00
Balance carried forward to the next year	142,954.00

38. The amount of money carried forward in the accounts is high, but it includes provision for substantial expenditure on ICT equipment, maintenance of staffing levels and other planned developments. The deployment of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) is appropriately targeted to provide specialist staffing. The EAL manager and the headteacher have a good understanding of the issues involved and have established effective contacts with the authority's EAL support service and other staff in order to improve pupils' attendance.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Overall standards have improved.
- Provision for reading is very good and this is reflected in the most recent results.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes are very positive.
- Standards in writing are lower than in reading, but the school is working hard to improve them.

Commentary

39. The school has made good progress in developing pupils' English skills since the last inspection. Pupils enter the school with standards that are average. By the end of Year 6, the majority, irrespective of ability, gender or ethnic background, have achieved well and standards are above average overall. The good quality of teaching and the use of assessment information to support groups and individuals have enabled the school to make good improvement.

40. Standards in speaking and listening are above average overall by the end of Year 6. Most pupils engage well in discussion and participate actively when responding to shared texts. Because of the teachers' high expectations and the effective use of questioning, many pupils demonstrate good skills in responding to questions and in sharing ideas with their peers. Planning is used well to identify where opportunities for speaking and listening are likely to occur, for example in working with a partner when editing a first draft, discussing the use of legal and illegal drugs during personal, social and health education (PSHE) or discussing shelters in design and technology. In lessons, attention is focused on key vocabulary and pupils are encouraged to guess what is meant.

41. Pupils achieve particularly well in reading, the development of their knowledge and enjoyment of books going hand in hand with the development of their reading skills. In Year 6, pupils are confident and read a rich variety of books. They cope well with demanding material, read independently and use non-fiction material for research purposes. Teachers' records contain useful information on pupils' progress, including targets for improvement. The school provides a wide range of additional resources and adult support for poor readers. The library facilities are very good. They are well organised, and this encourages pupils to browse and to access information.

42. By the end of Year 6, standards in writing are broadly average. Higher attainers write extensively and produce a variety of narrative and non-narrative texts. Writing is well organised, with appropriate use of paragraphs and complex sentences. Different types of writing include poetry, play-scripts, letters and newspaper reports. Handwriting is generally legible and fluent, with many pupils successfully using a cursive script. The presentation of work is satisfactory overall, and often good. The school is aware that writing is not as strong as reading and has identified strategies to improve it. For example, planning for writing is now much more focused than it was previously, and there is also greater emphasis on teachers discussing a range of model texts with their pupils and demonstrating the writing skills involved.

43. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of English that is reflected in the range of methods used and the creativity with which learning objectives are implemented and achieved. Where teaching is particularly effective, pupils are enthused, challenged and actively involved. Very good use is made of demonstration and questioning to establish and extend learning in lessons conducted at a brisk pace. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson with a group of lower attaining pupils where the combination of high expectations and effective methods led to a high degree of involvement. The teacher used whiteboards to assess the pupils' understanding immediately, enabling them to develop their ideas in response to skilful questioning. The good teaching and very effective use of teaching assistants ensure that the pupils' learning is continuously extended.

44. A very significant feature of all lessons was the very effective use of information from a laptop computer projected onto the board. This helped the pupils to focus, for example, on a shared text, and proved a very effective way of supporting whole-class discussion. Good use of ICT by pupils was also seen in lessons, including some English lessons conducted in the ICT suite.

45. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and committed manager who is keen to raise pupils' achievement. The analysis of data and the monitoring of teaching and learning have been used to identify not only those pupils who would benefit from extra support, but also the priorities for development which are reflected in the current whole-school focus on improving writing. Assessment arrangements are good and the information obtained is used effectively to group the pupils and target support where it is needed. Resources are good and are used very well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. Provision for teaching literacy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. Although opportunities are highlighted in the literacy plans, they are not always made clear in some other subjects. Good use is made of speaking, listening and writing skills, particularly in science, geography and PSHE.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are above average and have improved since the last inspection.
- Very good use is made of ICT.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Pupils' learning is not reinforced sufficiently at the end of some lessons.

Commentary

47. Standards in mathematics in Year 6 are above average. In the 2003 national tests, three quarters of pupils reached the expected standard, with nearly a third achieving higher levels. All pupils achieve well. Those with SEN are given work that is at the right level for them and they are well supported by teaching assistants, so that they also make good progress. There is no significant difference between the progress made by boys and girls, or by pupils from minority ethnic groups. The setting arrangement that the school has adopted extends the higher attaining pupils, but does not dishearten those who find the subject more difficult, so that all pupils achieve well.

48. Teaching and learning in mathematics are always at least good. Lesson planning ensures that all teachers have a secure understanding of the work and the resources available to support teaching. The objectives for each lesson are shared with the pupils before the oral starter engages their attention and prepares them for the main part of the lesson. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and, because they are aware of difficulties that particular pupils may have,

extra attention can readily be given when it is required. Pupils find the work stimulating and interesting. This motivates them and they respond by working hard and showing high levels of enjoyment. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well and manage their behaviour very well. Relationships are very good and play a positive role in maintaining the quality of learning in mathematics. All adults are skilled in the use of different strategies to support numeracy. They take every opportunity to praise and encourage success. Pupils respond positively and are very keen to participate and show what they know, understand and can do. However, short plenary sessions to review what has been learned by the end of lessons do not always take place. Homework exercises are chosen judiciously to help the pupils consolidate their understanding and promote independent learning. Assessment of progress and the setting of targets to be achieved are good overall and provide clear information about progress for pupils and teachers alike. The use of ICT in lessons is very good, especially as a teaching resource to engage and motivate the pupils.

49. The subject manager is a new appointee who acknowledges the contribution of her predecessor to the good improvement that has been made since the last inspection. A whole-school audit of mathematics has been completed, and a subject improvement plan is being implemented. The careful analyses of the most recent Standardised Attainment Targets (SATs) papers and the non-statutory tests, and the conclusions drawn from them, are indicators that the subject is well managed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their numeracy skills in other subjects. The National Numeracy Strategy is well embedded into the fabric of the curriculum. In geography, pupils use tally charts and graphs in explaining land use in the local neighbourhood and use scales with positive and negative numbers in connection with temperature in science. Graphs are also used to explore the relationship, or lack of it, between shoe size and height and circumference of head and height. In ICT, pupils use data to develop their use and understanding of spreadsheets.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Provision for practical activities is good.
- Pupils' enjoyment of lessons is good and they behave well.
- Leadership provides a clear focus.
- There is little evidence of independent learning.

Commentary

51. Pupils enjoy the practical nature of science lessons. They are keen and eager to have a turn at the various experiments and work well with their peers to achieve accurate results. By the end of Year 6, pupils assessed in the 2002 national tests had achieved the expected standard. Although results were slightly below this in 2003, they are expected to rise in the current year to meet the expected level once again.

52. In the three lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was always satisfactory, with particularly good use of practical experiments to focus pupils' enthusiasm, as was the case in the last inspection. Teachers' knowledge is good. They make good use of questioning to encourage pupils to think about their tasks carefully. The good use of scientific vocabulary helps pupils to talk accurately about their work. However, not enough attention is paid to enabling pupils to make choices, discuss their ideas and design their own experiments. Pupils are not always asked to think about 'how' they could find answers to questions. Where this does happen, learning improves and

pupils develop greater understanding and skill. For example, in a lesson observed in Year 5, pupils were required to devise their own recording method and organise their own resources to find out the volume of air in different soils. They responded well to this challenge and to their work. Evidence from lessons and the scrutiny of work indicate that all pupils undertake the same activity in the same way, with little evidence of independent thought.

53. Leadership of science is good and there is clear awareness of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject. Resources are appropriate. The skills of literacy and numeracy are used well in support of science. Plans are rightly in place to increase the use of ICT tools and equipment and to provide more challenge for higher attaining pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils are confident users of ICT and they achieve very well.
- Standards of attainment across the school are high.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support and enhance teaching in other curriculum areas.
- A good range of appropriate programs is used to support those pupils who need extra help.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is particularly well resourced, managed and maintained.
- Although it is developing rapidly, the use of ICT is still relatively limited in history.

54. Only two ICT lessons were observed during the inspection. However, inspectors saw ICT used very extensively in other lessons, talked with pupils and scrutinised work. Pupils throughout the school attain higher standards than those expected nationally. Year 3 pupils are proficient at basic word-processing skills and are able to save their work and print it. They know how to programme instructions to control a robot. They talk confidently about the wide range of uses of technology outside of school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are knowledgeable users of the Internet and other sources of information for research. They present their findings by using a range of techniques including digital pictures. They can discuss the merits of using ICT for various purposes, for example in communication systems, and are aware of the extent of its uses in their everyday life. Their confidence in using ICT is very good and, for many, it is enhanced by the opportunities provided at home. By the end of Year 6, their ICT skills are impressive.

55. In the two lessons seen, teaching was good. Teachers and teaching assistants have been able to develop their own skills and are able to teach with confidence and good technical knowledge. Their use of open-ended questions and their positive and encouraging teaching style enable pupils of all abilities to develop skills and understanding.

56. In these lessons, the teaching was positive and confident, based upon very good knowledge of the program being used. The questioning of pupils was excellent and teachers were skilled at enabling pupils to make choices. A notable feature of both lessons was the way in which pupils helped one another and co-operated with others. They were able to explore and experiment in a constructive way, confident that they were able to recover their data and that help was available if needed. In this way, they made considerable gains in their understanding and, as a result, personal achievement in ICT is high. Pupils with SEN make good progress, particularly when they have their teaching assistants with them at the computer to keep their thinking focused.

57. Appropriate software packages enhance learning in other curriculum areas and increasingly benefit those who need extra consolidation in a different format. In most of the lessons observed during the inspection, and in most of the subject areas, ICT was used very effectively by the teachers to introduce resource material to the lesson or to support the learning objectives. Extensive use was made of material prepared on their laptop computers and projected onto a whiteboard so that the whole class could see clearly.

58. The subject is led very well by a knowledgeable and experienced manager. She is able to monitor the quality of work and the standards achieved by pupils. She has a very clear vision of future needs and is confident about extending the use of the facilities. The very considerable investment in equipment, training, resources and technical support is evidently beginning to have an impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The new computer suite and the two class sets of laptop machines have only recently been commissioned, but their use across a range of subjects is impressive, and rapidly developing. A notable strength of the provision is the employment of an ICT technician, who is able to provide rapid and very effective support. He is able to resolve problems, thereby removing the stress of maintenance from the teachers, and this enables them to teach with confidence.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Good use of ICT is seen throughout the school in many of the subjects. For example, digital cameras are used in geography, recorded music is used extensively, and pupils record their own compositions. Relatively little use of ICT was seen in history. Word processing is commonplace, and the Internet is an increasingly familiar resource for information. Good use is made of information from CD-ROMs.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Use of the local and wider environment is very good.
- Research skills, particularly through the use of ICT, are developing.

Commentary

60. Only one lesson of geography was observed. However, scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display, and discussions with staff all show that a broad, balanced range of activities takes place in each class.

61. Younger pupils learn about the link between the weather and the activities undertaken. They begin to use appropriate geographical vocabulary well from the earliest years. As they move through the school, pupils in Years 4 and 5 study old Portsmouth town and use maps to identify key features. They describe the physical and human factors of the town, but are not yet linking the two or identifying the impact of one on the other. Pupils in Year 6 have undertaken a study of rivers across the world. Many can identify the names of major rivers and place them on a world map. Their geographical skills are developing appropriately.

62. The use of the community and the residential experiences offered are very good. All pupils have the opportunity to undertake a residential trip. These play a valuable part in the development of pupils' awareness of the world around them, and in the development of social and personal skills.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Effective use of local history and visits enhances learning.
- There is no clear map of provision in history to show how pupils are intended to develop key skills systematically over time.
- There is a lack of opportunities for pupils to undertake independent research, particularly using ICT.

Commentary

63. Judgements are based on limited evidence. Only two lessons were seen, but judgements are also based on samples of past work, analysis of documents and discussions with staff.

64. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils show appropriate knowledge and understanding of the causes of World War II. They can identify the main leaders of the war and show satisfactory ability to use secondary sources of evidence to find information. There is good evidence that pupils use their literacy skills well in history, but little evidence of the use of ICT.

65. Teaching and learning observed were satisfactory. Teachers' secure knowledge of the subject and their effective use of questioning ensure that pupils develop their skills systematically. Good emphasis is placed on chronology, and this leads to pupils being clear about interpreting time-lines. However, not enough opportunities are created for pupils to undertake their own research, either by using books, reports, photographs and artefacts, or through the use of ICT. Too often, pupils are provided with information to discuss or to write about. This inhibits their independence in learning and their ability to achieve higher standards.

66. The local environment is used well to promote interest and knowledge, and the rich historical background of Portsmouth is celebrated effectively.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Older pupils develop a sound understanding of the main rites of passage.
- There are good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills, but limited opportunities for extended writing to stimulate the high attainers.

Commentary

67. Pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with SEN, have equal access to the religious education curriculum. Only two lessons were observed, and much of the work covered in religious education lessons centred around discussion; as a consequence there was limited written work to examine. Nevertheless, inspection evidence obtained by talking to pupils and looking at their work and by talking to teachers and looking at their planning supports the judgement that the quality of teaching and learning is sound. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

68. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lesson planning clearly indicates what pupils are expected to learn and do. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils, so that they are aware of what they are to do. There are good opportunities for pupils to undertake focused discussion, develop speaking and listening skills and develop their personal and social skills. In one lesson observed, the teacher made good use of the experience of a pupil who briefly spoke to the class about his journey to Mecca on pilgrimage. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 show they are beginning to link religious teaching with everyday life. For example, they recognise the difference between infant baptism and total immersion, and they recognise the importance of each practice to believers. Use is made of the Internet to engage the pupils' interest, and there are some opportunities for higher attaining pupils to extend their ideas in written form. However, too many recording activities include pictures, or require simply the completion of worksheets with one word or short sentences for answers. Nevertheless, by Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

69. The management of religious education is satisfactory. The subject manager monitors teachers' planning and samples pupils' work. Assessment follows the school's guidelines for the foundation subjects. The subject action plan includes refining the overall planning to include the greater use of ICT in lessons and the improvement of links with other faiths. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The curriculum provides a very wide range of projects including two- and three-dimensional work.
- Pupils produce finished artwork of a very high standard.
- Good use is made of ICT.
- The range of materials and resources available to teachers and pupils is very good.
- Skills and techniques are developed as the pupils move through the school.

Commentary

70. Only two art lessons were seen, and in these the quality of teaching and learning was at least good. However, it is clear from a scrutiny of sketchbooks, finished artwork and the rich abundance of art on display about the school that teaching is good overall and that pupils achieve high standards. The quality of artwork achieved by individual pupils and by classes is of a very high standard and is displayed with great care about the school. Finished work by pupils is displayed alongside the work of established artists. It includes three-dimensional work of high quality. Increasing use is being made of ICT for research and to present ideas and images to pupils, although the direct use of drawing and painting programs to compose images and patterns on the screen is still fairly limited.

71. The range of experiences offered to pupils is very broad. They are able to experience and explore an impressive range of activities from drawing, painting and printing to three-dimensional modelling and sculpture. The programme is designed and planned to enable the pupils to develop their artistic skills and build upon their earlier experience. Art is used very extensively to enhance the other subjects of the curriculum and is used very imaginatively as the starting point for other topics, for example in a unit on relationships. It makes a very valuable contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils.

72. Planning for art across the school is logical and well structured. The range of activities is ambitious. Resources are good for drawing, painting, printing and three-dimensional work. Opportunities are taken to draw inspiration and technical skills from the art of other cultures and the work of established artists. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils develop their design and evaluation skills well.
- Pupils collaborate well when investigating design.
- There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

Commentary

73. Standards in design and technology were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection and there has been sound improvement. Pupils in Year 6 achieve levels of knowledge and skill in design and technology which are broadly appropriate for their age. Two lessons were observed, but further evidence obtained by talking with pupils and teachers and by looking at pupils' work and teachers' planning confirms that the quality of teaching and learning is sound overall.

74. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. The quality of teachers' planning is good and the scheme of work identifies full coverage of the National Curriculum. The emphasis given to designing, making, evaluating and amending means that all pupils, including those with SEN, are well motivated to complete their work to a satisfactory standard. This was particularly apparent in a lesson in which pupils were looking at the design of different structures. In a very mature manner they discussed ways in which different materials had been used to best meet the purpose of the construction. Teachers give appropriate individual support to pupils based on a clear knowledge of what they have already achieved and what they are capable of achieving. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of the curriculum. Both girls and boys become very involved in their work and behave well. The collaboration between pupils in this subject makes an effective contribution to pupils' social development. Teachers are following appropriate assessment procedures which provide helpful information when planning what needs to be taught next. Good use is made of ICT during lessons.

75. The subject manager has had a positive effect on standards and provides good educational direction for the subject. By observing lessons and by monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' evaluations of their work, she has been able to monitor the quality of the teaching and learning and to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are being taught.

Music and physical education

76. Only two lessons each were seen in music and physical education and it was therefore not possible to make firm judgements about provision. In addition to observing these lessons, discussions were held with the co-ordinators about their role and influence on the subjects.

77. In **music**, pupils were observed in Years 3 and 5. The subject knowledge of the teachers enables the pupils to develop their skills. In the lessons seen, standards were as expected and pupils achieved well because of the good quality of the teaching. A distinctive strength of music is the school's involvement in the 'wider opportunities project' which is focused on developing pupils' knowledge of jazz blues. The Year 5 lesson was a good illustration of the impact made on learning by having the project specialists working closely with the class teachers. The school is committed to widening the opportunities for pupils' musical experience and many pupils benefit from specialist tuition in a range of instruments. For example, up to 40 pupils are learning to play the guitar.

78. In **physical education** the school works hard to promote sport and makes good provision for extra-curricular clubs for football, hockey, netball and trampoline. The scrutiny of planning and discussions with teachers and pupils confirm that all the elements of the subject, including outdoor and adventurous activities, are taught during the year. Groups of pupils benefit from sessions at a local swimming pool, and standards in swimming are good by the end of Year 6. Good use is made of links to other subjects. For example, in a dance lesson seen in Year 4, pupils were developing an Indian dance sequence based on the story of Rama and Sita. They paid great attention to the gestures and movements, drawing on their knowledge and prompted by their teacher. Individuals and groups worked well together and achieved a good quality of performance.

79. Music is well planned and well managed. Temporarily, it is being managed by the headteacher working with a newly qualified colleague who is to take over as subject manager in the autumn. Physical education is managed by an enthusiastic teacher who is building good links with the neighbouring secondary school through the use of its facilities, and who is widening the opportunities for pupils to participate in sport.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The subject plays a major part in the school's approach to developing the social and personal attributes and skills of its pupils.
- Pupils of all ages, from the youngest in Year 3 to the oldest in Year 6, respond very positively.

Commentary

80. The programme of PSHE and citizenship is thorough and comprehensive. Many of the issues and structures that underpin the school's objectives are contained in the programme and are taught at the appropriate point in the pupils' development. The programme includes units on sex and relationships education and addresses issues of drugs misuse. There is considerable flexibility in the programme, so that activities such as circle time can be used to address issues of immediate concern to the children in a secure and supportive environment. Good use is made of external agencies, and also of individual professionals, such as the community police liaison officer.

81. Observation of PSHE lessons across the school shows evidence of good and very good teaching and of a very good response from the pupils. A very notable strength is the way in which every pupil is included and respected. Discussion with groups of pupils during breaks revealed their confidence in being able to talk through a range of issues and occasional concerns in an open and democratic way. The activities make a very strong contribution to the social, moral and spiritual development of the pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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