

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HAWES DOWN INFANT SCHOOL**

West Wickham, Bromley

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101591

Headteacher: Mrs S Cartwright

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Nelson  
20991

Dates of inspection: 15-18 May 2000

Inspection number: 189260

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 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Mead West Wickham Kent
Postcode:	BR4 0BA
Telephone number:	020 8777 4420
Fax number:	020 8777 1076
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Marian Maclaren
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J Nelson	Registered inspector	Science Information technology History Music Religious education Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs C Webb	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs J Penfold	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education Under-fives	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs A Storm	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Special educational needs The work of the special opportunities unit	

The inspection contractor was:

Full Circle  
35 Trewartha Park  
Weston-Super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 2RT

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hawes Down Infant School serves its local community, which is an area of private housing in West Wickham. It is an average size school that has 199 pupils who attend full time. There are more boys in the school than girls: 119 boys and 80 girls. When children start school most have had some pre-school experience in a large variety of nursery and pre-school situations. Their language, number and social skills are mainly above average. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Six per cent have African, Caribbean and Asian heritage and four pupils have English as an additional language. A third of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is higher than the national average. Eleven of these have Statements of Special Educational Need and ten are taught in the school's Special Opportunities Unit, which caters for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school is very effective. It achieves high standards through good teaching, high expectations, very purposeful leadership and management, and the shared commitment to improvement. Pupils behave very well and are keen to work. The school gives very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards are high overall in English, mathematics and science.
- The teaching is mainly good and much of the teaching in Year 2 is outstanding. Teachers provide a very high quality curriculum with stimulating practical activities and visits that capture pupils' interest.
- The teaching of the pupils in the Special Opportunities Unit is good and encourages pupils to achieve their best.
- The headteacher is very effective and sets an excellent tone for the work of the school, through her high expectations that are understood by all, and this is a key feature in the school's success.
- Very good support is offered to pupils for their personal and social development, and special educational needs.

#### **What could be improved**

- The weekly plans and the marking of work, as these do not make enough use of the best practice in planning and assessment.
- The secure outdoor play facilities for reception children and pupils in the Special Opportunities Unit.

*(the school had already identified these matters and is planning on how to improve them)*

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in September 1996 when it was found to be a very good school. In 1998, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools identified the school as one that was highly successful. The school has continued to sustain high standards and make good improvement. The lack of multi-cultural education noted in 1996 has been dealt with very well and now teachers incorporate this in many parts of the curriculum. The structure of lessons has been modified so better use is now made of time. Since the last inspection the school's Special Opportunities Unit has doubled in size. These pupils are achieving very well for their abilities but may not always reach the expected standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. This has had some negative impact on the school's overall

percentage results in national assessment tests. Performance in tests has been sustained at very high standards for pupils who are in the mainstream classes. Recently the school has been concentrating on improving the teaching of aspects of mathematics to raise standards further and inspection evidence indicates that this has been highly successful.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds, including those in the Special Opportunities Unit, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	A*	B	B	C
Writing	A*	A	A	B
Mathematics	A*	B	A	B

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

*Similar schools are those that have up to and including eight per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

By five years old most children are achieving better than expected for this age group in English and mathematics. They have good knowledge and understanding of the world and their personal and social development is also better than average. Their physical and creative development is as expected for this age group.

Last year in national assessments, in the mainstream classes, all pupils gained the expected standard in the mathematics test and in teachers' assessments of science. Almost all gained the standards expected in reading and writing. Results at the higher Level 3 were above average in reading and mathematics, and well above average in writing. The standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are above average in English, mathematics and science overall. They are well on track to achieve the school's targets for national assessment tests. Pupils' speaking and listening, writing and skills with number are particularly strong. The Year 2 pupils in the Special Opportunities Unit are achieving very highly and mainly reaching the expected standards for English and mathematics. In the other subjects, Year 2 pupils are reaching the standards expected for this age group with some features exceeding this: in design and technology, pupils' design skills are better than usually seen; in geography their knowledge of maps and globes is good; in music pupils' singing is a strength. Year 1 pupils are also demonstrating some strengths in their work, for example in writing about their experiences in history and religious education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are attentive and interested in their lessons, settle down to work quickly, and are keen to do their best and please their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils understand the school's expectations for good behaviour and conform to these sensibly in class and around the school. They are well behaved at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very strong. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and their teachers.
Attendance	Very good. Parents indicate that almost all pupils enjoy coming to school. Lessons start promptly and no time is wasted.

The purposeful and happy atmosphere in the school is a major strength that has a real impact on pupils' attitudes to their work and behaviour. The teachers' high expectations, and sensitive promotion of moral and social codes, result in very good behaviour and make all aware of others, their needs and feelings. The school has very good procedures to promote and monitor all pupils' personal development, and those followed in the Special Opportunities Unit are very effective.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall: 41	Satisfactory	Very good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

The quality of teaching across the school is good overall. Ninety-five per cent of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better; over three-quarters was good or better, with 42 per cent of lessons judged to be very good or excellent. At Key Stage 1, teaching was very good overall and is a key factor in the success pupils have in their learning. Two unsatisfactory lessons were taught in the reception year, although six out of ten lessons demonstrated good or better teaching in that year group. The weak teaching was due to insecure class management and the activities not matching all the children's needs. English and mathematics teaching is very effective overall. Teachers have successfully developed new approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy and the results can be seen in the well above average standards which pupils are achieving particularly in number work. Other subjects, such as science, history, geography, and religious education are used well to help pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills. Weekly planning for subjects such as religious education and history does not always state the lesson objectives clearly enough. Marking does not readily show how well pupils have learned work. Most teachers have very good skills in class management. This is reflected in calm classes where pupils are learning at a good rate. Teachers prepare interesting activities and present new ideas in lively, stimulating ways that makes pupils enthusiastic about their learning. Pupils who are capable of higher attainment are being particularly well challenged in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by learning assistants, who are usually skilled at assisting them with literacy and numeracy tasks and help them by careful explanations of activities. The pupils in the

Special Opportunities Unit are being taught very effectively and this is reflected in their very good achievement.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Children under five experience a good range of activities. The Key Stage 1 curriculum is broad with all subjects well organised. Strengths include the links that teachers make between subjects, and the visits and visitors that enhance the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	These pupils' needs are very well met, both in the main school and in the Special Opportunities Unit.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision overall. These aspects make an important contribution to pupils' personal development. Visits to places of cultural and religious interest, and artists and musicians in school, are playing a significant part in promoting spiritual, cultural and multi-cultural understanding.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well cared for. Staff understand pupils' needs and problems are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. There are good procedures for tracking pupils' progress in learning and their personal development.

The school puts a high priority on working in partnership with parents. Parents have confidence in the school. A good number of parents help in classrooms. There are regular, well-supported events for families as well as meetings about children's progress and curriculum matters.

#### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's purposeful and very effective leadership provides clear direction for the school's improvement. A strong professional team has been forged, able to co-ordinate and monitor subjects effectively, and to tackle new initiatives successfully.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body, newly constituted in January, is fulfilling its responsibilities soundly through its committees. Governors are led effectively and are supportive of the school, but are not yet fully monitoring its performance and shaping the school's long-term future.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses pupils' performance in national tests soundly and uses other performance data to judge improvement. There are good procedures to monitor the curriculum, teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Resources targeted to special initiatives, such as improving literacy and information technology, have been well spent on books, equipment and training.

The school has sufficient well-qualified teachers, and efficient administrative and learning support staff. Its accommodation is well cared for but there is very limited secure outdoor play space for children

under five, and this cannot be accessed easily from one reception classroom. This limits children's opportunity to use large wheeled toys and climbing apparatus to develop their physical skills. Subjects are well resourced for learning. The school uses National Curriculum and baseline test results to compare its standards and costs with other similar schools locally. It makes sure that services are bought at the right price.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way that pupils are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The good behaviour at the school.</li> <li>• The approachability of the staff and their care for the children.</li> <li>• The way the school is led and managed.</li> <li>• The good teaching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several parents commented that class sizes are too large so pupils do not get enough individual attention.</li> <li>• A few parents expressed concern about the washing and toilet facilities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors confirm the positive views that the parents express. Class sizes are large but the school is following a plan to gradually reduce numbers to a maximum of 30 per class. Many lessons have learning support assistants or support teachers working with the pupils so they can get more attention. At other times pupils are grouped in smaller sets for mathematics and literacy lessons. Inspectors consider that the school is doing everything it can on this matter. Inspectors noted that some improvements were needed to washing facilities and the school has plans for refurbishment of some of the toilet facilities. A few other minor health and safety matters have been identified to the school and governing body.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

##### *The Under-fives*

1. Children start school with above average skills in language and number. Other aspects of their development are broadly average. Assessments made soon after the start of the reception year indicate that up to a quarter have already gained the expected literacy skills for five year olds, and a half have reached these expectations in number.
2. Progress in the reception classes is generally sound but varies between the two classes. There is more rapid progress in one class where the teaching is consistently good and often very good. The partnership between support assistants and teachers is generally effective in providing interesting activities. Most children now five have already achieved the early learning goals set for this age group and attain above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This achievement is that which might be expected, given pupils' attainment levels when they enter reception. The children's personal and social development is good and by the age of five they demonstrate greater levels of independence and confidence than are typical for children of this age.
3. Practical activities and good relationships between the children and the adults encourage the children to explore the world around them, and by the time they reach five their knowledge and understanding of their environment and the natural world are above average. The children's creative development is sound and they achieve satisfactorily in their art and craft. The children enjoy their sessions in the hall with small apparatus, and make sound progress in their physical development. However, they miss out on the opportunity to use large apparatus and wheeled toys outdoors due to inadequate secure play facilities.

##### *Key Stage 1*

4. Pupils' performance in the statutory assessments in reading, writing and mathematics has been maintained at a very high level over the past few years. Since the last inspection the school's Special Opportunities Unit, for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, has increased in size and now has ten pupils. These pupils are achieving very well for their abilities but may not always reach the expected standards in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. This has had some negative impact on the school's overall results in national assessment tests. In the 1999 tests the school's results were well above the national average in writing and mathematics, and above average in reading. The pupils also did better than pupils in schools that have similar characteristics in writing and mathematics<sup>1</sup> and they reached similar standards in reading. In all three tests almost all pupils reached the level expected of seven year olds (Level 2). In reading and writing the proportion of pupils who reached a higher Level 3 was well above the national average in writing and better than in most schools in reading and mathematics. In both reading and writing, the girls outperformed the boys, as is the case nationally. The gap between them in writing is slightly wider than typically seen, although the

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<sup>1</sup> Comparisons are made on the basis of the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. An adjustment has been made for mathematics to one grade higher than allocated by computer statistics in respect of this benchmark information; this reflects more accurately the 100 per cent attainment, at Level 2 or better, of pupils in the main school.

- boys still did much better than the boys in most other schools. In mathematics the boys and girls had quite similar performance.
5. There are no statutory tests in science at the end of Key Stage 1 and assessment is carried out by the teachers. In 1999 this showed that the proportion of pupils reaching Level 2 was higher than in schools nationally, and that a very high number reached Level 3. Overall, in 1999, pupils in Hawes Down had the typical performance of pupils in similar schools in science.
  6. Inspection found standards to be above average at the end of the key stage. The school is on course to achieve the targets it has set in reading, writing and mathematics. These targets are based on a suitable analysis of assessment information for these pupils and are set to be challenging, yet achievable.
  7. In English, standards are, overall, above average. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very well developed. In lessons they listen attentively to the teacher and follow discussions carefully. In all lessons there are frequent opportunities for oral work and pupils show good confidence in expressing their views and joining in discussions. Pupils make good progress in reading and standards are above average. By Year 2, all pupils read widely and competently, and they are enthusiastic about the stories and books they read. The library time is proving effective in helping pupils to develop their skills in locating particular books and reading for information. Progress in writing is very good and the pupils achieve very well. By the age of seven they understand how different styles of writing are used for different purposes, and there are many examples in their books of lengthy well-written factual accounts of events, as well as stories. The attention given to improving the quality of boys' writing has been effective. However, in handwriting, standards are average. The oldest pupils print legibly and quite neatly in script, but few have taken the next step to develop a cursive style, although many are clearly ready to do this, so standards could be higher. The specialist support provided for pupils with special educational needs means they too make good progress. Sessions in small groups ensure that the pupils have opportunities to reinforce and practise what they have learned in class.
  8. Standards of numeracy are very good. Basic skills are very well taught and by Year 2 pupils have a very thorough understanding of the number system. Their skills in mental calculation are developing particularly well. Pupils are adept at using their knowledge of tables and number patterns to perform calculations in their heads. Standards in other aspects of mathematics - shape, space and measures and handling information - are well above average and teachers effectively develop pupils' skills in these areas through other subjects. For example, pupils frequently measure, calculate and record their science investigations in tables and graphs.
  9. In science, many pupils attain standards that are higher than expected for their age. In their practical work they are developing good skills of scientific enquiry. When discussing their work many demonstrate an above average knowledge and understanding of the science they are studying. Oral work is better than written work, where the organisation and presentation is not of as high a standard as it could be.
  10. Pupils achieve the standards expected in information technology by the end of Year 2. Progress is generally satisfactory, but if more adult help was available greater use could be made of the small computer suite facilities. A good feature is the way pupils are using information technology to enhance work in several other subjects, such as the design work on coats, using an art package, which pupils have experienced in Year 2.

11. The school has maintained the sound standards seen at the time of the last inspection in religious education. By Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of religious practices and their knowledge of beliefs and values is appropriate for their age. Pupils have a good knowledge of the importance and variety of local religious buildings. Year 1 pupils have learned a lot about these, and written about them very well for their age.
12. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills and talents in art, and design and technology, despite more time being devoted now to literacy and numeracy. The standards of work seen in lessons and on display are as expected for pupils for this age with several good features. Pupils produce designs for working models that are of a good standard. Pupils' artwork is lively, imaginative and demonstrates an appropriate understanding of the use of colour, materials and techniques to produce different effects.
13. In history, by the end of the key stage, pupils' work indicates that they have secure knowledge and understanding of how lifestyles have changed over time, and of the impact of changes on the local area. The Year 1 pupils' long, well-written accounts of a visit to a castle show very good understanding of life in a past time. In geography, the standard of pupils' work is as expected for their age. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils make good progress in developing their skills in map-work, through field studies and looking at maps and globes showing places further afield.
14. It was not possible to see a full range of physical education activities to make a secure overall judgement on standards. In gymnastic sessions, Year 2 pupils' movements were quite agile and controlled and they were well motivated by lively teaching. They showed a good ability to evaluate their own work and that of others when answering questions to help them do better.
15. The school and pupils benefit from several staff having skills in music, and this was seen to have a positive effect on the standard of singing, which is better than usual for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. It was not possible to judge the overall standards in music as playing and composition activities were not observed. However, the good range of music activities that pupils experience is clearly a strength.
16. The improvement in the overall quality of teaching means that the most able pupils have appropriate demands made on them. These pupils are achieving as well as they should be. This is particularly the case in numeracy lessons, and their achievements reflect their capabilities.
17. The achievements and progress of pupils with special educational needs are good overall. The progress of those in the Special Opportunities Unit is very good, particularly in English, given their starting points. The close liaison between class teachers and the teachers who give specialist support to pupils with special educational needs is highly effective. It ensures that the support is usually well focused to compliment whole-class teaching. A reflection of this success is that, although the school has a high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register, almost all pupils gain the expected standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Similarly the pupils in the main school who have specific talents, for example in mathematics, are being provided with demanding work. Very few pupils have English as an additional language, but those who are supported in this respect are making equally good progress as their peers.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

18. The school continues successfully to encourage pupils into the very positive attitudes and values reported by the last inspection. Behaviour and relationships are very good. Children are eager to come to school and almost all arrive on time. Their attendance is very good. A vibrant, happy atmosphere is fostered by staff's high expectations and the school's ethos. Staff know all the pupils very well and are trusted to deal with their concerns.
19. Pupils are enthusiastic and develop good work habits from the time they start school. They are interested in their lessons and want to please their teachers. "I try so hard with my writing that I get needles and pins things in my hands" was one comment made. They like the stickers and stars they receive for good work and enjoy celebrating their success with their peers. A caring ethos soon develops with children offering to share equipment if there is not enough to go round. They are very aware of those less fortunate than themselves. They help each other if one is hurt in the playground, where play is amicable and lively. Pupils from the Special Opportunities Unit are very well integrated and mingle well with their peers at playtimes.
20. Pupils behave very well. There have been no exclusions this year. In lessons they concentrate hard on their tasks and endeavour to complete these and this is a key feature of the high achievement seen in the inspection. For example, without exception when they enter class in the morning or after lunch they know what is expected of them and start work straight away. Similarly, when they are asked to work independently there is no fuss and within a very short time all are concentrating quietly.
21. The school very effectively encourages pupils' personal development. All are given very good opportunities to develop independence. Teachers are watchful but expect the youngest children to be able to dress and undress themselves for physical education, congratulating them when they are able to do up their own buttons and fasten their shoes. Reception children quickly learn the safe way to move physical education equipment through watching a Year 1 class do this. Year 2 children deliver the Harvest Festival produce personally to elderly residents and collect for charities enthusiastically. All pupils carry out tasks allocated to them conscientiously and the older pupils take seriously their duties to move chairs and operate the cassette recorder during assemblies.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

22. The quality of teaching is good overall and is promoting high standards and good achievement for pupils. Seventy-nine per cent of lessons were good or better, with a high proportion, 42 per cent, very good or excellent. Of the rest of the lessons, 16 per cent were satisfactorily taught and five per cent (two lessons) were unsatisfactory. The issue from the last inspection, that teachers did not always use time well to get the best balance between direct teaching and pupils' activities, has been dealt with appropriately. Teaching is now better with more very high quality teaching than before.
23. Teaching for the children under five is satisfactory. Over half the teaching for this age group is good or better. However, there are weaknesses in some teaching and two lessons were unsatisfactory. In these the teacher did not manage the children's behaviour well or give all of them work which matched their needs, so more able ones marked time and those with fewer skills were not fully involved in the activities. For instance, a group of children were asked to write their addresses, which they knew, but they were not given enough guidance on how to go about the task. In the good teaching observed, the consistently high-quality class management is a strength, which ensures an orderly, calm classroom in which children learn to listen and follow instructions well. In the less effective teaching too few strategies are used to promote good behaviour so children call out and do not listen properly. Teachers' expectations are

often high. In the best teaching, basic skills are taught effectively and this is resulting in some good learning in literacy and numeracy, as seen when children were so enthusiastic about the counting activity they were doing they kept asking the teacher for 'harder ones'. Assessment records are built up steadily to give a comprehensive picture of children's development.

24. At Key Stage 1, overall the teaching is very good. Over a quarter of the teaching observed in Year 2 was excellent. There are important strengths in the basic skills teaching in English and mathematics, for example a quarter of the mathematics teaching was outstanding and a further quarter was very good; this is a key reason for the very good gains in knowledge that pupils are making in mathematics. Teachers are using the new strategies for teaching these subjects effectively and teach lively, purposeful introductory parts to these lessons, which capture pupils' interest. Their questioning techniques are often very skilful in exploring pupils' understanding of the ideas being taught. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson the teacher set a quick pace for counting in twos, fives and threes during the mental section, which contributed to pupils very good consolidation of these skills. Helpful guidance was given, such as an analogy of 'crossing a hundreds bridge' to assist pupils in learning about place value. Planning for literacy and mathematics is usually at least sound and in some examples good. The style makes it quite time-consuming for teachers to get an overview of the week's objectives and activities and make alterations if required.
25. All teachers are skilled at introducing new phonic sounds and blends. For instance, a teacher used a simple but very effective technique of pupils using their fingers to show they knew the number of phonemes in different words. In Year 1, a very good sharing of teaching was observed when the support teacher taught a section of the lesson on long and short vowel sounds; pupils responded with quick understanding of this new idea because of the very high quality teaching. A strength is the attention which teachers pay to developing pupils' vocabularies and confidence in explaining their ideas. Teachers emphasise the correct language during other lessons too. In a science lesson the teacher frequently used the terms 'variable' and 'constant' to check pupils' understanding about a jumping investigation. This emphasis on language gives pupils confidence in talking about their work. Teachers have very high expectations of the amounts of work pupils will complete and pupils consistently rise to this challenge. This is apparent in the quantity and quality of the written work in history and religious education produced this year by Year 1 pupils. A good feature is the way teachers are ensuring pupils develop their information technology skills in literacy, mathematics and science lessons.
26. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are usually provided with work which matches their specific needs, particularly in English where many attend additional small group reading activities. Pupils from the Special Opportunities Unit are successfully integrated into some lessons and this is benefiting both their learning and self-esteem. The learning support assistants play a useful role in ensuring that pupils focus on tasks, and make good progress in their learning. Teachers identify those pupils in their classes with particular talents and tailor their work accordingly. Two pupils with English as an additional language have some additional support to help them improve their English. In class lessons they were seen making similar good progress to their peers and being fully involved in lessons.
27. There is a good amount of effective teaching in other subjects, which is promoting high-quality learning in lessons. The teaching in science is particularly good and a key factor in the high standards that the pupils are achieving. Teachers have a very good knowledge of all subjects, which is reflected in their teaching. For example, they effectively link investigative work in science with activities in mathematics and information technology. The good variety of

interesting practical work, as seen in geography and design and technology, makes learning enjoyable for pupils.

28. A good feature is the close co-operation between year group teachers when planning; teachers regularly refer back to key objectives in long-term plans, checking what pupils have experienced, to plan the future work. While the long and medium-term planning remains as strong as it was at the last inspection, the written short-term plans for subjects, other than literacy and numeracy, are less effective and lack well-focused learning objectives for lessons. Written comments about lessons are extensive but often descriptive rather than evaluative. These could be briefer and more effective if the short-term plans had precise learning objectives that provided the focus for the analysis after the lesson. The senior managers have already identified that short-term planning requires some improvement and this is in the school's development plan.
29. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. The very high-quality management and consistently applied behaviour strategies are contributing extensively to the pupils' pace of working, as pupils understand the importance of being attentive and concentrating on their activities. Teachers offer appropriate praise and encouragement. There are productive working atmospheres and good use of resources to support pupils' learning. Pupils are usually expected to record work for themselves. This is a strength, which is developing their literacy skills in the wider curriculum. However, much of the work for different topics is in one writing book so it is hard to see progression, for example in science work.
30. Assessments, using informal strategies to gauge pupils' understanding, are used well in most lessons. Individual pupils have targets for improvement and instances of teachers talking to pupils about these were heard. Teachers discuss written work with pupils but this is often not noted in any way on the work so it appears to be unmarked. In this respect, marking is not being used as productively as it could be as an assessment tool. Teachers provide a reasonable range of homework, mainly linked to literacy and mathematics class work in line with the school's policy. All pupils are expected to read at home and older pupils are guided to undertake other activities and this has a good impact on their reading development.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

31. The school's curriculum strengths have been sustained since the last inspection; requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are met. The youngest children experience a good range of activities overall in the required areas of learning for under-fives. However, the school is unable to provide these children with enough opportunities to be involved in outdoor physical and play activities. This is because of the cramped space available for one of the reception classes and the lack of any safe, secure area for the youngest class. The curriculum offered to Key Stage 1 pupils is very good, with lots of interesting practical experiences provided in subjects such as mathematics and geography. It is broad, balanced and relevant to their needs. A high amount of time is spent teaching English and mathematics throughout the school, and this contributes to the high standards achieved. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are fully implemented. However, the school has decided not to teach a full literacy hour but several different parts of each day are devoted to literacy. The school chose to implement the National Numeracy Strategy earlier than required and has done so to very good effect.
32. The curriculum includes very good opportunities to develop personal and social education. Circle time sessions give pupils opportunities to put forward their views. Health education is

provided for very well indeed throughout the school, closely linked to physical education and science each term. The school has implemented a programme including themes such as substance misuse, safety, personal hygiene, sex education and psychological aspects of health education. It holds a Bromley Healthy Schools Award and is promoting 'healthy playtimes' by making sure that children gain sufficient exercise using specially chosen equipment such as hoops and skipping ropes. The curriculum is enhanced well by the school's strong link with Hawes Down Junior School and there are excellent links with the wider community.

33. The school works very hard to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils, and those at Key Stage 1 have access to the full range of subjects. Pupils of the same age taught in different classes do the same work, and this strength was much in evidence during the inspection. While this works well overall, there are instances where the youngest children in one reception class require different activities from those in the reception class for older children in order to meet their needs, particularly in English and mathematics. At Key Stage 1, the pupils who are attaining at high levels, and those who require additional support to learn, benefit from the close attention paid to their needs, for example through weekly extension or support groups in English and mathematics. At the last inspection the provision for pupils with special educational needs was judged to be very good and this remains the case. Pupils' individual education plans are well organised and provide very good information on the steps being taken to support them, and the resulting progress.
34. The provision for extra-curricular activities for pupils in Year 2 is very good but younger children do not participate in these. There is a wide range of well-organised clubs and activities such as choir, story telling, computing, gardening and construction. These are very popular.
35. The school has excellent involvement in the local community and members of the staff and governing body praise the headteacher for her strong leadership in instigating many exciting initiatives, such as the current fund raising for the Millennium Gates. The locality is used well to make learning interesting for pupils. Visitors to the school include a local historian, who talks to children about the history of West Wickham and why buildings are so named. Liaison with local playgroups and nurseries is well established. A good feature is the way the schools on the campus work together to offer interesting activities for pupils. For instance, pupils are proud of the tiles they made to mark the millennium, these forming part of the two sculptures which the campus schools have created with the help of a local artist. The Education Business Partnership has provided many useful links and the school's proactive approach, through pupils writing to various organisations, has resulted in attractive blinds and a new greenhouse being donated. The school has excellent links with local residents and benefits from these and the close relationships established with other educational institutions. The Walking Bus has proved popular and has resulted in an additional safe crossing on one of the roads.
36. Pupils' spiritual development is good and promoted through assemblies, circle time, when pupils sit quietly and discuss with each other and their teachers, and religious education lessons. Feelings are explored and all listen sympathetically to others' experiences. Pupils listened, with rapt attention, to the local vicar telling the story of Jesus and the storm. A sense of awe rippled through the reception class when they realised the size the whale had to be in order to swallow Jonah. Science, music and art education are all making good contributions to pupils' understanding of human responses to different experiences. For instance, Year 1 pupils were fascinated by the variety and smallness of the mini-beasts they found in the school grounds and understood these had to be treated with due care.

37. The school's provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. All learn right from wrong and how to behave in school as soon as they arrive. Teachers' high expectations and sensitive promotion of moral and social codes result in very good behaviour and make all aware of others, their feelings and needs. The school's excellent ethos underpins this. Visits from the school nurse and the rail safety officer alert them to dangers and difficulties outside their home and school environment. They are well prepared for transfer to junior school.
38. The school provides many very good opportunities to ensure that pupils are aware of their own and other cultures. Local churches are used as a resource for both religious and historical enquiry. In conversation pupils showed real interest in a lesson on Buddhism. They enjoy the Arts Week when they hear music from other cultures as well as their own, and also the visits they make. Bodiam Castle made a big impression on Year 1 pupils. A key issue from the last inspection was the need for the school to improve pupils' multi-cultural awareness. This has been tackled purposefully and this aspect of the provision is now very good. Imaginative and informative displays around the school, such as the one celebrating the school's link with Ghana, make a positive contribution to children's understanding of other cultures.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

39. The school continues to provide the good personal support and guidance for all pupils, reported by the previous inspection, and has good procedures to promote their welfare. Dedicated staff and the excellent school ethos foster a purposeful, happy atmosphere from which all benefit. Health and safety have a high priority and regular risk assessments are made. Trained first aiders are on site at all times and practice is good, although not every minor incident is recorded. The headteacher is the designated teacher for child protection and further training is planned for the autumn to enhance all staff's awareness. Local agencies are well used when the need arises. The school was informed of several minor health and safety issues noted during the inspection. Despite the caretaker and cleaners' best endeavours the toilets do not always smell hygienic and several parents rightly expressed concern about this at the parents' meeting.
40. The school has very good procedures to promote and monitor all children's personal development, and those for the Special Opportunities Unit pupils are very effective. In the sample of Statements of Special Educational Need that were examined there is an excellent match between the requirements and what is being provided for the individuals. The Special Opportunities Unit has very good links with the unit at the junior school. Although circle time is not always timetabled as lessons in all classes, issues arising from the school's daily life are discussed and resolved as they occur in each class. Assembly themes, such as co-operation during the week of the inspection, promote good social and moral messages. Detailed charts record all aspects of pupils' development and form, in part, the basis for the annual report and discussion at parents' consultation evenings.
41. Good attendance is expected. The school keeps good records and every absence has to be explained. Parents are aware that their children should arrive on time, and holidays taken in term time are kept to a minimum. Registers are correctly completed and regularly monitored by the educational welfare officer.
42. The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The behaviour policy is consistently implemented by all staff, who provide good role models. Although there are no school rules each class agrees their own rules and the playground charter is closely adhered to, well supervised by vigilant staff. No bullying was observed during the inspection. There were

minor collisions during the exuberant playtime sessions. Behaviour logs are well kept when necessary and parents involved at an early stage if problems arise.

43. The school's assessment systems, and monitoring of pupils' attainment and the progress they make, are good overall; however, the marking of pupils' work is not as useful as it could be. Class teachers carry out careful assessments of children under five when they start school. The information gained from this is used appropriately to group the children for their work. At Key Stage 1, records of pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are maintained conscientiously. Pupils' progress is assessed carefully against the important expected outcomes in these subjects. In mathematics these are updated at the end of each half term. In English, pupils have individual target sheets showing what they are expected to learn and when these targets have been reached. Such records give a good indication of how the pupils are doing. These procedures are used very well to help plan what individuals and groups will learn next in English and mathematics.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

44. The school continues to enjoy the very good links with parents, reported four years ago. Parents are very appreciative of the education and guidance their children receive and value the family atmosphere present in the school. They are very supportive of the school's aims, ambitious for their children and help them regularly at home. Some assist in school with reading when they are given a useful handbook to help them, others with cookery and they accompany their children on trips. Although there is no parent/teacher association many dedicated fund-raisers organise discos, fetes and other fun events to raise money for the school. This is spent to benefit the children. Parents report that events are well attended by local residents as well as friends and families of children at school.
45. Parents are well informed about the school, forthcoming events and their children's progress through regular letters. The school's prospectus and annual governors' report are detailed and informative, but have no comparative national figures for test results. In the survey and meeting held for parents prior to the inspection, a number were concerned about current class sizes, which are larger than average. The school is following a plan to gradually reduce numbers to a maximum of 30 per class. Many lessons have learning support assistants or support teachers working alongside the class teacher, which enables more individual attention. At other times pupils are grouped in smaller sets for mathematics and literacy lessons. Inspectors consider that the school is doing everything possible to deal with the matter. Parents of children in the Special Opportunities Unit, and those of children with special education and other needs, are involved with their children's individual education plans and with reviews. Contact books are very well used and constructive dialogue takes place within the reading records. The annual reports, and assessment charts shared at consultation meetings, are appreciated by parents. Attendance at meetings, class and grandparents' assemblies and school productions is excellent and parents are welcomed into school at other times to talk to staff should they have concerns.
46. The headteacher and all her staff are strongly committed to improving the school's links and relationship with parents and they, in their turn, are strongly supportive of the school. These coupled with the excellent local community involvement in, and support for, the school make a very positive contribution to children's achievements, widen their experience and enhance their personal development.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

47. The leadership strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained. The school is led by a very experienced headteacher who provides purposeful, very effective leadership. This gives clear direction for the school's improvement, which is understood and appreciated by all. She is well supported by an able deputy headteacher and effective staff team. The headteacher has strongly held values that underpin her vision, to ensure that all are valued and feel successful, and that everyone's strengths are developed and used appropriately. The school's aims are wide-ranging and linked fully to its expectations for pupils' personal development and achievements in learning. These aims are very successfully reflected in the day-to-day life of the school.
48. The school has held 'Investors in People' status for several years for the quality of its management and organisational systems. All permanent teachers have curriculum co-ordination roles, which they fulfil effectively. The headteacher delegates effectively and, through the use of an excellent appraisal and professional development system, is helping other staff to take the lead in their areas of responsibility. Annually negotiated job descriptions clearly indicate responsibilities and tasks that are expected to be undertaken by the teachers responsible for each subject. There are well thought out procedures which are followed to check up on the quality of teaching and other aspects of school's work. Subject co-ordinators are allocated time to develop and monitor these, and provide annual reviews which build into the school improvement plan. These arrangements have a positive impact on curriculum development and pupils' learning. Teaching, and pupils' learning, are regularly monitored by senior managers; the appraisal process is also used fully as a key part of the school's system for improving teaching. The headteacher is clearly aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement; for example, concerns about pupils' mental mathematics skills have been focused on and this has led to improvement. The school is on course to achieve the targets it has set in reading, writing and mathematics and these are challenging ones. In her role as special educational needs co-ordinator the headteacher provides excellent leadership. The register for special educational needs is carefully and fully maintained. Also, the Special Opportunities Unit is very well managed by the teacher in charge. The grants for these aspects of the school's work are being used very effectively. One of the deputy headteacher's whole-school responsibilities is to analyse test results. Together with the headteacher she is effectively analysing the school's performance so it can deal with any weaknesses; for instance the slightly weaker performance of boys than girls in writing.
49. The governing body, which was newly constituted as a single governing body in January, fulfils its statutory duties soundly. It has a high proportion of relatively new governors who are receiving training. The governing body is led by a knowledgeable chairman, who has a good relationship with the headteacher. The committee structure is developing soundly. Specific governors have links with some subjects and co-ordinators. Most governors visit occasionally during the school day and report after the visits, noting what has been seen and learnt. However, there is no clear system established through the curriculum committee for the focus of this visiting, which is limiting its usefulness as a monitoring tool. The governing body receives occasional reports from co-ordinators, discusses the school's test results and asks questions to ensure the evidence is acted upon. These activities enable the governors to have a reasonable understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
50. The school has effective procedures to produce an annual school improvement plan. Teaching and non-teaching staff, and key governors, all contribute to identifying priorities for development. A strong feature is the annual review meeting where staff discuss past improvements and new proposals. The governing body consider an early draft of the plan. The plan is focusing on the improvements needed, for example in short-term planning. The plan briefly identifies developments and initiatives over a three-year period but the governing body

does not cost these to give an idea of future expenditure. Each development in the immediate one-year plan has costings and success criteria, but no information on who will monitor or evaluate the improvements to show the impact of the initiative on the pupils. There is scope for the governing body to develop a more robust monitoring system linked to the school improvement plan, and independent approach to shaping the school's long-term development.

51. Teachers are well qualified in the early years and Key Stage 1 phase of education. There are as many as funds can provide. The teachers without class responsibilities are deployed to allow some smaller groups for literacy and numeracy teaching and to support teachers in class. This together with the use of learning support assistants eases the problem of having some class sizes larger than 30, which parents are concerned about. Administrative and support staff are experienced and well briefed, and complement the work of the teaching staff very well. The administrative staff use new technologies competently to provide the school with financial and other information. Training needs are clearly identified through appraisal and school reviews and then co-ordinated efficiently by the deputy headteacher. All staff have been well trained in the literacy and numeracy strategies.
52. The standard of the accommodation is satisfactory overall, but lacks an adequately sized secure outdoor play area for children under five. This is limiting their opportunities to use climbing apparatus and large wheeled toys to develop their physical co-ordination. The school is very aware of this problem. Small fenced areas have been provided for one reception class and the Special Opportunities Unit but a build up of funds will be required to tackle the matter more generously. The school is clean, soundly maintained and bright with displays. Resources are well organised and plentiful. There is a good range of books, many newly purchased using special grants, to support literacy. Some new purchases of information technology hardware have been made and the school is well resourced for this subject.
53. The school applies principles of best value soundly. The systems for financial administration in the school are very effective, with an extremely efficient finance officer and knowledgeable governing body finance committee ensuring services are bought at the right price. The minor recommendations from the most recent audit report have been addressed successfully. All grants the school receives are being spent appropriately and the developments contribute successfully to the breadth of facilities for the pupils. The overall leadership and management, and the education that the school is providing, are very effective, enabling pupils to achieve consistently high standards. The school continues to give very good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order to improve the quality of education and raise standards further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) improve teaching further by developing the short-term planning and marking, so these demonstrate the best practice in using lesson objectives and assessing written work;  
*paragraphs (28, 30, 43, 86, 92, 113, 124)*
- (2) when funds allow, extend and improve the secure outdoor play facilities for the under-fives, to promote their physical development more effectively.  
*paragraphs (3, 31, 52, 73)*

Both these items have been identified by the school as matters for improvement, for example, short-term planning features in the school improvement plan.

Each issue is followed by a reference to the paragraph(s) in which it is discussed.

### Other issues which should be considered by the school are to:

- strengthen the governing body's role in monitoring the school's work and shaping its long-term goals;  
*paragraphs (49, 50)*
- improve the various health and safety matters identified to the headteacher and governing body.  
*paragraph (39)*

## OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

### THE SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES UNIT

55. At the last inspection the unit had half the pupils it has now. Ten pupils with moderate learning difficulties are educated in a class in the school. They come from various parts of the borough; some start in the unit at five but others arrive part way through their Key Stage 1 careers. All have Statements of Special Educational Need, mainly for moderate learning difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. These pupils mostly work together but are integrated with other classes for some physical education lessons, and individual Year 2 pupils join mathematics classes. The unit has maintained the high standards identified in the last inspection and in some areas has built further on the good practice. The curriculum continues to be well planned and based on National Curriculum requirements. The appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy teaching, with measurable and achievable targets has been sustained; as has good teaching, with all staff contributing to planning, monitoring and assessment processes, and strong co-operation with the rest of the school. For all these reasons pupils make very good progress.

56. Teaching is always good, with examples of excellent teaching. The support from learning assistants is of a high quality. The detailed knowledge of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses allows work to be targeted and so achieve maximum success and lead the pupil forward in small steps. For instance, a science topic on plant growth, included recording the growth of bean plants, consolidating the names of the different parts and producing

collaboratively a plant on a flannel graph with all the parts named. Individuals were given appropriate questions to answer and suitable practical tasks to carry out. Thus, Year 2 pupils read name cards while reception children articulated their answers or pointed to a particular part.

57. A lesson on oral and mental maths shows all the Year 2 pupils working at an appropriate level for their age. This is an example of very high achievement given the starting point for these pupils. A classroom assistant working with the reception children encouraged them to work independently and they improved their ability to combine two low numbers and find the total.
58. 'Big Book ' lessons are used well in literacy to introduce and consolidate punctuation. Pupils read well in unison and are able to carry on when the teacher stops. Questions are targeted to match individual's needs. For example, Year 2 pupils put speech marks in the correct position, recognise an exclamation mark and know the book will be found in the fiction section of the library. Reception children recognise various initial sounds and Year 1 pupils recognise simple words.
59. Pupils enjoy the arts curriculum and displays show a variety of paintings and models. Music and art have been successfully combined for a topic on Aboriginal art. Pupils have looked at bark painting and listened to appropriate music. Painting skills are developing well and cutting skills are worked on in a variety of ways.
60. Behaviour of pupils in the unit is very good. They have well-established routines that all the staff implement consistently. The atmosphere is quiet and calm. Opportunities for personal development are taken whenever possible and some are planned for. For instance, the regular routine of a mid-morning snack. These opportunities also extend pupils' language and numeracy skills.
61. Planning is detailed and covers objectives and tasks for the pupils thoroughly. Detailed assessments are carried out. The assessment procedures have been sharpened since the last inspection and show precisely the steps achieved by pupils in all areas of the curriculum and personal development. An important strength is the arrangements for integration with classes and pupils in the main school. Integration plans are organised for individual pupils when this is appropriate. At some point each week all pupils work in a larger group, for example for physical education. They also mingle at playtime and lunchtime, perform assemblies and take part in all the school's events.
62. The unit is very well managed, staff are well informed and have good training opportunities. The staff successfully make every effort to communicate with parents. A well-presented handbook gives clear information. Well-organised 'home packs' have been prepared by the staff for pupils and parents. These include a variety of games and tasks with the apparatus and instructions for parents. A check-list is available in each one to assess progress.
63. The classroom is lively and stimulating, full of displays of pupils' work and a variety of useful teaching aids. However some parts of the room are cluttered and the quality of display is lost. A session is organised once a week for children to join with the reception class and use big toys. The safe outdoor area attached to the unit is quite small so it is not possible for activities in this area to be a daily experience for those who would benefit.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
13	29	37	16	5	0	0

*The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	199
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	72

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	31	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	28	29
	Girls	35	35	35
	Total	62	63	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (83)	93 (87)	94 (88)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	29	29
	Girls	35	35	35
	Total	63	64	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (87)	94 (89)	94 (92)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	2
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	2
White	187
Any other minority ethnic group	

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian	0	0
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups		

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	28

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	132

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	443,839
Total expenditure	429,364
Expenditure per pupil	2,169
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,186
Balance carried forward to next year	20,661

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	199
Number of questionnaires returned	146

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	28	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	30	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	49	2	0	3
The teaching is good.	62	32	3	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	45	7	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	28	4	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	34	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	60	30	9	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	78	21	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	31	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	36	9	2	20

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Several parents wrote to praise the work of the teachers and headteacher, and the friendly atmosphere in the school, from which their children were benefiting. Concerns raised included: the high numbers of pupils in classes that reduced the opportunity for personal attention; insufficient guidance for children on which reading books to choose; that working parents needed greater notice of some events to be able to attend. These were looked into by inspectors and are commented on where appropriate in Part B of this report.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

64. Children join the school in September and January each year. They are taught in two reception classes. Those who have their fifth birthdays in the autumn term and early part of the spring term are in one class, and the rest are taught in another. Most have pre-school experience, but the school takes children from a large number of different pre-school education settings. Their attainment when they join the school is higher than that commonly found nationally. They make sound progress in their learning and, by the age of five, exceed the expected standards for their age in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development. Creative development and physical development are satisfactory. They settle into school quickly as a result of the very good procedures put in place by the school. Under-fives in the Special Opportunities Unit are integrated and supported well when they join the reception classes for some sessions and achieve well. Classroom assistants in these classes provide high quality support and have a significant and positive impact upon the children's learning.

#### **Personal and social development**

65. The teaching in this area of learning is very good, as it was at the last inspection, and ensures that all children become independent as quickly as possible. To achieve this they have useful procedures, such as taking the children to watch Year 1 pupils in a physical education lesson so the older pupils show them how to move and use the equipment safely. Teachers make their expectations of how children should behave towards one another clear and children generally learn to behave appropriately as a result. They monitor their personal development carefully. All can dress and undress independently for physical education lessons.
66. As a result of the very good teaching by the age of five the children exceed the expected standards for their age. They are able to go about their work confidently when working in groups. They share resources without being prompted. For example, when a group were using plasticene a newcomer to the activity found there were not enough boards for her to be able to join in, another girl shared hers so that they worked together. The pupils in the older reception class, all of whom are five, behave very well during lessons.

#### **Language and literacy**

67. The teaching in this area of learning varies. It is satisfactory overall. The teaching of the older pupils helps them learn well. For example, children are encouraged to join in with simple texts and use different 'voices' for characters, which they did successfully. Questions such as "how did you know it said rolled not jumped?" challenge children to use their letter knowledge to explain what they are reading. The teaching of the younger children has some weaknesses. In an unsatisfactory lesson, activities lasted too long and did not meet the needs of the lower attaining pupils. Children enjoy listening to stories read by teachers because they generally use expression well.
68. By the age of five most children are working within the National Curriculum at Level 1. Children speak confidently and listen well to others, including their friends. Whilst some children are still developing their early writing skills of forming letters, many are beginning to write words and short sentences with some help. All write their own names correctly. The highest attaining children write sentences independently, spelling simple words correctly. They

recognise some words in books and use their knowledge of the sounds made by letters to help them read simple unknown words. All children enjoy books and are keen to read. A few children read short pieces of writing, using their letter knowledge to sound out words, and using clues from what they have read already. The oldest children are keen to discuss their experiences with one another. For example, when discussing models they have made they question each other, listen to the answers and even respond, in a more advanced way than is usual for their age.

## **Mathematics**

69. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall but there are differences in quality between the two classes. Teachers plan for mathematics together and this is done very carefully. The older pupils make good progress and, by the age of five, all are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. This is a result of very good teaching which is characterised by very high expectations of what children can do and motivates them to want to do better. There are some weaknesses in the teaching of the younger children. Its pace is rather slow and the children become distracted as a result; some work productively in groups, but others make little progress when the task provided is too difficult for them.
70. By the age of five children have a very good understanding of the number system and are able to pick out odd and even numbers when counting up to 20. They add two small numbers mentally by counting on from the larger number. They apply this skill well in games when they throw dice and find the total. They recognise numbers from their environment. One boy exclaimed “sixty-two - that’s the number on my door” when seeing 62 written on a board. They have a good knowledge of the names and properties of common shapes.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

71. The teachers provide a variety of activities that interest children. The small amount of teaching seen was good overall. The curriculum is well planned to give children a wide range of opportunities to learn about the world around them. For example, by the age of five children describe in simple terms the route they take to school. They talk about their homes and families, and are particularly interested in young babies. They learn about the properties of dry sand by filling and emptying containers and make furniture such as a bed for a teddy bear using large construction kits, which they then test for size. In a story-telling session a teacher made good links with a visit to the London Aquarium when reading ‘The Lighthouse Keeper’s Lunch’, and children have used plasticene to produce recognisable models of sea creatures seen on that visit. Teachers prepare children well for their science work in the National Curriculum by teaching them about the idea of ‘fairness’ during simple scientific experiments involving ice cubes. The lesson on this was very well taught as the skilful questioning gradually drew from the children their understanding of warm and cold places and how water became ice. Children enjoy using computers; several had very good support from the teacher to make a programmable floor toy move forwards and turn corners by typing in commands. They thoroughly enjoyed this challenging activity. All use cassette recorders independently to listen to songs and stories.

## **Creative development**

72. The teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. There is a strength in the teaching of drama. In one lesson children’s ideas about being on an island were developed very skilfully by the teacher whose questions and encouragement gave them the confidence to use their imaginations and ‘explore’ an island. A suitable range of activities and experiences are

planned for and provided. Children achieve the expected outcomes for their age and are learning at a satisfactory rate. They experience creative activities in a range of materials including paint, and malleable materials such as plasticene. Self-portraits are well proportioned and carefully coloured. No music activities were observed in the inspection but children enjoy singing songs together. Children enjoy using puppets for imaginative play during the weekly 'big toys' session, where they are joined by pupils from the Special Opportunities Unit. Role-play areas are available and children use their imaginations in the 'pirate ship' with clear enjoyment.

### **Physical development**

73. Teachers do well in developing physical skills through physical education lessons so children make sound progress. However, the range of physical experiences for the under-fives is not as broad as expected because the small, secure outdoor play area, is not big enough for climbing equipment and large wheeled vehicles. This limits the children's physical development. This applies particularly to those children with special educational needs or whose large motor control is weak. The younger children do not have access to the same amount of space as those in the older class to use for painting and playing with larger toys. This problem was also highlighted at the last inspection.
74. Children achieve most of the expected learning outcomes. The teaching seen was good. Children learn to use space and to develop their poise, agility and performance on large apparatus in the hall. They set this out themselves, overseen by the teacher. They learn to control their actions with confidence. Children use scissors competently and improve their dexterity successfully in activities such as weaving paper to produce simple patterns.

### **ENGLISH**

75. The last inspection judged standards to be well above the national average by the end of the key stage. Teaching and pupils' progress were good. These strengths have been maintained.
76. National Curriculum test results for Year 2 pupils in reading and writing were very high over the past four years compared with national figures. These statistics include the results for the pupils with moderate learning difficulties in the Special Opportunities Unit. As the unit has grown and the number of these pupils taking the tests has increased the overall standard is not quite as high as it was four years ago. Last year almost all pupils in the mainstream classes gained the expected Level 2 in reading and writing. Over a third achieved the higher Level 3 in reading and a quarter in writing. Pupils' performance was average compared to that of pupils in similar schools for reading and above average in writing. Nevertheless the school's analysis of the results showed boys' writing was somewhat weaker than girls and this has been a focus for improvement this year. Inspection findings show that the present Year 2 pupils are on course to achieve similar high standards in reading and writing this year. Across the school pupils are achieving well overall in English, with very good progress in writing and speaking and listening.
77. The school implements the National Literacy Strategy effectively and has successfully modified the literacy hour to suit its needs. There is daily whole-class text and word work, and extra sessions for reading, extended writing and other literacy work. Inspection evidence shows that this combination is giving pupils a high degree of success, and is seen reflected in above average attainment.

78. Standards in speaking and listening are well above the expected level for most pupils by the end of the key stage. Progress is very good. In all lessons teachers promote the use of language through simple discussions, thoughtful questions, and extending vocabulary appropriately. Pupils respond well to this. They enjoy using the correct words for the features of books and aspect of writing. For example, Year 1 pupils used the word 'metamorphosis' in connection with their mini-beast topic. Teachers' clear and interesting introductions to lessons hold pupils' attention and ensure they start tasks with understanding.
79. Reading standards are above average for seven year olds. Teaching ensures there is a strong emphasis on phonic understanding and the use of other strategies that enable pupils to quickly become independent readers. Pupils learn how books work from an early age. Year 1 pupils use reference books to answer questions they have posed for themselves. They have a good understanding of terms such as index and glossary. In a Year 2 class pupils read confidently from the 'Big Book' adjusting their tone of voice for different characters. They understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and explain terms such as author, illustrator and 'blurb'. They are keen readers of their own choice of books and concentrate very well during quiet reading periods. Word lists in all classes and the use of dictionaries help pupils to be independent learners.
80. Pupils' library skills are good. The library is well stocked and organised in a modified Dewey system. Pupils are introduced to the library at an early stage and quickly learn the system. The number of multi-cultural books has been significantly increased since the last inspection and these are proving very popular with pupils. Home-school reading is well established. Reading diaries show regular reading with parents is making a significant contribution to success. Some parents are also involved in school reading sessions.
81. Standards in writing are well above the national average and pupils make very good progress. Their handwriting develops well as the termly pieces of unaided writing demonstrate. Many pupils within Year 1 have developed a neat style, however, not many progress to a cursive form in Year 2 although they are clearly capable of so doing. Teachers ensure that pupils write for a good range of reasons. Creative stories from interesting starting points give Year 2 pupils the chance to use their imaginations and develop lively vocabulary. They spell simple words accurately and use dictionaries confidently to spell more complex words. Their spelling ability and use of punctuation is generally above average.
82. Letters are written for a variety of reasons including a forceful letter complaining about plans for a factory being built near the school, and a 'thank you' letter to a supermarket for donating some works of art. Pupils used well-chosen words to express concern in the one and sensitivity and gratitude in the other. Visits provide excellent reasons for writing and in all classes there are examples of very good descriptive writing.
83. The high standard that pupils achieve in literacy has a positive effect on achievement in other subjects. All work seen in books and displays has a written element. Of particular note is Year 1 work on a visit to Bodium Castle, which produced some very good writing from the perspective of people who worked there; for example, the blacksmith and the carpenter among others. The quality of the writing demonstrated a good understanding of what they had seen and been told.
84. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are well supported by teachers and assistants. Individual education plans include precise and achievable targets. For example in Year 1 several pupils with special educational needs wrote sentences relating to

their mini-beast hunt with the help of a support teacher. The teacher is skilful in making the task a challenge but at the same time ensuring that there is success.

85. The teaching of English is very good overall, and teachers' high expectations are reflected in the pupils' keenness to do their best. Most lessons are planned with learning objectives clearly identified, shared with pupils, and revised with them at the end of the lesson. However, occasionally tasks are not suited to all abilities of pupils in the class, as some lower attaining pupils would benefit from more guidance and structure when they are writing. Teachers all demonstrate confidence in teaching the subject and explain key ideas knowledgeably, question to probe pupils' understanding and engage them in purposeful discussions. For instance, pupils gave lively responses when asked to put forward their ideas as to where an author might have got the inspiration for an amusing poem about an elephant in a car park. Lessons have a good balance of different activities that hold pupils' interest and help them develop positive attitudes to their work. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, and in some lessons excellent.
86. Assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress are effective in English. Several planned assessments are undertaken each term to track progress. Pupils have individual targets that they identify for themselves with the class teacher's help. However, marking does not make as much use as it could of these targets and sometimes it does not reflect the level of achievement by giving suitable praise. The monitoring of books by senior staff has picked up on this matter and the need for improvement. The co-ordinator has been recently appointed and has plans for future initiatives. She is well supported by the previous co-ordinator, who works part-time, and who has played a key role in the continued successful development of the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. In the 1999 national tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, results were well above the national average. When the results are compared with the results of pupils from similar types of schools these are above average. Inspection found standards in mathematics to be well above average, and often very high, with no discernible difference between boys, girls or the few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The picture over the last four years since the last inspection shows that the school has maintained a good rate of improvement and that results in mathematics have been very high in comparison with the national average. In all year groups, pupils' numeracy standards are very good and in other areas of mathematics they are well above average. Pupils with special educational needs, including those based in the school's Special Opportunities Unit, achieve very well indeed due to the very good provision that plays close attention to their needs.
88. Pupils achieve standards higher than those expected as a result of the quality of teaching which is very good overall. The rate of progress they make increases as they move through the school and, by the time they reach Year 2, where the teaching is excellent, they are very confident mathematicians. By the time they are seven, pupils have an excellent ability to explain the way they have worked things out and this makes a significant contribution to their speaking and listening skills as well as their work in numeracy.
89. Pupils have a very good range of methods for calculating mentally and are able to choose the most appropriate one for the numbers that they are working with. For example, when Year 2 pupils were working out how to add sums of money such as £7.99 and £9.99, some rounded the amount up to £8 and £10 before adding them and taking off the extra 2p that they had added on when rounding up. One girl explained that she had "used old-fashioned tens and

units” on this occasion. The highest attaining pupils in Year 2 have worked out the square numbers to 100 as part of their work on multiplication. Pupils use mathematical language well to describe the properties of three-dimensional shape such as triangular prisms. Such high attainment is due to a combination of thorough planning, the strong subject knowledge of all staff and the quality of explanations given to pupils. For example, in a lesson for Year 1 pupils in which they were learning about how numbers can be partitioned, the purpose of the lesson was made clear to the pupils, resources were used well to help explain, and the tasks were explained thoroughly to the pupils. This meant that they all knew what they had to do, settled to work quickly with a positive attitude and got a lot done.

90. The pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics. Their behaviour in lessons is very good and enables all to learn without distraction. These factors, combined with the very good use of time and resources by teachers, help the pupils to improve their understanding in all lessons. They are very aware of what they achieved. This is often as a result of the skilful use of the final part of each mathematics lesson. In these ‘plenary sections’ teachers encourage the pupils to reflect upon what they can now do better as well as reinforcing succinctly the main points that they want the pupils to remember.
91. Teachers plan carefully to make sure that pupils apply their numeracy skills to a good range of subjects including information technology, science and geography. The short-term plans are very thorough but they are written separately for each day so it is not easy to get an overview of the whole week’s activities. Displays and pupils’ work throughout the school contain many examples of the use of numeracy skills. For example pupils in Year 1 produced graphs and charts using computers to collect and analyse information about their survey of mini-beasts in the school grounds. In science there are many instances of pupils using and applying their data handling skills. Teachers make sound use of information technology to support the pupils’ learning in lessons, particularly to develop their calculation skills and knowledge of the number system.
92. Management of the subject is very good. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been very successful due to the leadership given by the mathematics co-ordinator. Together with the headteacher she had identified the need to improve pupils’ mental arithmetic skills and the actions taken in order to make the desired improvement have been very successful. Pupils’ test results have been monitored and evaluated. A good amount of monitoring and evaluation of teaching has taken place and this has helped to ensure that any weaknesses are remedied and strengths identified so that all teachers can improve.

## **SCIENCE**

93. Standards in the past two years, based on teachers’ assessments, were above the national average and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was very high. Compared with pupils in similar types of schools, those gaining the Level 2 expected standard, or better, was broadly average; however the proportion gaining the higher Level 3 was well above average. Inspection evidence indicates that the present Year 2 pupils are achieving well and reaching standards that are above average. This is similar to the findings at the 1996 inspection. Investigations and experiments are taught very well. The lessons challenge the higher attainers, so enabling pupils to gain the higher Level 3. This is resulting in high achievement for those with the most potential.
94. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils carry out simple tests, and they are relating their knowledge to the world around them. They are developing good investigative skills and most are confident

about making scientific predictions and drawing conclusions. For example, in a Year 2 class, they considered whether children who were tall would jump further. Pupils were quick to offer thoughtful reasons why this proposal might or might not be the case, and were clear about how the ideas should be tested to get fair results. The outstanding teaching in this lesson ensured that pupils used a range of mathematical ideas and skills in the investigation. Pupils' mathematics and information technology skills are being used purposefully in science activities such as when measuring the lengths of different jumps, and logging the location of mini-beasts using a data handling program.

95. The scrutiny of work shows pupils have good scientific knowledge. A good feature is the consistency seen in the work of parallel classes. Pupils experience a variety of ways to record activities, such as writing booklets, asking and answering questions and recording investigations. For instance, in Year 2 pupils write predictions and investigations about melting and freezing in their own words, practising their literacy skills. However, in pupils' writing books science work tends to be interspersed with that from other subjects so it is difficult to see how the work is developing week by week. Teachers discuss pupils' work with them to assess what they have learned, but this is not noted on the work; so it is not clear at a later date how much the pupils have gained from the activities.
96. In conversation, Year 2 pupils were full of information linked to the work they had done so far this year. Their recall of what they had learned about electricity, forces, and plants and animals was very good, clearly reflecting high quality teaching. For example, they can explain the human respiratory system in much greater detail than is usually the case for pupils of this age. Year 1 pupils are excited by their science activities, and showed keen curiosity when exploring different parts of the school grounds for mini-beasts. Their collaboration with each other on the activity is better than expected for such young pupils. They take care when collecting specimens, showing a concern for living creatures. The excitement at finding a small lizard was a special moment and the pupils observed it in hushed awe. Learning assistants, and parents, support pupils in these and other practical activities and are adept at helping them to focus on the tasks.
97. The quality of teaching is good overall, with excellent teaching observed in two lessons. Lessons are carefully organised with appropriate resources. Teachers have good subject knowledge, scientific terms are explained well and questioning is thorough. A Year 1 teacher made good use of pupils' learning about mini-beasts and formed it into the focus for a subsequent literacy lesson. A strength is the links which teachers make between science and other subjects. For example, in Year 2 pupils have written songs about healthy eating. Teachers make good use of displays in ensuring that science has a high profile. However, a weaker aspect is the written weekly plans that do not always indicate what pupils are expected to learn in the lesson, consequently making it more difficult for teachers to judge pupils' achievement. This criticism was also made at the last inspection. In the main school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported in science lessons by assistants who encourage them to answer questions. In the Special Opportunities Unit, excellent teaching was seen, where every opportunity was taken to encourage pupils to talk about what they were doing and observing; this ensured pupils' very good learning about the parts of plants and plant growth.
98. The school has a sound science policy to guide teachers. National guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is used appropriately as the basis for the scheme of work. Regular assessments are collected to show the progress made by individual pupils, although sample items are sometimes not annotated to indicate the standards that pupils have achieved. The large pond, wild area and vegetable planters are all good features that are used

well to enhance science teaching and pupils' learning. The co-ordinator is new to the role and plans to develop the environmental aspects of the subject further. Science is making a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development, through an understanding of and respect for small creatures, and by caring for the environment around the school.

## **ART**

99. At the last inspection, pupils were judged to be making good progress and standards were at least as expected for the end of Key Stage 1. Evidence in this inspection comes mainly from displays of pupils' work and discussions with staff; one lesson was observed. Overall standards are typical of those usually seen for pupils of this age. There are examples of good achievement in pupils' acquisition of painting techniques. For instance, tulips painted in the style of Turner capture the translucent quality of the artist's work.
100. The teaching was very good in a Year 2 lesson on observational drawing of faces. The teacher demonstrated a series of techniques required for the task with considerable skill, which showed good subject knowledge. Probing questions encouraged the pupils to observe closely and consider the proportions of a face and how to transfer the features to paper. This enabled pupils to learn well and produce work of a high standard. Most pupils understand the sketching technique and are able to use smudging and shading to provide texture. Pupils' attention and concentration in the lesson were excellent for their age and this contributed considerably to the good progress they made.
101. Art has a high profile in the curriculum. The pupils benefit enormously from learning from many professional artists who visit the school to work on collaborative projects. The many albums of photographs show that these occasions inspire the pupils to produce lively, interesting work. For example, the Peter Pan painted screen, and the recently completed clay tiles created for the campus 'Millennium Line', which marks out where the Greenwich meridian line passes through the school grounds. Visits to different galleries, including the National Gallery, enhance pupils' learning effectively.
102. The art curriculum covers the full range, although there is scope to further develop three-dimensional work. The subject supports pupils' cultural development well. Appropriate attention is paid to the work of famous artists and framed prints are on display around the school. Since the last inspection successful efforts have been made to include non-western art in the curriculum. For instance, costumes of African drummers who visited the school inspired fabric printing in this style. Resources are good. Since the last inspection the number of information books for staff and the resources to illustrate the work of famous artists have been improved.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

103. At the last inspection, standards were typical of national expectations and teaching and pupils' progress were satisfactory. However, pupils were being offered too wide a choice in activities and had an unrealistic expectation of what they could do. Now the co-ordination of the subject is effective and the co-ordinator has reviewed the policy, and the school has adopted national guidance from Qualifications and Curriculum Authority as a scheme of work. This has raised teachers' confidence and is starting to raise standards further. Now pupils are better at using the design process than is usually the case for this age group, and their skills in making models are broadly average. Displays illustrating work in Year 1 show that pupils carry out detailed research before a project begins and that they have developed a good concept of the process of designing. For example, understanding the purpose of hinges when making castle drawbridges. These have been carefully constructed with lifting mechanisms, and in conversation it is clear pupils are proud of the results. Resources are good and the school has started to set up boxes of materials that are appropriate for particular topics. Pupils are achieving well in several

aspects of the subject, such as cooking. Their knowledge of a range of materials is sound, but they lack experience in making things using harder materials like wood.

104. Two lessons were seen during the inspection; teaching is at least good, and in one lesson it was outstanding. Consequently pupils are making good, and often very good gains in their understanding of designing and making. For example, in a lesson to develop pupils' understanding of winding mechanism, the highly skilled questioning encouraged pupils to think around the problems they would encounter and developed pupils' technical vocabulary very effectively. They responded to this very well and were able to give many examples of these mechanisms, such as clocks. Individuals with special educational needs had the confidence to make a contribution to the discussion. The excellent demonstration and explanation by the teacher ensured that there was complete understanding of the task. The organisation of the lesson in rotation with pupils using the computer suite allowed the level of instruction to be matched to the needs of different ability groups, so greater demands were made upon more able pupils to solve the problems themselves. During the practical task the teacher supported pupils' learning with useful guidance for improvement, such as helping them to think of better ways to join different materials together.
105. The school has a high quality cookery area, which is used well for food technology. A parent was observed with three pupils making Caribbean scones. Pupils read the recipe and weighed and mixed ingredients. They thoroughly enjoyed the activity and confidently explained the process. The scrutiny of work shows that practical activities on food topics are a good feature of pupils' design and technology work. This includes a very well written and illustrated collaborative book on the making of cheese, and a dictionary of food with a wide range of foods from all parts of the world.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. Standards are in line with expectations for pupils of these ages at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily over time and have good attitudes to their learning in the subject. The school has maintained pupils' attainment and achievement since the last inspection.
107. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils show an appropriate understanding for their age about the effects of climate. For example they know that in hot countries people need to drink more water and wear hats in order to keep the sun off their heads. In written work they describe the sorts of clothing that would need to be worn at the South Pole. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of other countries and their people, for example, those who live in Ghana. They are able to make comparisons between their own lives and those of children in India and Ghana, for instance, talking about the way that a typical day varies. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils make good progress in developing their skills in map work, through field studies and looking at maps and globes showing places further afield. Year 2 pupils worked industriously using atlases and globes to find the countries from which different foods had been imported. They organised themselves very well in groups, for example electing one pupil to find out where the food had come from by looking at the label on the tin or box, one to act as a scribe and one to find the country of origin on the map. Year 1 pupils enjoyed comparing the maps they had made to show where they had collected various mini-beasts in a science lesson. Information technology helped pupils to construct databases quickly to show the location of the mini-beasts they have found. They can look at photographs taken around the school grounds and mark their location on a large-scale map drawn by their teacher.

108. The teaching is good overall and some is very good. A particular strength is the wide range of activities provided, which kindle pupils' interest well. Good use is made of links with other subjects, for example, mathematical and information technology skills are used to record findings about the weather in simple pictorial graphs. Teachers are careful to build on the work done in previous years. In lessons they effectively review the work done in the last lesson so that pupils can recall what they already know. Occasionally, where a few pupils are restless, they deal appropriately with the situation so that the learning can continue. Resources are good and used well in lessons to support all pupils' learning.

## **HISTORY**

109. History was not taught during the week of the inspection so evidence of pupils' attainment is based on previous work and conversations with them. At the last inspection, history standards were in line with expectations, and pupils' progress was sound. This picture has been broadly maintained; by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve standards that are similar to those found in other schools, and the achievement of pupils in Year 1 is better than usually seen for this age group.
110. Year 1 pupils' interest in history has been captured by their visit to Bodiam Castle. They talk confidently and enthusiastically about how much they enjoyed the role play and other activities. Their written accounts of the visit are of very high quality for this age group. These demonstrate a good recall of factual information and good appreciation of the difference between life in a past time and the present. Teachers have displayed the work attractively. Pupils can continue to revisit the topic, through photographs and captions that they have word-processed themselves, and so further their learning. Through this topic, history is making a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. In their study of West Wickham Year 2 pupils have recorded information about the buildings' history soundly, in a variety of ways, including using literacy skills in extended writing and through art. Those spoken with remembered a good amount about the church and the graveyard and had enjoyed making rubbings of gravestones. They are able to make comparisons between the past, and the present; for instance, asserting that buildings are not usually made from stone and flint nowadays.
111. The teachers' planning for visits and first hand experiences are strengths that make history come alive for pupils. This 'hands on' experience significantly improves their learning, understanding of time sequences, and ability to make direct comparisons between the past and the present. Teachers wisely plan for some work to be completed through literacy activities, so pupils study non-fiction texts to gain information and use different genres of writing.
112. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear understanding of her role and the developments that could be made. Long and medium-term plans show the curriculum is covered appropriately and that pupils are building on their skills from year to year. However the short-term planning is less useful in identifying exactly what is intended to be learned in each lesson. Similarly pupils' work is not marked with assessment in mind so it is unclear whether the pupils have done particularly well with their work, or could do better.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

113. At the last inspection, pupils' attainment was broadly in line with, and sometimes higher than, national expectations; some criticisms were made of pupils' slow keyboard skills. All of the

sound features noted in the last inspection report have been maintained and those pupils observed have reasonable keyboard skills for the end of Key Stage 1. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are achieving the expected standard in all strands of the subject and building up their skills satisfactorily. They are competent in using word-processing and art applications for communication, and have experienced gathering and analysing information using the computer, and controlling devices such as programmable robots. A new, high quality long-term plan, based on national guidance, has been in place for several months. This allows teachers to plan effectively, match the work to pupils' abilities and build up their skills from year to year.

114. No direct teaching was seen during the inspection but pupils were observed working independently and with a support assistant. Most evidence has come from pupils' completed work. Several Year 1 pupils were observed learning to put information about mini-beasts into a new database program. They quickly grasped the procedure and were quite confident about controlling the mouse to move items around on the screen. Conversations with Year 2 pupils show they know the basic principles of using a computer and name its main parts and functions. In a group lesson in the computer suite most pupils quickly learned to control the mouse to open different files, and move from screen to screen in a word-processing package. Pupils have learned to use the mouse and appropriate icons to change the size, style of fonts and are starting to use simple procedures to edit writing. They are positive about using information technology, can remember a few programs they have used, and enjoy using the computer. However, in one group pupils' learning was less productive than expected as a few did not take the activity seriously and were inattentive. Pupils use their keyboard skills soundly to write stories and accounts in English and history. They analyse information, stored on disk, in mathematics and science, for example to find out their favourite pets.
115. The school has good quality up-to-date hardware and software for information technology available in classrooms and in a small computer suite. Pupils are timetabled regularly to use the suite though there is scope to make more use of this valuable facility if more adult support was available. Teachers plan to use information technology on a regular basis and are successfully establishing ways to link essential information technology skills with other subjects. For example, the directional work with a programmable toy is linked with the geography and mathematics curriculum. Information technology is being used appropriately in some English and mathematics lessons to improve skills in these subjects.
116. The school benefits from a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator for information technology, who is helping to raise the profile of the subject in the school. There is a clear policy, programme of work and high quality assessment record. The co-ordinator is clear about the areas for improvement, for example, the development of internet opportunities and further training for staff so that they are confident about using a wide range of applications. Older pupils have the opportunity to attend a computer club and the co-ordinator reports that many do so during the year and this enriches their skills.

## MUSIC

117. One music lesson was observed during the inspection, and some further evidence of pupils' singing skills was gained from hymn practice, choir and assemblies. By the end of Year 2, pupils' singing is of a better standard than usually heard for seven year olds. They sing songs expressively in several different styles. In the Year 2 lesson seen, the teacher shared the learning objectives with the pupils clearly and discussed the ways in which these were to be developed. These pupils responded to the activity sensibly and co-operated well, as a class, to practise songs and rounds. For instance, they sang their own words for a Healthy Eating song

capably in two and four parts to the tune of Frere Jaques. Pupils know the difference between the meaning of beat and rhythm but are not yet secure in understanding how the texture of music is built up. They use untuned instruments appropriately, demonstrating control in keeping a beat, but cannot readily name some instruments. The lesson was well taught and helped the pupils to strengthen their understanding in both music and literacy, as the teacher encouraged pupils to match syllables to rhythms. A good feature was the thoughtful suggestions pupils made to improve the song.

118. In hymn practice and assemblies, pupils listen with concentration and sing together with a good sense of pitch and rhythm. A new song they were taught was sung with verve, good diction and a sweet tone. They know the words of many songs by heart. Pupils listen quietly to music at the start and end of assembly. They have performed in celebrations of major festivals such as Christmas and the school's Spring Festival. In addition a third of the oldest pupils are in the choir and sing in events outside school, such as the recent Millennium Tales. The subject is making a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Year 2 pupils are also able to learn the recorder, and several take violin lessons from a peripatetic teacher. The co-ordinator is experienced and well qualified to support other teachers, and has opportunities to check on pupils' music experience through monitoring lessons. The curriculum is well organised to ensure pupils have a full range of musical experiences and build up their skills over successive years. Music activities have a high profile in the school, such as those featured in Arts Week where specialist musicians and music groups work with the pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

119. At Key Stage 1 standards seen for gymnastic skills were typical of those for pupils of this age. In both of the lessons observed the teaching was good. Teachers started the lessons very quickly and maintained a good pace, which meant that the pupils were motivated to work hard. They were careful to ensure that all pupils were safe throughout the lessons, for example checking the apparatus once it was put out, involving the pupils in the process. A strength in the teaching was the way in which pupils with special educational needs from the Special Opportunities Unit were very well integrated. These pupils complied well in these large groups and answered questions, for example about safety, and volunteered to demonstrate their sequences. All pupils showed a good ability to evaluate their own work and that of others when answering questions to help them do better. For example, Year 2 pupils explained what they would improve when planning a sequence of balancing and travelling movements. All pupils enjoyed their lessons and responded to the teaching positively, with good or very good attitudes and behaviour.
120. In the lessons seen, pupils' ability to link together movements was as expected for their age. The movements of pupils in Year 1 were energetic but lacked precision. Year 2 pupils moved confidently but had to be reminded to use all space. They showed a good knowledge of the effects of exercise on their bodies, feeling how fast their hearts were beating at the end of the warm-up phase of the lesson. Displays in classrooms show that pupils have written with good understanding about what happens to their bodies after one minute of strenuous exercise in the playground. They showed a good knowledge, explaining that they had felt out of breath, started to sweat, and 'had pinker cheeks' and a raised pulse rate.
121. The subject benefits from being co-ordinated by an experienced teacher who ensures suitable links are made with health education.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. One lesson was observed during the inspection. Most of the evidence for the overall judgement has been gained from examining pupils' work. Standards in religious education are similar to those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the subject meets the requirements of the syllabus. By the end of the key stage pupils are aware of the festivals of several major world religions and have studied Christianity and know about local places of worship in some depth. The oldest pupils explore and discuss different emotions and record these simply in pictures and sentences. They have studied the various festivals of light of different religions, and know, for instance, the importance of Diwali to Hindus. Teachers make useful links with other subjects that stimulate pupils' learning and interest, such as with art where pupils create rangoli patterns. A good feature is the opportunities that are provided for pupils to visit places of religion. Year 1 pupils have produced some high quality work about their visits to local Baptist and Methodist Churches. These experiences have clearly made a strong impression as they have recounted them in independent writing in detail, explaining some interesting facts.
123. The lesson observed was well taught and resources were used well. To introduce pupils to some insights into the Islamic faith the teacher used a 'Big Book' - My Muslim Friend - which was pitched at the appropriate level of understanding for young pupils. A copy of the Qur'an was displayed and treated with reverence and respect. This was reflected in the attention and concentration of the pupils when its importance was discussed. Most pupils showed interest in the lesson and their responses to questions demonstrated that they learned much in a short time.
124. Schemes of work are well organised for medium-term planning, but teachers' weekly planning does not focus clearly enough on the intended learning and the school improvement plan notes this for development.