

INSPECTION REPORT

PLATTS HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Platts Heath, Maidstone

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118295

Headteacher: Ian Priddle

Reporting inspector: Peter Payne
12155

Dates of inspection: 25 to 27 February 2002

Inspection number: 191395

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Headcorn Road Platts Heath Maidstone Kent
Postcode:	ME17 2NH
Telephone number:	01622 850316
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Kenneth Alexander
Date of previous inspection:	27 - 29 January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12155	Peter Payne	Registered inspector	Mathematics; science; geography; art; music; physical education; equal opportunities and special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards – the school's results and achievements? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9595	Susan Cash	Lay inspector		How high are standards – pupils' attitudes and values? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14508	Krysia Baczala	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; English; information and communications technology; design and technology; history and religious education	How well are pupils taught?

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Platts Heath Primary School is a community primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven. There are 57 pupils currently on roll, which is much smaller than other primary schools. The school serves the village of Platts Heath and some nearby hamlets. The children entering the Reception class have a wide range of attainment but overall it is slightly above that found nationally. At the time of the inspection, 12 pupils (21 per cent) have special educational needs, which is about the national average. There are no pupils with formal statements of special educational need. Five pupils (8.7 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. There are no pupils from homes where English is an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. It gives children a very good start to their education and helps them to achieve to the best of their ability. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school. They are keen to learn and most make good progress. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good. The teaching is good throughout the school and lessons are interesting. There are good arrangements to support pupils and care for them. The school has a strong partnership with its parents and keeps them well informed. The leadership and management of the school are good, and it is well governed. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of the Foundation Stage gives children a very good start to their formal education.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, with interesting lessons and a good range of experiences
- The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They enjoy coming to school, respond to the high expectations of them and take a pride in their work.
- Provision for the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- It is an inclusive school with equality of opportunity and excellent relationships.
- Parents and the community make a strong contribution to the pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- The monitoring and assessment of academic progress and the way in which the information is used to raise individual standards
- The development and extension of the use of information communication technology to support the subjects of the curriculum and the efficiency of the school administration

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 January 1997, and has made good progress in addressing the key issues that were raised, with the exception of the use of assessment information. The 20 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and all of the lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory, which is a substantial improvement. Curriculum co-ordinators have recently been identified for each subject and are beginning to develop their role. A programme for monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is in place and is carried out by the headteacher and some subject co-ordinators. Strategies for extending the more able pupils are explicit in the daily lesson planning. The use of assessment information to clarify future curriculum plans is developing, but has not yet done so sufficiently. This remains a key issue. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully and are well established. The basic skills taught in English and mathematics are evident in other subjects. The standards achieved by pupils in science, art, design and technology

and music have improved since the last inspection. The school has adopted the curriculum guidance and planning documents published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and appropriate programmes of work are now in place for all subjects.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	B	D	E
Mathematics	B	E	D	E
Science	C	D	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Because the number of pupils in each year group is very small, (in Year 6 in 2001 it was 11), the results of their performance in the national tests at age seven and eleven need to be treated with some care because the performance of one pupil can change the average performance of the group by about 10 per cent. When children start at school, they have the full range of ability and the overall pattern is slightly above the national expectation. They make good progress, and all achieve the national Early Learning Goals by the age of five. At the end of Year 2 in 2001, pupils achieved standards that were in line with other schools in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of Year 6 in 2001, standards were below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence in mathematics and science indicates that there is an improvement in standards. Challenging targets have been set for 11 year olds in 2002. Standards in the other subjects are above expectation at age seven and eleven in art and design and technology. They are as expected in information and communication technology, history, geography, music and religious education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They approach their work with interest and enthusiasm and take a pride in the work that they do. They participate eagerly in all the activities that the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good both in the lessons and about the school at breaks and lunchtime. Pupils are courteous, orderly and considerate.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils act responsibly and have a very good understanding of how their actions affect others. They show respect for the values and beliefs of others and form very good relationships with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average and there is very little unauthorised absence. Regular and punctual attendance has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery & Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	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 is a considerable strength of the school and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teachers provide interesting lessons and, because of the good teaching, learning is effective. Teaching of the basic skills of English and mathematics is consistently good. Particular strengths of teaching include confident knowledge of the subject, very good management of the pupils and a very high expectation of them. Time is used very effectively and the objectives of the lesson are shared with the pupils so that they are clear about what they are going to learn and how successful they have been. Pupils of all ages are able to increase their knowledge and understanding and develop their skills. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is good. Particularly effective teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants ensures that these pupils make satisfactory progress. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, more than four out of five were graded as good or better.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides good opportunities for learning. There is a broad range of worthwhile activities that meet the interests, aptitudes and needs of the pupils. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented successfully.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special needs is good. Their teachers and learning support assistants know them well and provide clear individual education plans and effective support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The good provision for pupils' spiritual development is reflected in aspects of the life and work of the school and is an element in acts of collective worship and religious education. The very good provision for pupils' moral and social development is reflected in their social skills and behaviour. Very good provision for cultural development enables pupils to experience and appreciate the richness of the cultural diversity of British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and ensuring the health and safety of pupils. There are good procedures for monitoring and supporting their personal development. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory

The school has a very good relationship with its parents and carers and maintains a very effective partnership with them. They are particularly supportive of the school and comment on the improvement in behaviour and the high expectation of work. Arrangements for sharing information about progress and achievements made are good. There is a genuine open-door policy and the school welcomes parents in to share information and to ensure that their children are happy and learning effectively. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' personal progress and ensuring their welfare are good. It is a particularly inclusive and caring community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher provides purposeful leadership and a clear sense of direction and purpose for the school. The staff and governors share a firm commitment to the development of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities, play an active part in school life and provide highly committed support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Performance management has been introduced and monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is established. Realistic and challenging targets have been agreed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has limited financial resources but these are used prudently. Decisions on spending are linked to educational priorities and the principles of best value are applied. The school makes imaginative and effective use of its very limited accommodation.

There are sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum in Year R and the National Curriculum and religious education in Years 1 to 6. The very effective team of learning support assistants plays an important part in ensuring the good quality of learning and behaviour. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and some elements are poor, although the staff and governors have made imaginative use of the spaces available and tried to sustain a good quality of internal decoration. The outdoor play areas are satisfactory although there is no immediate access to a grassed field. Resources for teaching are good in most subjects and satisfactory in information and communication technology and physical education although some specialised books are needed to support the religious education programme of study. Financial management is good. The governors have a policy of achieving best value in their transactions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like to come to school. • The good quality of the teaching. • The good behaviour of the children. • The good leadership and management. • The good progress that their children make. • The high expectation of hard work and achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The amount of work pupils are asked to do at home.

The inspectors endorse the parents' very positive views of their school. The school expects its pupils to work and play hard during the school day. The inspectors confirm the intellectual and physical application and engagement during lessons. Although opportunities for extra-curricular activities are limited, the new staff are developing opportunities in physical education and music making. The inspectors found that the amount of homework provided across the age groups was about right.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The levels of attainment of the children upon entry to the Foundation Stage are consistent with the full range of ability, including children with learning difficulties and potentially high attainers. The overall level is marginally above that for similar schools. Children make good progress in the reception class and most have already reached or exceeded the Early Learning Goals for children aged five and begun work in the early stages of the National Curriculum. Because of their positive attitudes and the commitment and expectation of their teacher and learning support assistant, most children work at or near to their potential.
2. Because the number of pupils in each year group is very small, the results of their performance in the national tests at age seven and eleven need to be treated with some care because the performance of one pupil can change the average performance of the group by 10 per cent. The results of the 2001 tests taken in reading, writing and mathematics by seven year olds were in line with the national average for all schools and when compared to the performance of similar schools. The standards achieved by higher attaining pupils were above the national average in reading and close to the national average in writing and mathematics. Performance in science was above the national average. Over the last five years, the performance of seven year olds has consistently exceeded the national trend, with the exception of a consistent dip in all subjects in 1999. Girls consistently performed better than boys over this period.
3. The 2001 results for 11 year olds were below the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to the performance of similar schools, their performance was well below average. The performance of higher attaining pupils was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Over the last five years, the overall performance of 11 year olds has been just below the national trend. Girls consistently performed better than boys over this period.
4. The school has set challenging targets for 11 year olds in 2002. These were carefully established and reflect the performance of the year group through the school, including the proportion of pupils with special needs. Inspection evidence suggests that they will be achieved.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in learning and achieve standards that are at least in line with their individual abilities in both key stages. Although attainment is often below that expected from pupils of a similar age, the majority of these pupils meet the targets set in their individual education plans.
6. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, standards are above expectation at seven and eleven in design and technology and art. They are as expected in information and communications technology, history, geography, music and religious education. Standards in science, art, design and technology and music have improved since the last inspection. Although standards in information and communications technology are as expected, some pupils have developed skills which are well above the national expectation and recent investments in new equipment and training mean that the school is well placed to improve standards still further.

7. The basic skills developed through the literacy hour are evident across the curriculum and both key stages. There are impressive examples of speaking and listening skills used to promote and extend thinking and to clarify the pupils' understanding of their work. Good quality discussion takes place, particularly in science, history, geography, religious and personal and social education where the thoughts and ideas of the pupils are developed and valued. Pupils use their numeracy skills in the measurement of parameters in science, plotting of co-ordinates in geography, weighing, measuring and the use of nets in design and technology. The use of information and communications technology tools to support learning in other subjects has been limited by the need to replace deficient cabling and install new cabling to the new mobile classroom. As a result the development of the effective use of e-mail, access to the Internet and the routine use of computers for word processing and data handling has been limited.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils very much enjoy coming to school. They like to meet their friends and think lessons are interesting. There is a very happy 'family' atmosphere in the school, which pupils respond to by taking care of each other and playing happily together. Many people commented to inspectors about the improvement in standards of behaviour in recent months. Pupils no longer scream and shout while they play, but show consideration for others and play constructively. Lunchtimes are pleasant, social occasions. Pupils move around the school quietly and sensibly. The youngest pupils in particular are very aware that they must go quietly to lunch and not disturb the older ones who are still working. Pupils and parents are confident that there is no bullying and that minor disagreements are dealt with quickly and effectively. There have been no exclusions.
9. In lessons, pupils are very attentive and keen to be involved. They speak enthusiastically about their work and the things they have made in design and technology, for instance. Their response to the teaching in a recorder club was excellent. Pupils sensibly put up their hands before answering or asking a question. This high standard of orderliness makes a significant contribution to the standard of work pupils achieve. Even those few who find it difficult to behave are helped by the consistently high standards expected and rarely disrupt lessons. In no lesson seen was behaviour less than satisfactory and in nine out of ten lessons it was good or better.
10. When they are given the opportunity, pupils show a high level of responsibility and initiative. For example, when an overhead projector acetate was wrongly positioned, an older pupil discreetly moved it so that all could see. Older pupils are very good at looking after the younger ones. All pupils willingly and conscientiously undertake useful tasks in the classroom. The school is considering the formation of a school council.
11. Relationships throughout the school are very good and are better than those reported by the last inspection. Adults set very good examples in how to relate with others, listen to their point of view and value what they are saying. Pupils speak politely to each other and to adults. They are considerate of each other and welcoming to visitors. The quality of relationships and the positive ethos in the school are very well supported by the regular, well planned use of circle time and by ideas discussed during assemblies.
12. Levels of attendance are well above average and there is very little unauthorised absence. This makes a significant contribution to the standard of work pupils attain.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is a new policy that sets out the school's approach to teaching and learning clearly. All lessons taught during the inspection were satisfactory or better. In the Years R, 1 and 2 class, the quality of teaching is good or better in all lessons and two lessons were very good. In the Years 3 to 6 classes, two thirds of the lessons taught are good and about one in four was very good.
14. In the reception and nursery, where children are taught in the same room as the infants, teaching is always good and has many very good features. Planning is meticulous and the mixed age class is managed very well to ensure that the needs of all the children are met. The teacher has very good knowledge of the way young children learn and uses assessment well to plan activities that help them all to reach the Early Learning Goals for children aged five. Children that reach the Early Learning Goals during their reception year are well provided for with more challenging tasks.
15. The teaching of Years 1 and 2 is good and the teacher is highly competent in the teaching of phonics, numeracy and other basic skills. A good range of teaching methods is used to enable pupils to learn effectively. For example, in one lesson taught during the inspection pupils were working on initial sounds and consonants. The youngest children were collecting things from around the classroom that began with a consonant that had been allocated to them, for example a cup, crayon or toy cat. Older pupils were focusing on consonant blends such as 'sp', 'spl' and 'spr'. They were insecure with these at the start of the lesson. By the end of the lesson they were competently reading and saying several words that required recognition of these sounds and were able to sort and write word lists using them. They made visible progress during the lesson, enjoyed their work and took pleasure from the knowledge that they were improving their reading and writing skills. The teacher insists on high standards of behaviour and always challenges pupils to do their best. The learning support assistant is deployed very effectively and makes a very positive contribution to the welfare of the pupils and the standards they achieve.
16. The quality of learning in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils respond well to the tasks they are given and show increased independence in carrying out activities. They acquire new knowledge and skills at a good pace, show interest in their work and understand what they have learned. The oldest pupils would benefit from time targets for their written work, as they do not always settle to writing tasks quickly and productively.
17. In one lesson seen during the inspection pupils were planting seeds. They were very careful with equipment and materials, worked carefully and helped each other and made sensible predictions of how the seeds planted in different ways might grow. There was a good level of discussion and they were clearly enjoying the process of learning.
18. In the Years 3 to 6 classes teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach basic skills well but subject knowledge in information and communications technology is not up to the standard of the other subjects. A good range of effective teaching methods is used and lessons are presented in a way that interests and involves the pupils. Planning of lessons is satisfactory but the use of assessment to help future planning is not fully developed. Homework is used well to extend what is learned in school.
19. Where teaching is particularly effective, teachers match activities accurately to the needs of the pupils. For example, in one lesson pupils were learning to use calculators

to master the rules of subtraction. A brisk mental warm up wasted no time, pupils were reminded of the layout of calculators and they settled quickly to their tasks. Very good use was made of resources and prompt sheets for groups working independently and the directly taught component of the lesson exemplified partitioning, estimation and inverse operation well. Pupils were encouraged to discuss their methods and ideas and they genuinely applauded their colleagues who had worked particularly hard. The atmosphere was confident and positive and behaviour was excellent.

20. The quality of learning is good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make good progress in skills, knowledge and understanding and become increasingly independent in their work and study skills. Most pupils put very good effort in to their work, show interest and concentrate well but some older boys are not productive in terms of writing.
21. The skills of literacy are taught well across the school. Teachers are still being trained and supported in the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and some resources such as 'Progression in Phonics' are not yet being used to full effect. The teaching of literacy occurs in many subjects across the curriculum and pupils have sufficient literacy skills to enable them to access a rich range of learning opportunities. Good use is made of mathematical skills to support and develop other subjects in the curriculum. For example the use of co-ordinates in geography, time lines in history and data handling in science. Teachers take opportunities to remind pupils about the need for estimation or of the way in which a similar problem had been solved during a numeracy session.
22. Teaching in the school meets the needs of all pupils well. Boys and girls have equal access to every aspect of the curriculum. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers, learning support assistants, parents and additional teachers who are brought in to teach 'booster classes'. Individual education plans are concise, positive and pay due regard to the new code of practice. Able pupils are appropriately challenged. Small class sizes allow for increased individual attention and a high proportion of pupils pass the Kent selection test each year.
23. In the Years R, 1 and 2 class it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching and learning in history and the quality of teaching in art, as it was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all the other subjects. In the Years 3 to 6 classes the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in geography. Learning is satisfactory in religious education. Apart from this the quality of teaching and learning is good in all other subjects.
24. The pupils' own knowledge of their learning is good. They are able to recall and discuss what they have already learned and how to apply this to new situations. Contributory factors include the ways in which teachers support pupils through sharing objectives, focused reviews of activities and creating displays that remind and reinforce learning and achievement.

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

25. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage and in both key stages is good. It is broad, largely balanced and has many strengths. It provides a wide range of interesting and relevant opportunities for children to learn. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Kent agreed syllabus for religious education, with the exception of some elements of physical education that are beyond the school's ability to

accommodate. The school has adopted the curriculum advice and planning documents published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for subjects. These provide guidelines on medium and short term planning and include clear and precise learning objectives that are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

26. There is a very good programme of personal, social and health education that includes opportunities for pupils to learn about the misuse of drugs and sex education. Whilst all subjects have an agreed allocation of time, some of the foundation subjects, for example geography or history, disappear from the curriculum for parts of the year, which inhibits the progressive development of subject-specific skills and knowledge in these areas. A notable feature of the formal and informal curriculum is its inclusivity. The school ensures that all pupils have access to all activities, organising appropriate adult help and support where necessary.
27. Subject co-ordinators have begun to take an overview of the needs of their subject and plan for further development. Literacy, numeracy, science, design and technology, art and music have shown improvement since the last inspection. Investigative work is now well established in science and pupils are able to devise their own experiments with confidence by the age of 11. In mathematics, pupils can use investigation and problem solving to apply their developing numeracy skills. This develops independence in thinking and learning and allows them to take responsibility for their own learning. Co-ordinators have been able to support teachers and this has led to improvements in subjects such as design and technology. In information and communications technology progress has been slow because of difficulties in ensuring the necessary cabling to commission new computers.
28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Their needs are identified early and the special needs co-ordinator works with teachers to develop effective programmes of work that are monitored regularly. Targets are shared fully with learning support assistants who play an effective role in supporting pupils in most subjects. The pupils are predominantly taught in class, and are only occasionally withdrawn for individual support. There is a good balance between individual and small group work on specific difficulties and classroom support. This maintains the full range of curriculum opportunities and has regard to pupils' individual education plans. The school is actively working to ensure that it meets the recently revised code of practice.
29. Implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies has been the predominant focus within the curriculum during the last two years in terms of staff training, time and resources. These initiatives are now well established and their effect is noticeable in improving standards. All teachers take good account of the guidelines of the National Literacy Strategy in planning the literacy curriculum and a daily literacy hour. Grouping is used to match learning to need in numeracy and literacy. Further time is allocated to improve writing and reading skills. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established in all classes and is supported by clear and detailed planning for each component of the lesson. The time allocated for numeracy each day often exceeds that recommended by the strategy. Throughout the school there are good opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the other subjects of the curriculum.
30. The curriculum is considerably enhanced by the teaching on a two year cycle of French and German. It is enriched by a very good range of educational and cultural visits, and many people in the community visit the school to share their experiences or talents.

Opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities are limited at present to recorder groups and a session of physical activities at the local secondary school, although there is a strong tradition of participation in music festivals, including one in Jersey. Given the small number of teachers at the school, the supervisory duties and the many other pressures upon their time, this is understandable.

31. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development, with particular strengths in their moral, social and cultural education. Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on moral and social issues. For example, an assembly about Mary Seacole encouraged pupils to think about her courage and care of others. It also alerted pupils to the importance of getting to know someone and not relying on first impressions. The school is developing good links with local churches. The Family Trust leads assemblies regularly and last Christmas the school held a carol service in a nearby church. Pupils study all the major world religions and are developing an understanding of what it means to have a faith. Pupils have time to reflect about themselves and their relationships with others during circle time. The youngest pupils thought about 'why I am special?' As yet, the school has not formally identified ways in which the curriculum could contribute to pupils' sense of awe and wonder. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good.
32. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. The school has high expectations of how pupils will behave and relate with each other. These expectations are discussed and class rules developed with the pupils. Sanctions are made clear, but pupils are helped to meet the high standards through the positive, caring and supportive ethos of the school. Circle time and assemblies provide good opportunities for teachers to discuss problems pupils may be facing and to help them to appreciate the needs and viewpoint of others. Posters around the school give good advice on how, for example, to say sorry, give a compliment or accept criticism. Others promote respect, fairness, trustworthiness and explain what these words mean. Pupils are also helped to consider those less fortunate through the fund-raising efforts which raise considerable sums of money. Pupils are encouraged to take part in competitions and festivals to bring them into contact with a wider circle of their peers. Through links with the small schools consortium, pupils meet others of a similar age and have access to a wider range of experiences. For example, they recently enjoyed a theatre visit to a production of 'Twelfth Night'.
33. A good range of visits supports not only pupils' social development, but also increases their cultural awareness. Older pupils have been to visit their link school in France. They recently spent a day in London meeting their MP and looking round the Houses of Parliament and Downing Street before going on to the National Gallery. The school has a close association with the Mayor of Maidstone and, through her, pupils are gaining a good understanding of citizenship and local government. Pupils are exposed to a wide range of art and music during their time in school. They are also introduced to aspects of other cultures through studies in religious education and geography, with good displays of artefacts to arouse their interest. Very good provision for cultural development enables pupils to experience and appreciate the richness of the cultural diversity of British society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school makes good provision for the care and safety of its pupils. Child protection procedures are clear, though the head teacher has to complete his training. Those who hurt themselves or feel unwell are kindly and efficiently taken care of and their parents informed. Due attention is given to all matters of health and safety and the

security of pupils.

35. The school has good systems for monitoring attendance and contacts the home if no explanation for absence has been received. Consequently levels of unauthorised absence are very low compared with those found in many other schools nationally. Registers are accurately and neatly marked and annotated. The head teacher has impressed upon parents the importance of not taking holidays in term time and not allowing their children to miss school for birthday treats and shopping trips. This has led to an improvement in levels of attendance.
36. The very good behaviour observed in the school is supported by consistent expectations among all the adults in the school. Teachers, mid-day supervisors and parent helpers all know what standard of behaviour to expect of the pupils because school rules are clear. The rules are regularly discussed in class and displayed so that the pupils understand what is expected of them.
37. The new behaviour policy is very brief and deals with poor behaviour and sanctions. It does not reflect the good practice in promoting good behaviour that is evident in the school. If pupils occasionally find it difficult to conform, they are supported and helped in a positive and constructive way and, if necessary, their parents are actively involved. Attractive posters around the school help pupils to learn, for example, how to disagree with someone without being confrontational or how to ask for something. This helps pupils to deal with worries or concerns in a positive and practical way. Parents are rightly confident that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.
38. The small size of the school enables teachers to know each individual pupil very well. Any concerns which might arise are quickly shared and action taken. However, there are no formal systems for recording pupils' personal development.
39. The quality and use of assessment is a weakness and requires further development. New arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have only recently been introduced and are not yet used consistently by all the teachers. Assessment in the Foundation Stage, where performance is measured against progress towards the Early Learning Goals for children by the age of five, is good. Assessment information is gathered about pupil performance in core subjects in some classes and teachers are beginning to use this effectively to monitor progress and to set pupil targets for the end of the year or for performance by age seven and eleven. A good start has been made by some teachers in using newly designed pupil assessment records, in keeping comprehensive records of pupil achievement and in using this information to plan carefully for next steps in learning. This practice should be extended to all classes.
40. The analysis and interpretation of pupil performance and school results in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, when measured against national data, is underdeveloped. Assessment information is not used to guide curricular planning. For example, analysis of pupil performance in SATs papers is not used to adjust plans to strengthen teaching in weaker areas. Assessment in most of the other subjects is not well developed.
41. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Staff know the pupils well, recognise their needs and offer effective personal support and guidance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school has worked hard recently to involve parents and has kept them well informed about the large number of changes which have been taking place. Parents are encouraged to help and a useful audit of skills has recently been conducted. This has led to several parents, as well as older members of the community, volunteering to help on a regular basis, for example, with cooking, sewing and reading. This is providing pupils with a breadth of experience that they would not otherwise have. All the teachers are very approachable and parents are confident that any concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. Parents are increasingly positive about the school and comment very favourably on the changes that have recently occurred. The school is building a very effective partnership with parents.
43. Information for parents provided by the school is good. There are improved opportunities for parents to visit and see the work of the school. A numeracy evening was held recently, as well as an open day and there are now two opportunities during the year to meet the teachers for formal discussions. The booklet they receive when their child first starts in the Foundation Stage is excellent. It tells parents all they need to know about the school and also includes many useful ideas on how to help their child at home. The new prospectus is detailed and informative. Newsletters and other written communications are sent home frequently. End of year reports are brief but to the point, giving parents a clear view of how well their child is progressing, what the child can do and how to improve further in English and mathematics. The school is aware that parents would appreciate more information on the topics their child will be looking at, so that they can give extra support at home, and is planning to provide this.
44. Parents make a significant contribution to the life and work of the school. The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA) organises a number of social and fund-raising events which are very well supported, not only by parents but also by the wider community. The bonfire is enjoyed by all, as is the summer fair. The large sums of money raised make a major contribution to the work of the school. The PTFA has funded most of the literacy and numeracy hour books, as well as computers. Parents take an active interest in their children's learning, hearing them read and discussing their progress with teachers, for example. They lend photographs and artefacts, which enliven the topics pupils are studying.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. Leadership and management of the school are good. The new headteacher provides purposeful leadership that has identified new priorities and a clear sense of direction and purpose throughout the school. He is supported by staff and governors who share a firm commitment to the development of the school and the raising of standards. This is a significant factor in the school's current improvement.
46. The school's aims and values are published and displayed about the school. The diligence and good quality of relationships at all levels in the school demonstrate the commitment of pupils and adults to live up to them. Significant features of the aims are a commitment to strive for high standards to maximise each pupil's potential and a partnership between home and school.
47. The day-to-day management of the school is good. The staff have job descriptions that establish their roles and what is expected of them. Effective delegation of responsibility for the development of subjects to individual co-ordinators is a recent initiative and a demanding one in so small a staff. A performance management policy has been agreed and is being implemented. Teachers have a regular professional review

meeting where their targets are reviewed and agreed. Training needs are identified with regard to both the individual's and the school's needs.

48. The headteacher and core subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching in classrooms by observation and by evaluation of the work of pupils. Outside agencies are also invited in to validate the quality of work in the classrooms. This is a significant development since the last inspection and is having a positive effect on standards. Assessment data in the core subjects of English and mathematics is used to establish realistic performance targets at the end of the key stage. However, other information, such as the detailed performance data produced by national tests and the school's own internal testing, is not used systematically to identify weaknesses of individuals or groups that may be identified by the data.
49. The governing body is effective and fulfils its statutory duties. Governors play an active part in school life and provide highly committed support. The committee structure is logical and well organised with appropriate terms of reference. The governors have a clear vision for the development of the school. They are kept fully informed by the headteacher about the school's performance and have a realistic understanding of the school's current strengths and weaknesses.
50. The school is well staffed for the number of pupils currently on the roll and there is a good match of qualifications and experience to deliver the curriculum. Teaching, support and administrative staff work well together to meet the pupils' needs. The commitment to continuing in-service training is a strength. Induction procedures to support new teachers tend to be ad-hoc, because of the very small staff. Learning support assistants and mid-day supervisors are effectively trained and deployed. They are very effective and play an important part in ensuring the quality of learning and good behaviour.
51. Although a dilapidated mobile classroom has been replaced with a new unit, greatly improving the quality of experience for one class, the quality and extent of the accommodation are unsatisfactory. The state of decoration in some areas of the school is substandard, despite the best efforts of the staff to mask them with soft furnishings. The problems of accommodation to deliver the full curriculum for physical education, which were reported in the last inspection, remain a major limiting factor. The school does its best to provide physical education within the constraint of the poor physical facilities on the site.
52. Resources, with the exception of the reference books for religious education, are satisfactory in information and communications technology, history and physical education. They are good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, art, geography and music. Good use is made of them. Storage, particularly of bulkier equipment and artefacts, is difficult because of the very restricted space. The quality of the learning environment and the school surroundings owes much to the high standards achieved by the cleaner-in-charge and to the care and pride in their school shown by the pupils and adults.
53. The financial management of the school is good. A recent LEA audit confirmed that the financial systems and controls were operating satisfactorily. Advice given was acted upon. The finance committee is provided with good quality information from the monitoring statements provided by the local authority. The overall use of new technologies for administrative purposes is satisfactory though full advantage is not taken of the opportunities that information technology affords for the production, for example, of annual reports. The budget is very tight, and a deficit has been agreed with

the local education authority. When it is necessary, firm action is taken to avoid overspending. Educational priorities are established by staff and governors and supported by the prudent use of very limited funds. The governors have a policy of achieving best value in their transactions. The school has been successful in attracting additional funding and specific grants, such as the New Opportunities Fund and the National Grid for Learning. These additional funds and grants are wholly applied to their designated purposes.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order to continue the successful development of the school and to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) Develop the monitoring and assessment of academic progress and the way in which the information is used to raise individual standards by:
 - extending the good practice of assessment in English and mathematics to the other subjects of the curriculum by devising a manageable and practical system for each subject;
 - ensuring that the good use of the recently introduced pupil assessment records with the younger pupils is extended to all the classes;
 - evaluating the individual pupil performance in the SATs tests to identify areas requiring further development;
 - making greater use of the detailed information contained in the annual PANDA package.
(Paragraphs 38, 39, 55, 101, 109, 115, 118, 130 and 138.)

 - (2) Develop and extend of the use of information and communications technology to support the subjects of the curriculum and the efficiency of the school administration by:
 - ensuring as a matter of urgency that appropriate cabling and connections are completed to enable the computers and printers in classrooms to be fully operational;
 - completing the formalities required to gain access to the Internet;
 - taking full advantage of the staff training programmes funded by the New Opportunities Fund;
 - ensuring that the potential use of ICT is identified in daily lesson planning;
 - taking advantage of the opportunities which the use of ICT affords to support the administration of the school.
(Paragraphs 7, 26, 52, 66, 84, 93, 99 and 122.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	26	5	0	0	0
Percentage	0	18	68	13	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents nearly three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	57
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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 (Year 2)

Because the number of pupils in the year group are below 11 the table giving details is omitted in accordance with OfSTED requirements.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	5	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (88)	73 (50)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (88)	82 (50)	100 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (89)

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

Because the numbers of both boys and girls in the year group are lower than 11, details about boys' and girls' performance are omitted in accordance with OfSTED requirements.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0

White	57
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.8
Average class size	19

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	40

FTE means full-time equivalent

Financial information

Financial year	2000 / 2001
	£
Total income	208,874
Total expenditure	215,886
Expenditure per pupil	3,787
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,051
Balance carried forward to next year	-3,961

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	57
Number of questionnaires returned	18

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	33	56	11	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	55	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	72	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	56	16	0	0
The teaching is good.	50	50	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	11	0	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	28	6	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	50	11	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	39	39	10	6	6
The school is well led and managed.	44	50	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	50	6	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	0	17	28	50	6

Other issues raised by parents

At their meeting with the registered inspector, the parents were very strongly supportive of the school and its staff. They applauded the warmth and strength of relationships and described it as a welcoming and inclusive school. The attitudes and values of the school were seen as a positive attraction for parents and they applauded the great improvement in behaviour. They appreciated their ability to have good quality information about their child's progress. They expressed a sense of genuine partnership. There was some concern at the amount of work expected out of school, particularly during the holidays.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are very well cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff. The curriculum is broad and provides a good range of activities that are suitable for young children. It is fully planned in accordance with the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. According to baseline assessment of their skills on entry to the school, the average attainment of the children is marginally above that in other local schools. There are few children in the year group and attainment of individuals varies considerably. At the time of the inspection, just before Easter in the spring term, most of the children had already reached or exceeded the Early Learning Goals for children aged five and had begun work in the early stages of the National Curriculum.
56. In the Reception and Nursery, where children are taught in the same room as the infants, teaching is always good and has many very good features. Planning is meticulous and the mixed age class is managed very well to ensure that the needs of all the children are met. Behaviour in the Foundation Stage is very good. The children have very good attitudes to attending school, are happy and secure in the school environment and respond well to an ethos of encouragement and support. The teacher has very good knowledge of the way young children learn and uses assessment well to plan activities that help them all reach the Early Learning Goals for children aged five. Those children that reach the Early Learning Goals during their Reception year are well provided for with more challenging tasks. Staff assess children's work accurately and regularly. They use their observations to plan thoroughly for next steps in learning. The learning support assistant is deployed very effectively and makes a very positive contribution to the welfare of the pupils and the standards that they achieve. The co-operation between the parents and teaching team in the Foundation Stage class helps to establish a pleasant and purposeful learning atmosphere. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is good. A wide range of activities is provided that offer the children new experiences, stimulate curiosity and encourage them to role-play. For example, groups of children were taking it in turns to play in the class 'bakery'. They could say that the shop would need to have customers and practised acting out the role of customer or shop assistant, saying please and thank you and having simple conversations. They played co-operatively, organised and thought about the activities and took turns well. In another lesson, the children were seated in a circle. They discussed with the teacher the significance of a smile and of making eye contact when greeting or speaking to people. The special nature of individuals was then discussed and each child was asked to say why they were a special person. The children made sensible suggestions such as 'I am a good friend' or 'I play nicely'. They listened to each other well, took turns to speak and supported shy or hesitant children sensitively when it was their turn. The lesson had a positive impact on children's personal and social development and self-esteem.
58. Most children have a positive self-image and make good progress in personal development. They become increasingly independent in organising their own belongings such as coats and book bags, they can attend to matters of personal hygiene and most can change their clothes for PE unaided. They gain confidence in

finding their way around the school and learn from older pupils how they should behave in shared areas of the school during assemblies, playtimes and meal times. Adults in the school community model good behaviour and praise the children for appropriate actions.

Communication, language and literacy

59. On entering school, the children have attainment that is marginally above the expected level, although individual ability varies widely. A few children can speak, read and write well for their age, sounding out simple words and writing some letters. Most of the children can say the sound of some letters and have had experience of handling books and being read to by adults, although a few do not know all the letters or sounds.
60. At the time of the inspection, the majority of children were on track to meet the required standard by the end of Foundation Stage and some had already reached this level. The children listen well when people speak or read to them and express their own ideas confidently. Most speak clearly in sentences, know they must take turns to speak and significantly extend their vocabulary. The majority of children can hear, say and write the sounds at the beginning and end of words. Some of them know the sounds two letters make when joined together and can recognise, read and write simple words. Children are confident in their early attempts at handwriting. Most can write letters clearly and a few children can write recognisable words. Most children recognise and write their own name and they can recite nursery rhymes or retell stories they know from memory. The teaching team provide a good range of activities that promote the development of spoken and written communication. The teaching is good and all the children make good progress.

Mathematical development

61. The majority of children are on course to reach the expected standard in mathematical development by the end of the Foundation Stage. They can say, use and recognise the numbers 1 to 10 and can put these in order. Most children can count to 20 and some can count beyond this. They have a good understanding that the numbers represent greater quantity. The most able children can identify number bonds to 5 and can say which number is one or two more than or less than a given number. Children can use an increasing range of words associated with mathematical language such as longer or shorter, higher or lower and can name simple shapes. They can follow patterns and arrange objects in sequence well.
62. The classroom is well equipped with a good range of objects and resources designed to promote mathematical development. Posters with numbers, number lines and number squares are displayed and there are many sets of objects for the children to sort and count. They have access to age-appropriate resources such as measuring implements, weighing scales, coins, clocks and timers of different kinds. The teaching of mathematical development is good and has a very positive impact on the progress made by the children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Teaching in the reception class provides well for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world. A wide range of activities is planned to help them to find out more about their surroundings and how they inter-react with them.

64. During the inspection some good teaching was seen which promoted progress towards this early learning goal very well. For example, in one lesson the children were planting seeds of peas and flowers. They were encouraged to examine the seeds carefully and were able to note similarities and differences. They understood that soil, water and warmth were necessary in order for the seeds to grow and they made good attempts to 'pot' the seeds in soil. Plants and flowering bulbs are a feature of the classroom, helping children watch how growing things develop. The children can describe the effects of the passing of the seasons, such as some trees having buds in the spring and the temperature changing.
65. The children have an early geographical understanding. They look with interest at big atlas books, maps and globes, can say the name of the village in which they live and that this is in England. They can speak about changes in the weather and describe correctly when it is sunny, windy or raining. They develop an awareness of the passing of time and can use words such as yesterday and tomorrow increasingly accurately. They understand basic historical ideas, for example that other children attended their own school long ago.
66. Children are given many opportunities to design and make things and most can cut out, arrange and stick simple pictures. They can model with construction kits and use three-dimensional materials to create artefacts. For example during the inspection, groups were taking it in turns to make 'bread rolls' for the class 'bakery' using salt dough. They looked at examples and could reproduce them well by rolling, cutting and pressing the dough. They decorated the tops with patterns, used their imagination well and made good quality examples.
67. Some opportunities are created for children to increase their technological awareness but their use of computers is underdeveloped. Children know how to use some of the equipment in the classroom such as a cassette player and earphones. The children can give examples of when they have used computers for simple letter or number activities. They can locate a cursor on a screen by using a mouse and know they must click to make something happen. Beyond this, their knowledge is limited and they do not as yet move naturally to use computers as one of a choice of activities offered in the classroom.
68. Children respond well to early opportunities to reflect on life, to consider the importance of significant events in peoples' lives and to begin to understand about relationships with other people. They attend whole school assemblies and join in and listen to simple prayers. They can name Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter and know that they are a feature of life in their own community.

Physical development

69. Children are on course to reach the expected standard by the end of the Foundation Stage. They make good progress in understanding how their bodies work and the need to keep safe and healthy. They develop an increasing awareness of their own need to sleep, eat and take exercise. They learn about the importance of hygiene, such as washing their hands before eating and not touching their eyes when they have handled materials like soil or sand. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop the finer skills of dexterity and hand-eye co-ordination. They learn manipulation skills by drawing, cutting, threading, sorting, sticking and building. They develop greater accuracy when using crayons, pencils and paint or when joining or pouring. They use tools such as scissors or small digging spades with increased control.

70. There are limited facilities at the school for the provision of appropriate physical challenges on a larger scale. There is no dedicated outdoor area for Foundation Stage with fixed climbing equipment and there is no access to a school hall or gym with physical education equipment. There is limited access to a field area in summer and to the small school playground. Teachers make good use of what is available but children have few opportunities to mount stairs or climbing equipment using alternative feet, to scramble, swing, balance, push or pull large play equipment or construct with large blocks and planks.
71. In the physical education lessons that do occur in the classroom or on the playground, opportunities are provided for children to increase their awareness of space, their physical co-ordination and their strength and stamina. They improve their ability to run, jump, hop, catch and throw and generally manage their body with increasing control. Their progress is satisfactory.

Creative development

72. Children make good progress in creative development. Activities are well resourced and planned carefully to offer a diverse and stimulating programme. All children reach the required standard for children aged five in aspects of this Early Learning Goal such as art and music.
73. Children are able to use a wide range of artistic materials sensibly. They can use pencils, felt pens and crayons with which to draw and can use paint to fill in shapes and to print. There are some good examples of paintings and observational drawings done by the children on display in the classroom. Children can make pictures using jigsaws, complete patterns using a range of coloured shapes and say the names of most colours. A few can say which two colours they would mix in order to make another they would like to use. The children can explain the difference between simple textures such as rough, soft or smooth. They do simple work with textiles, for example fabric purses they have made were on display in the classroom during the inspection.
74. Children can name several musical instruments and recognise the sounds they make. They experiment with basic instruments by shaking, hitting or plucking and explore how sounds can change, for example, by becoming louder or softer. They listen well to a variety of recorded music and can clap in time to music, recognising repeated sounds and sound patterns.
75. The quality of teaching in creative development is good. The teaching team plan for a good variety of activities which the children enjoy and enable them to have the widest possible range of creative experiences.

ENGLISH

76. There are very few pupils in each year group in this school. Because of this, the performance of each pupil in the SATs tests at age seven and eleven can account for a very large percentage when averages are calculated. This should be taken in to account when considering reported results, as these can appear to vary widely from year to year.
77. In the end of year assessments for seven year old pupils in 2001, standards in reading and writing were very high when compared to all schools nationally. When compared to schools in similar contexts, the school's performance in reading tests was close to

the national average and in writing tests was above average. About one third of the pupils reached levels that were higher than average in reading and the proportion of pupils that reached higher than expected levels in writing was well above the national average. Boys and girls both do slightly better than boys and girls nationally. Results vary from year to year but there is an underlying trend of improvement.

78. The level of work in the Years R, 1 and 2 class is broadly in line with national standards and teachers have set targets for all the pupils to reach the required levels in reading and writing. About a quarter of the pupils are on track to reach higher than expected levels. Standards in the part of the curriculum that deals with speaking and listening are satisfactory.
79. In the end of year tests in 2001, results for the cohort of pupils aged 11 were below the national average when compared to all schools nationally and were well below the expected standard when compared to schools in similar contexts. The proportion of pupils reaching higher than expected levels was well below the national average. Over time, boys do marginally less well than boys nationally and girls do well when compared to girls nationally. The trend over several years shows that the overall performance of pupils in English keeps pace with national standards but, based on prior attainment, pupils do not make as much progress as they should by the age of 11.
80. In the older classes, standards of work seen during the inspection are presently in line with national standards but there are individual pupils achieving significantly above and below expected levels. Teachers have set targets for pupils which indicate that about a quarter of them are likely to reach higher than expected levels, the majority should reach the expected levels and two or three pupils are unlikely to reach the required standard. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well through their individual education plans and able pupils are appropriately challenged.
81. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory and the pupils communicate well with their teachers and with each other. There is a small number of pupils in the Years 3 and 4 class who need extra support to speak clearly and concisely and the teachers provide additional activities to help them. Some of the boys in the Years 5 and 6 class do not take it in turns to speak, dominate class debate and require additional guidance to abide by the conventions of group discussion. Standards in reading are satisfactory. Pupils are enthusiastic readers. Most read fluently and accurately and understand what they read well. They can name authors they like and understand that people need to read for different purposes, for example, to find information, to follow instructions and for enjoyment. Standards in writing are satisfactory but boys' writing is less well developed. The school is aware of this and measures are being developed to assist boys with developing purposeful writing skills.
82. The structured daily literacy lesson is a relatively recent introduction. A good start has been made with the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the school receives additional support from literacy specialists from the local education authority. The teaching of phonics requires further development and teachers are currently being trained to use new materials more effectively. A handwriting policy and scheme have been introduced in the school and the benefits of this are already visible in pupils' workbooks. Work in other subjects makes a positive contribution to standards of literacy. Pupils learn new vocabulary such as tempo and tone in music, orbit and friction in science and font and database in information and communications technology. They use their literacy skills well to write reports in subjects such as history.

83. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good across the school. In the Years R, 1 and 2 class teaching is always good and in the older classes it is always satisfactory or better. Two very good lessons were seen. All the teachers plan their lessons well and in accordance with the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils in both behaviour and academic effort. The learning purpose of each lesson is shared very clearly with the pupils so that they are clear about what is expected of them. In a very good Years 5 and 6 lesson on report writing the basic elements were recalled, the instructions for the task were given clearly and questioning enabled misconceptions to be remedied. As a result, the pupils had a very good understanding of the process and produced work of high quality. Teachers manage the pupils well and use time and resources effectively. Good use is made of learning support assistants. Assessment is good in Years R, 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers know the abilities of their pupils well. Lessons are presented with flair and enthusiasm and, as a result, pupils are motivated to learn. Good use is made of praise and many pupils have individual writing targets to help them understand what they have to do to improve.
84. Pupils across the school respond positively to English lessons and are very well behaved. They are enthusiastic about reading and can speak about a wide variety of books that they have read at home and at school. They enjoy poetry and drama activities and speak animatedly about theatre visits and school productions with which they have been involved.
85. The subject is well led by the co-ordinators. Resources for English are good although the use of information and communications technology in English is not well developed. The improvement of writing remains a high priority for the school.

MATHEMATICS

86. It should be remembered that because of the small numbers of pupils in each age group in this school, the performance of each pupil can account for a large percentage fluctuation when averages are calculated. This should be taken in to account when considering the reported results as they can vary widely from year to year.
87. In the 2001 national tests for seven year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level 2 was close to the national average with eight of the nine pupils achieving the expected level. The percentage reaching the higher level 3 was above the national average. Over the last three years the performance of seven year olds has been above the national average when compared to the performance of all schools. However, when the school's results are compared to those of similar schools, the performance in mathematics at age seven is close to the national average. The inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils in Year 2 is above the national average.
88. The 2001 national test results for pupils at the age of 11 show that the percentage of pupils that reached the expected level 4 and the higher level 5 was below the national average. Over the last four years, the trend in mathematics at the end of Year 6 has fluctuated with an improvement in 2001 from the 2000 performance. When the school's results are compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools, the performance in mathematics is well below average. Inspection evidence shows that the performance of the current Year 6 pupils is far closer to the national average, with some pupils likely to achieve the higher level 5. The school has set realistic targets for improvement.

89. By the age of seven, pupils are alert to number. The rapid mental arithmetic at the start of each lesson excites their interest and there is considerable competition to be chosen to answer questions. Pupils are able to handle multiples of 2, 3, 5 and 10 confidently, know addition and subtraction facts to 20 and use them to solve simple problems in number counting forwards and backwards. They can calculate simple transactions using coinage, know terms like less and more, odd and even, and apply them to tasks. They are beginning to recognise patterns in numbers and are able to find the next number in a sequence.
90. By the time that they are 11, they use mathematical vocabulary as a matter of course and are able to translate written problems into calculations. Their numeracy skills are good and they have a wide range of mental strategies for calculating number. They extend their experience in using the four operations of number and become increasingly confident about place value, factors and multiples. The majority of older pupils are secure in their knowledge of number bonds and can use them effectively. They understand ratio and proportion. Their ability to measure length and to calculate areas and volumes is good and they are able to attempt complex tasks involving symmetry. Presentation of work is good and improves through the key stage. Figures are carefully formed and calculations set out logically.
91. Pupils make good progress. This is enhanced in both key stages by daily practice in mental calculation and the revision and application of number facts and patterns. The grouping of pupils within classes based on their prior attainment is effective, and ensures that there is a good match of tasks to pupils' needs.
92. The overall quality of teaching of mathematics is good, and half the lessons are very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers make the lessons interesting and challenging. The structure follows the advice of the National Numeracy Strategy and is characterised by the good quality of planning, secure subject knowledge which enables teachers to use different strategies and examples to explain concepts, clear establishment of the intentions of the lesson and a useful review at the end. Teachers make excellent use of questioning which enables everyone to take part at their own level. Pupils throughout the school are motivated about their work in mathematics and respond very well to the pressure and high expectation. They feel secure and are confident about asking questions when they do not understand. Homework is used appropriately. Marking is accurate and often engages the pupil about the next step. Praise is given where it is deserved and effective intervention and help provided when the need for it is identified.
93. Teachers' management of their pupils is very effective, with a range of strategies used to keep pupils on task and occasionally to defuse potentially difficult situations. Pupils are used to working co-operatively in pairs or small groups, and their tasks were often structured so that they could make choices about the methods that they used, or the equipment that they selected to help them. Pupils with special needs are involved in all aspects of the work of the class by focused tasks that are appropriate to their needs. They receive good support and make at least satisfactory progress. The higher attaining pupils are being challenged and stretched, particularly in Years 5 and 6, by more complex tasks and by direct teaching. When learning support assistants are involved, they are effectively deployed and assist pupils in their understanding and learning.
94. Good use is made of mathematical skills to support and develop other subjects in the curriculum. For example, the use of co-ordinates in geography, time lines in history and data handling in science. Although there is some evidence of the use of

information and communications technology to support mathematical learning, computers are not routinely used to develop and extend learning in the mathematics lessons.

95. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. The implementation of the national numeracy strategy has had a positive effect on the quality of the subject and pupils are very positive about their work. Curriculum planning is good and takes account of the needs of pupils at both ends of the range of attainment. There are sufficient resources of good quality and, once the necessary installation work has been completed, access to computers will be higher than the national average.

SCIENCE

96. The standards of attainment of seven year olds in 2001, based on the teacher's assessments of those pupils reaching the expected level 2, was very high and the percentage of pupils who attained the higher level 3 was well above the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the overall levels of achievement are above those expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The standards of attainment of 11 year olds in 2001 were also very high in comparison with the national average although the percentage of pupils who attained the higher level 5 was below the national average. The same pattern is shown when compared with similar schools. This is also an improvement since the last inspection. Girls perform better than boys but the difference is not significant. Over the past three years the trend in science has followed the national trend and it shows an improvement in 2001.
97. By the end of Year 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are about the national average. They are learning about themselves and have explored a range of everyday activities concerned with life processes and the differences between animals and plants. They are able to use simple scientific vocabulary to describe the differences between things and are beginning to record and describe their findings. They are encouraged to think as scientists from the beginning of their school career.
98. Lessons and scrutiny of work in Years 3 to 6 showed this quality of enquiry to be sustained and developed. Pupils had consolidated their understanding of physical forces such as electricity and magnetism and of the behaviour of substances in response to heat. They are able to consider the design of an investigation, eliminate variables and record their findings accurately. For example, pupils in Year 3, looking at the behaviour of model cars running down an inclined ramp, were able to explain why it was not fair to push one of the cars and not the others. Higher-attaining pupils are encouraged to propose improvements in the light of practical experience. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were able to discuss a range of investigations that they had carried out, using scientific terms accurately and confidently. They are used to collaborating, discussing their work, interpreting and explaining their findings.
99. Pupils in both key stages make appropriate use of basic skills from other subjects, for example when writing technical accounts of their investigations, interpreting measurements or producing graphs to summarise data that they have collected. Use of ICT to support their work in science is limited, and none was directly observed during the inspection. Science makes a contribution to their literacy skills as they acquire specific scientific vocabulary and learn to apply it to their spoken and written work.
100. Attitudes to science are good. Pupils are interested in science and enthusiastic about sharing their ideas with each other. Their recall of earlier experiences and knowledge

is good. When in groups, they work effectively together and co-operate to carry out the tasks. The behaviour of pupils observed in lessons was consistently good.

101. The quality of teaching is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan in detail, using the latest national guidance as the basis for their programme. They have good subject knowledge and understand the nature of scientific investigation. This allows them to explain to pupils, using scientific words and terms accurately. The intentions of lessons are clearly established. Very good use is made of questioning to draw upon what the pupils have learned in earlier sessions and this is built upon. They are skilled at engaging everyone into the discussion. Teachers have high expectations and provide activities that can engage pupils of all abilities in active learning. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson on forces, there were genuine opportunities to make choices and decisions. They worked very well together and were engrossed in their tasks. The consistent and effective management of behaviour is a key factor in assuring the good quality of the lessons, particularly where equipment is used. Opportunities are taken to assess at the end of each topic unit and at the end of each term but the systematic use of the information to measure achievement and to help with future planning is still developing. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils with special needs are fully included in the lessons and provided with activities in which they can succeed. As a result of the careful planning and positive but unobtrusive support from adults, these pupils make good progress.
102. The co-ordinator has recently taken up responsibility for science, and provides positive support. The programme of study for science is well structured and ensures that all pupils will experience the range of topics and activities in science and develop their skills and knowledge through scientific enquiry. Resources to deliver the range of scientific activities are good and outdated equipment is being replaced. Problems with the safe wiring of the computers in classrooms considerably limits the use of information and communications technology in science.

ART

103. The standards achieved in art and design at the end of both key stages are above expectation, and there are examples of finished work of high quality. Work seen demonstrates that pupils develop their skills and make steady progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children in Year R use paint extensively and in a variety of ways. They have painted striking rainbows in strong primary colours. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use colour and materials confidently. They have observed the nature and shape of twigs and teasels in close detail and drawn them very accurately. In the Years R, 1 and 2 class, art techniques are used throughout both key stages to support work in other subjects. In Years 3 and 4 there is a good development of skills with some impressive examples of observational portrait drawing with very close attention to details of shape and colour, some finished in the style of Picasso's blue and rose periods. Work in their sketchbooks to support this work explored the depiction of the component features of a face and they considered "What worked best?" Good use has been made of the Paint Spa program to create modern impressionist art in the style of several practitioners with very good use of different combinations of colours. In Years 5 and 6 pupils had created masks of aliens, created a set of model planets of the solar system as part of a science topic and made wide use of techniques with coloured inks.
104. Only one lesson could be observed during the inspection, which was with Years 5 and 6. In this lesson, the quality of teaching was good and this, together with evidence

from teachers' planning and scrutiny of the considerable amount of art work displayed in classrooms and about the school, indicate that the overall quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. In the lesson observed, the teacher had a very good understanding of the activity, challenged the pupils to reflect upon their work and to discuss it with others in their class. The pupils are keen to succeed and all of them, including the higher-attaining pupils and those with special needs, are able to do so because the work was carefully chosen and they received good support. Their response to the task and their ability to co-operate with one another is impressive.

105. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has good subject expertise and is able to support colleagues with advice and resources. The policy and scheme of work for art and design is a constructive progression of acquisition and development of the various skills of the artist. Planning for art across the key stages is logical and well structured, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Resources are adequate for drawing, painting and three-dimensional work but limited for printing activities.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards in design and technology are above the national expectation throughout the school which is an improvement since the last inspection. In the Years R, 1 and 2 class pupils are able to generate simple ideas and use a range of techniques in the correct way. For example, pupils had designed and made finger puppets, drawing out their suggestions and saying what they would need in order to make them. Pupils can use tools such as scissors and staplers safely and can choose suitable materials such as paper, card, straws or fabric from which to make items. They know how to join things in a variety of ways such as gluing, taping, stapling or tying.
107. By the age of 11 pupils can explain the design process. They understand the importance of planning, saying that ideas need to be drawn out first. They can use words such as 'improve' or 'modify' correctly when speaking about designing. They can evaluate the performance of the things they have made. For example, pupils could explain how they had taken part in an inter-school competition to design a simple machine that would move underwater and how they had improved the design.
108. During the inspection there were no design and technology lessons taught and only a limited sample of activities could be observed, for example when pupils were working in groups with construction kits. Based on a scrutiny of teachers' planning, on samples of pupils' work, on discussion with pupils and teachers and on photographic records of activity, there is sufficient evidence to show that the quality of teaching and learning in design and technology is good across the school.
109. As yet there is no whole school routine for judging the level at which pupils are working and for planning pupils' next activities accordingly. The school is aware of this and the development of assessment is itemised in the School Improvement Plan. A new policy and scheme of work for design and technology have recently been adopted but have not yet been personalised to the school. The subject is led well by the subject leader who has a good understanding of the requirements of the curriculum.
110. Pupils have positive attitudes to design and technology. They enjoy the lessons and work well individually or in groups. They speak enthusiastically about activities and can describe how they have designed and made a number of items such as masks, tie-dye T-shirts, kites and simple air pumps.

111. Two of the three classrooms have running water and all classrooms have sufficient power points but space for practical work and for storage of resources is very limited in the school. Learning support assistants, parents and other members of the community make a substantial contribution to standards in design and technology because they organise small group activities that enrich the curriculum for the pupils. For example, when inspectors were in the school, one group of pupils was learning how to bake bread and in classrooms there were good quality examples of fabric technology that had been produced with the support of one of the grandparents.

GEOGRAPHY

112. During the inspection, only two geography lessons were taught. Observation of these, together with scrutiny of the work in geography, the quality and range of work on display and discussions with pupils in both key stages suggests that the standards achieved in geography at age seven and eleven are comparable to the national expectation. There is some work of very high quality in Year 6. This maintains the standard achieved at the time of the last inspection.
113. Pupils in Years R, 1 and 2 are studying a topic based on the story of a lighthouse. They know an impressive amount of information about coastal features and why lighthouses are needed. In their work on settlements, pupils in Year 2 were able to explain what a map and plan were and that they were studying their own village of Platts Heath and wondering about the differences from a small Scottish island community. They were able to describe in simple terms the differences in size, climate and communication. They knew what an atlas was, but were not sure how it might be used.
114. In contrast, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made quite extensive use of maps, and used atlases and world maps to locate places during their history lesson. They have studied and contrasted landscape features in Kent and Mexico, and have made good use of secondary sources of information. They understand the use of representative symbols and have a good grasp of the key facts and concepts in geography. Years 5 and 6 did no geography during the autumn term, concentrating instead on a history topic. They are currently studying a substantial unit of work on settlements which included a visit to Dover to collect first-hand field information. Their work showed some very good examples of contrast of features and facilities and a good view of the differences in a village community 100 years ago and today. Work is presented carefully and completed.
115. In the two lessons seen, the overall quality of teaching was satisfactory. Teachers share the lesson objectives with the pupils encouraging interest, concentration and involvement in completing the tasks and investigations. In both lessons, a very good feature was the recall of facts by the pupils during the introduction and plenary sessions. The good relationships built up by the teachers helps to sustain a positive working attitude by the pupils. Pupils with special needs make satisfactory progress as a result of the teachers' knowledge of their abilities. Higher attaining pupils receive encouragement and high expectations of completing tasks both quickly and with greater depth. The provision of appropriate resources supports their learning. The use of assessment in geography is largely informal and not well developed.
116. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The QCA guidance for geography provides useful support for teachers and the resources for the subject, including maps, atlases and globes, is good. Good use is made of the immediate locality and locations further afield for first hand information.

HISTORY

117. Standards are in line with the national expectation when pupils reach age seven and age eleven. Seven year olds can retell stories from history and can say how times have changed, for example, by describing the increased use of electronic devices in daily life. They know the names of many historical characters such as Guy Fawkes, Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille and can retell their stories or write them in their own words. By age 11 pupils can give sensible descriptions of what life was like in a number of periods in history such as in Roman times, in Victorian times and in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s. They can carry out in depth historical investigations using a range of resources and evidence. For example, pupils talked about and showed projects on the history of Dover, personal family histories and life in wartime Britain. They had used interviews, factual books and fictional stories to research their work and produced projects of good quality enhanced by illustrations and the use of information technology. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
118. During the inspection only two history lessons were taught. These were both in junior classes and the quality of teaching was good. Work in pupils' books, teachers' planning and schemes of work for history show that teaching and learning in this subject are effective across the school and that pupils make good progress. The use of assessment in history is not well developed.
119. The subject is satisfactorily led. Resources are adequate for the teaching of history and the school makes good use of educational journeys in order to enrich pupils' experiences of historical environments. Parents and grandparents make a positive contribution to historical studies by generously loaning artefacts that the pupils can examine and discuss.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

120. At the last inspection standards in information and communications technology (ICT) were in line with the national expectation throughout the school and these have been maintained although it is still not used extensively to support learning in other subjects. Provision for ICT has improved greatly and continues to improve because new facilities are being regularly added.
121. By the time they reach the age of seven, pupils have made good progress and the majority of pupils reach the expected National Curriculum level 2. Pupils know the vocabulary associated with computers such as laptop, mouse, keyboard, icon and cursor. They know how to access computers and can save and retrieve work they have created. They can write and improve simple texts, move items on the screen by dragging the mouse, change the style, size and font of text and print their finished results. They understand that computers are used beyond school for a variety of purposes in daily life and can give examples such as the keeping of records at a doctor's surgery. They confidently use equipment like a cassette players and earphones and are familiar with equipment such as a radio and CD player that are used in the classroom.
122. Standards at the age of 11 are broadly in line with the national expectation and pupils meet most of the requirements of the expected National Curriculum level 4. However there is a mixed picture. Where pupils have had access to appropriate technology, they do well. All pupils can access their own files on a computer, can word process confidently, handle text well and can independently produce work of a good standard. They can move paragraphs of text, insert diagrams or charts such as pie charts,

process data and use spreadsheets. They have had experience of remote operations of simple programmable floor robots and can give good explanations of activities they have done using remote technology. For example, during the inspection pupils were using construction kits to make simple models of a fork lift truck, a set of traffic lights and a garage door that are operated remotely. Pupils do not have access to e-mail and the Internet at school so standards in these areas are underdeveloped, although most pupils have had experience of the Internet at home and can explain how to search for information.

123. During the inspection it was only possible to see a limited amount of ICT teaching. Teachers' planning and pupils' work were scrutinised and discussions were held with pupils about their work in ICT. The quality of teaching is satisfactory across the school and there are some individual examples of good teaching. Where teaching is good, teachers have good ICT knowledge, the lessons are well organised and maximum use is made of available equipment. The teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and explain it to them very well. Pupils understand exactly what it is they are supposed to learn and are aware of their own progress. Frequent checks are made for understanding and any errors or misconceptions are swiftly addressed. Lessons move at a swift pace and have maximum impact on pupil progress.
124. Teachers have worked very hard to increase their own levels of ICT competence, undertaking personal study and attending training courses. This has resulted in teachers having greater confidence to incorporate ICT activities into lessons and routines but the use of ICT to enrich work in other subjects is still underdeveloped and many opportunities are missed. The use of assessment in ICT is not well developed and there is no policy or detailed scheme of work.
125. Across the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. They increase their confidence and progressively produce results of greater quality. Pupils enjoy and look forward to the use of ICT. They are very well behaved when using computers and know that they have to be very careful with equipment. They listen to instructions well, co-operate with their teachers and help each other.
126. The school has made significant improvement in provision for ICT since the last inspection. The ratio of computers to pupils is now better than the national average. A subject co-ordinator has been identified, teacher competence has been audited and intense training continues. In the context of the many improvements, much remains to be done. Historically, the school has made poor use of government funding and initiatives to support ICT but this is now being urgently addressed and arrangements are in hand to commission the computers and link them to e-mail and the Internet. The school still has to make arrangements to ensure pupils will be protected from inappropriate e-mail or Internet material. There is no technician support for the increasing number of computers, printers and other hardware. The range of software is limited.

MUSIC

127. The quality of music has improved since the last report and the overall standard of music across the school is above the national expectation. Singing is good throughout the school, because of the quality of the teaching and the wide range of opportunities that are provided to learn, refine and perform songs. Pupils develop an understanding of rhythm through clapping exercises and the use of percussion instruments. Musical terminology is introduced at appropriate times, and pupils are genuinely interested in

the technical aspects of the subject. Some pupils have good musical knowledge and they are encouraged to contribute ideas and information in lessons.

128. The overall quality of teaching in music is good. A music specialist teaches music to each of the three classes. The teacher has considerable technical competence, plans lessons well, has high expectations of what pupils can do and is prepared to take acceptable risks. Because of the good relationships that have been established, she ensures that behaviour in music is generally good, although in one lesson the need to manage behaviour detracted from the overall quality of the lesson. The music curriculum is extended by opportunities for pupils to learn to play the recorder to a particularly high standard in two extra-curricular groups. A peripatetic music teacher provides specialist tuition in the oboe and visiting musicians perform and explain their instruments to the pupils. Opportunities are taken to take music into the community, for example, by taking part in music festivals and performing songs to a variety of audiences, including an annual festival in Jersey attended by the majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6.
129. Pupils enjoy learning about and making music. They are eager to respond to questions, treat their instruments with respect and are able to demonstrate a high level of co-operation. They have opportunities to listen to music from a range of cultures, including their own. Pupils with special needs are fully integrated into musical activities and they respond well. Where appropriate, they are supported and encouraged by their learning support assistants.
130. Music is well managed across the key stages. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge, understanding and expertise in music. She teaches music to each of the classes and can provide additional support for colleagues. There is no formal procedure for assessment and, as a result, it is not clear how well pupils have done and what they need to do to improve further. Resources for music are satisfactory, although the keyboards are old and well used. Good use is made of equipment to record performance, but the use of ICT to support musical composition is limited.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. Pupils at age seven and eleven achieve standards that are broadly in line with the expectation for their ages. This maintains the standard since the last inspection. From an early age pupils are taught to work safely and co-operatively. They are aware of space and use it well. In Years R, 1 and 2, the pupils are able to clear part of the floor in their classroom for physical activities. They are good at performing basic skills and actions in gymnastics. They can balance, move in different directions and vary their speed. They know the importance of warming up and cooling down after exercise, take part in the activities enthusiastically and make good progress.
132. The facilities available for pupils in Years 3 to 6 for physical education are limited, and they are not easily able to experience the full range of indoor activities that are usually available to pupils of their age. They lack the facilities to take part in gymnastics and dance beyond a modest programme capable of being taught out-of-doors on the asphalt playground. In games lessons they are able to play small-sided games and have a good understanding of attacking and defending. They are able to work well with others and understand the need to use team members through passing a ball and moving to gain an advantage. They are able to vary the pace and technique of passing and receiving a ball in a netball skills lesson. During the inspection they were enthusiastic and able to sustain a good work rate in spite of the poor weather and the limitations of the site.

133. In the three lessons observed, the overall quality of teaching is good. The main strength of the teaching is a good knowledge and understanding of the subject that enables the teachers to plan effective lessons, coupled with the ability to explain and demonstrate the skills of the session. They have high expectations of behaviour and performance, manage pupils well and match activities to the pupils' needs. Teachers explain clearly what they want pupils to do, help them to reflect on what they have learned and discuss what they can do to improve their performance. Time is used well and there is a good awareness and explanation of safety issues.
134. Pupils learn well and make satisfactory progress because of the consistently good teaching. Their attitude to the subject is very good. They work hard in lessons and really try hard to improve their skills and level of performance. Their behaviour is very good. Boys and girls perform equally well and this subject makes a very strong contribution to the school's aim for inclusion and equal opportunity for all. Pupils of all abilities participate and where necessary, they are effectively supported by their learning support assistants. Opportunities for extra-curricular activities in physical education are limited, although the school is currently engaged in a series of after school sessions at the local secondary school, where a range of activities is available.
135. The accommodation for physical education is poor. The range of opportunities in physical education is limited by the lack of a suitable hall and the restricted space on the small school site. A good school playing field is available in summer. The school cannot provide facilities itself for the full range of activities required for the National Curriculum. Swimming is an important part of the physical education programme and the whole school attends a weekly session taught by specialists at a local leisure centre. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of physical education and leads the subject well. The range and quality of resources for the activities that are taught are satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. In the last inspection standards across the school were reported to be in line with the expectations of the Kent agreed syllabus and these have been maintained but only barely so. Religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus. The parts of the syllabus that deal with comparative religion are covered adequately. By the ages of seven and eleven pupils can give reasonable accounts of religious beliefs, teachings, practices and lifestyles associated with major world religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. The parts of the syllabus that deal with moral and religious issues, attitudes, values and understanding are less comprehensively developed. Pupils do have some opportunities to explore these issues through discussion but they do not do as well in this part of the curriculum.
137. During the inspection there was only one religious education lesson taught in the Years R, 1 and 2 class in the school and the teaching was good. The pupils reacted well and gave sensible answers to questions, reflecting on the theme of the story of St Francis of Assisi and its deeper meaning. There were no other lessons taught during the inspection so there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching across the whole school. Pupils have good attitudes to religious education, listen to each others point of view and use their skills of speaking and listening well to discuss with each other and to retell stories and factual information they have learned.
138. There is no policy for religious education but the need for this has been recognised and is a feature of the school improvement plan. There is no evidence that teachers

assess pupil performance in religious education against the standards and expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. A subject co-ordinator has been identified for religious education but leadership in the subject has yet to be fully developed. Resources for religious education are sparse, partly due to a lack of storage space. High quality artefacts are borrowed from the county resource service when required but in the Years 3 to 6 classes there are no sets of up to date reference books or materials available for the teaching of religious education.