

INSPECTION REPORT

SANDWICH INFANT SCHOOL

Sandwich

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118547

Headteacher: Miss L Taylor

Reporting inspector: Jennifer Nicholson
23036

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 May 2000

Inspection number: 193890

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Road Sandwich Kent
Postcode:	CT13 9HT
Telephone number:	01304 612228
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Mark Roberts
Date of previous inspection:	14.01.1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Jennifer Nicholson	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography Music	Standards Teaching Under-fives
John Lovell	Lay inspector		Care Partnership with parents
Steven Hill	Team inspector	English Art History Religious education	Leadership and management Equal opportunities English as an additional language
Ken Parry	Team inspector	Science Information technology Design technology Physical education Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Curricular and other opportunities

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sandwich Infant School is smaller than most other primary schools. It is smaller than at the previous inspection. Pupils come from a variety of social backgrounds. One hundred and thirty nine pupils attend the school, of whom eight are under five. Two per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups. Sixteen per cent of pupils transferred to the school from other schools during the last school year. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Twenty nine per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, higher than the national average, but lower than during the last inspection. The majority of these pupils are on the early stages, mainly for literacy difficulties. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is about average. Although there is a wide range of attainment as children enter the school, overall it is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective in achieving at least satisfactory standards overall. The quality of teaching is good overall, and pupils generally learn well in individual lessons. However, the overall progress in their learning as they move through the school is only satisfactory, although it is good in some subjects and aspects, because of limitations in subject work programmes to adequately support teachers' planning. In addition, there are weaknesses in monitoring, to make sure that what is taught builds effectively on what has gone before. The new headteacher has accurately identified areas for improvement and has effectively begun to address key priorities, particularly for raising standards. She provides a very clear direction for the future work of the school. Almost all the strengths identified in the last inspection have been maintained well. The identified strengths of the school outweigh the weaknesses. The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in history and art exceed expectations.
- The quality of teaching and learning in lessons seen was good overall.
- The headteacher is making an excellent start in addressing what needs to be done.
- Pupils behave well and work purposefully; relationships are good.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and very well for their cultural development.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school makes good use of the local area to support geography and history lessons.
- The school works well with parents and with the community.

What could be improved

- Subject guidelines and work programmes are not detailed enough to promote pupils' learning systematically year-on-year.
- The monitoring of teaching and standards is not fully established, including by subject co-ordinators.
- The school day is shorter than the recommended guidelines, and some sessions are overlong.
- The main priorities for school development are not clear, or costed adequately.
- The school's plans for the significant budget surplus are not clear.
- There are not enough opportunities for children under five to play.
- There is insufficient teaching support for children under five and the classroom is cramped.
- The school aims do not fully reflect the work of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in January 1997. Most of the previous strengths have been maintained. The quality of teaching is much improved, as are standards in art and history, and provision for cultural development. Behaviour is now almost always good. Improved assessment procedures better inform day-to-day planning, and an adequate teaching and learning rationale

is now in place. However, there has been insufficient improvement in the development of subject guidelines, which still lack detail and do not contribute well enough to the way pupils' learning develops through each year group and through the school as a whole, a key issue raised at the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
reading	D	D	C	D	well above average above A
writing	C	D	C	D	average B
mathematics	D	E	D	D	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

In 1999, the overall standards for seven-year-olds in reading and writing, including those for higher attaining pupils, at the end of Key Stage 1, were average. In mathematics, standards were below average overall, although an above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 3. Results indicate a wide range of abilities, and reflect the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. In addition, nearly half of these pupils are summer born, and have therefore had less time since turning five following National Curriculum programmes, than their older counterparts. In comparison with schools with a similar take-up of free school meals, results for reading, writing and mathematics were below average overall. Over the last four years, results in writing have been close to average, but below overall in reading and mathematics. The school's targets for national testing in 2000 are realistic and reflect the context of the year group. During the inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in art and history were judged to be above expectations. Standards in other subjects met expectations. Standards are judged to be high enough in general, reflecting attainment on entry, but the new headteacher is working hard to analyse past results and chart each pupil's progress to enable standards to rise further.

Children under five achieve satisfactory standards across the range of their work. In some aspects they do well. Their personal and social development is good; in language and literacy they listen well; they make careful observations in scientific aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world; and they move well in a range of different ways in physical development sessions. They are making a sound start to statutory education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic, interested and fully involved in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is almost always good; pupils respond well to the school's expectations for their conduct.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. All members of the school community show respect for the feelings, values and opinions of others.
Attendance	Good

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

In 62 per cent of lessons seen, teaching was good or better, enabling pupils to learn well in these sessions.

In seven per cent of lessons, teaching was very good, but two per cent of teaching was judged unsatisfactory when the work was too complex and class management not effective enough, hindering good learning. Teachers manage pupils well overall, and lessons are well structured with a good range of different activities. Teachers' lesson planning satisfactorily meets the needs of all pupils. Teaching in art and physical education is good, and in history, very good. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught systematically. For children under five, although there is a good variety of practical activities in lessons, overall there are not enough planned opportunities for talk, enquiry and play.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school places a good emphasis on practical activities and makes good use of the locality to enrich pupils' experiences. However, there is not enough guidance for teachers to make sure that pupils make good progress from year to year.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and support staff work sensitively to meet the needs of these pupils, enabling them to make satisfactory progress overall towards their individual targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school provides a very good range of cultural experiences for pupils. There are good opportunities for reflection, and for pupils to work together.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. The school provides a secure and supportive environment, and promotes friendly relationships and good behaviour. However, good assessment procedures do not influence future planning well enough and pupils are not involved with setting personal targets.

The school works well in partnership with parents, who as a result are very supportive. Parent helpers are valued and make a good contribution to the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has made an excellent start since her appointment. She gives a very clear lead to a staff, who work well together as a team. She has begun to monitor teaching in a rigorous way. Subject co-ordinators give good informal support to colleagues but do not monitor teaching and standards in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is supportive and has good systems to gain a view of the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory; good in terms of the thorough analysis of the results of national testing, but weaker in the more detailed analysis of standards of work and implications for teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Day-to-day financial planning is good and resources and finances are monitored well. Staff make good use of human and material resources. A sound start has been made in trying to ensure that money is spent to obtain the best value, but the school has not clearly outlined how it can best use a substantial budget surplus to improve pupils' education. This is unsatisfactory.

There are sufficient staff to meet the demands of the school and a good number of learning support assistants. Resources are readily accessible throughout the school and used effectively to support learning.

Accommodation is satisfactory but classroom space for children under five is too cramped.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The children are keen to come to school.• The headteacher and staff are approachable.• The school works well with parents.• Behaviour is good.• The school helps new children to settle well.• The teaching is good.• The children are progressing well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons• Some parents expressed the view that higher attaining pupils were not always sufficiently challenged.

Parents are generally very pleased with the school and the education which it provides. Inspectors' judgements support the positive views expressed by parents. They found that pupils' learning in lessons was good overall, but that the way their learning builds up from year-to-year was only satisfactory because of weaknesses in the curriculum. Although there are no formal extra-curricular activities outside lessons, a wide variety of visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning experiences. In addition, the school's homework arrangements extend effectively what pupils learn in class. The inspection team judged that teachers' expectations for the learning of all pupils are satisfactory, including for higher attaining pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In national testing, in 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment overall in reading and writing were broadly in line with the national average, but in mathematics they were below average. These results include those of pupils gaining the higher Level 3, which were close to average in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics. Fewer pupils than average gained the expected Level 2 in these subjects, with many gaining Level 1. Results reflect the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this year group, almost half. Results in teacher assessments for science were in line with national averages. In comparison with similar schools, results were below average overall. These comparisons are based on comparative levels of free school meal entitlement and do not take into account the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs.
2. Over the last four years, results for writing were average overall, but for reading and mathematics they were below. Results show a particular dip in 1998 when there were fewer higher attaining pupils in the year group. Results show no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in reading and writing, but in mathematics, boys performed less well than girls. Inspection evidence found there to be no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls, or pupils from different ethnic groups.
3. Since the last inspection, standards are broadly unchanged in all subjects with the exceptions of history and art, which show good improvement. Standards in these subjects now exceed expectations, whereas previously they were below.
4. There is a wide range of attainment when children start school, and the attainment of each year group varies, but overall it is average. By the time they are five, most children are on course to achieve the desired outcomes in all areas of learning, and to exceed them in personal and social development, and in aspects of language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They are making satisfactory gains in their learning, resulting in a sound start to statutory education.
5. Inspection evidence shows that standards in art and history are above expectations. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations.
6. Standards in English meet expectations overall. Although higher attaining pupils in Year 2 speak confidently before the class, many pupils appear shy and find it hard to express their ideas coherently. Pupils listen attentively to the teacher and to each other, and ask relevant questions. In reading and writing, pupils use their increasing word-building skills to attempt new words. However, a limited range of known words restricts their fluency and understanding in reading. Joined handwriting is a strength of the subject, as a result of specific teaching of letter formation, and how letters are joined, from early in the school. Pupils write for different purposes, for example, lists and stories, and they have a good understanding of poetry and its structure. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact in the way it supports lesson planning although opportunities are lost for pupils to practise their literacy skills in other subjects.
7. Standards in mathematics meet expectations overall. Pupils in Year 2 competently add coins

together in shopping problems, but are less certain about adding the numbers mentally. Although they are beginning to explain their working there is a lack of confidence. A reasonable start has been made to implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a positive impact on raising standards. It is supporting planning effectively, especially in planning tasks for different groups. Pupils suitably practise numeracy skills in other subjects, for example in science, geography and history.

8. Standards in science meet expectations. Pupils in Year 2 know about the basic conditions for living things and that different creatures will be found in different habitats.
9. Standards in information technology meet expectations. Pupils can locate, retrieve and communicate information with support. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils know about aspects of some religious faiths other than Christianity, for example birthday and wedding celebrations.
10. In relation to prior attainment, pupils make satisfactory progress from broadly average levels on entry to average levels overall when they leave the school. However, in some aspects they make good progress, as in handwriting, understanding of poetry, history and art. In two thirds of lessons observed, pupils' learning was good as a result of good teaching, over the range of subjects, and in science, art and history in particular. The good learning is strongly linked to a teacher's subject expertise, as in history and music; pupils capture the enthusiasm and are motivated well. Good learning in lessons is sometimes hindered by insecure subject knowledge. Although the new headteacher is successfully promoting and encouraging good learning by classroom observations and by tracking pupils' progress, the overall good learning in individual lessons does not yet develop into good progress year-on-year. This is accounted for by a lack of adequately detailed subject work programmes, to better support teachers in their planning and to enable pupils to systematically extend their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. However, in handwriting, the school has clear expectations from the beginning for pupils' achievements, and how they are to be systematically developed, and as a result pupils make good progress in this aspect, and many attain a good standard. Also, the new monitoring programme is not yet fully established to ensure that what is taught builds effectively on what has gone before. However, inspection evidence indicates that improvements in monitoring are starting to have a positive impact. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and attain standards in line with their learning targets. A significant minority of pupils on the early stages of the special needs register make good progress. They exceed their targets and as a result come off the register. This is because the school identifies pupils requiring support early and provision for them is good.
11. As a result of careful analysis, the school has set realistic targets for national testing in 2000 reflecting clearly the context of the year group to be tested. Targets are also set for the next two year groups, but these are not yet influencing the work programmes for these pupils. Explicit individual targets for pupils are not set.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The personal and social development of children under five is good. They have good attitudes to their tasks and activities and settle readily. They are sensible and mature, and well behaved. They work and play together well.
13. The quality of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good, contributing significantly to a positive learning environment and to the quality of life in the school. Comments from parents, both in the questionnaires and the meeting prior to the inspection strongly support this view. Almost unanimously, they consider that the school is successful in achieving good standards of behaviour and helps their children develop mature and responsible attitudes. The generally positive picture emerging from the last inspection has been strongly maintained and weak elements, such as aspects of behaviour, have been improved.
14. Pupils have good attitudes to school and to their work. They are keen and eager as they arrive

punctually at the start of the school day and settle quickly and purposefully to their lessons. They are well motivated and become involved enthusiastically in the wide range of opportunities presented by teachers. These good attitudes are the positive outcome of good behaviour management and a shared commitment between home and school, and impact well on learning. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work and sustain concentration well to make satisfactory progress. They are well integrated and work well with other pupils.

15. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Staff almost always have high expectations for behaviour and pupils respond accordingly. Class rules are displayed and pupils understand and adhere to them. Pupils clearly understand the class rules. They know what is expected of them and they respond well. For example, on formal occasions such as assemblies, they arrive and conduct themselves in an orderly and respectful manner. During the inspection little aggressive behaviour and no bullying or other forms of oppressive behaviour were observed. In lessons pupils' good and sometimes very good behaviour contributes effectively to their learning. A small number of pupils, who are sometimes inattentive or call out, are generally handled with firmness and tact by teachers and do not affect the concentration of others. In the playground, pupils are lively and many are boisterous, yet self-disciplined, as they make the most of their breaks from lessons. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
16. Relationships between all members of the school community are good. Pupils co-operate well by sharing resources, and very good examples of collaboration were observed in information technology, science and physical education. Pupils are secure and relaxed in their relationships with teachers and adults, and this gives them the confidence to ask for help when required. This clearly has a strong bearing on the resulting effective learning. In circle times and in assemblies, teachers sensitively invite pupils to reflect on their own behaviour and feelings. The school promotes a strong sense of inclusion and pupils integrate well at all times.
17. When given opportunities to exercise responsibility and independence, pupils respond well by willingly undertaking helpful duties such as returning registers to the office, and clearing up after lessons. In a gymnastics lesson, the youngest pupils co-operated effectively to help the teacher put apparatus away. Personal development and social behaviour have a high priority in the school and underpin all areas of learning.
18. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good. Registers are completed efficiently and comply with requirements. Attendance is above the national average. Attendance rates have been consistently high over the previous three years and show an improvement upon those reported at the time of the previous inspection, when levels were below average. These good levels of attendance have a positive effect upon standards of attainment and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching in lessons seen, was good overall. In 62 per cent of lessons, teaching was good or better, and as a result, pupils generally learned well. In seven per cent of lessons teaching was very good, occurring in the Year 2 classes. In these lessons teachers' good subject expertise and the challenging tasks stimulated pupils particularly well. Two per cent of teaching was judged unsatisfactory, when there were weaknesses in class management and subject knowledge was insecure, and good learning was hindered. Good teaching was seen in science, art, and physical education, and very good teaching in history, reflecting good subject expertise in these subjects. In addition, there were examples of good teaching in all other subjects observed during the inspection. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers use support staff well. These staff are well briefed, and provide sensitive and effective support. The quality of teaching for children under five is satisfactory overall. In individual lessons seen, teaching was often good, with a wide range of suitable practical activities. However, over the week as a whole, there are not enough daily planned opportunities for children to play, investigate and explore. The quality of teaching shows good improvement since the previous inspection when 30 per cent was judged good

and 17 per cent unsatisfactory.

20. Teachers' overall good management of pupils and clear expectations for behaviour contribute well to pupils' learning. Teachers' relationships with their classes are good, and they value pupils' contributions. As a result pupils are almost always well behaved and work purposefully. The good range of teaching methods effectively promotes learning, in particular the emphasis on practical activities. A wide variety of direct experiences motivate pupils well, for example collecting and observing mini-beasts from the summer garden and looking at old houses in the locality. Teachers give clear explanations and instructions. Consequently pupils know what to do and settle quickly to their tasks. Teachers use question and answer techniques effectively to prompt recall of previous learning and stimulate thinking. During group sessions, the teaching focus is clear, and teachers generally support the learning in other groups effectively, although sometimes pupils are not productive enough. On one occasion a teacher used a very good strategy to maintain purposeful learning in an unsupported group by preparing an interactive tape, which effectively engaged children's attention and interest. Teachers teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy in a thorough way, checking appropriately for understanding. Sometimes teachers use formal teaching methods to successfully promote skills, as in handwriting in Year 1. Teachers use a good variety of homework tasks to support and extend classroom work. Pre-inspection responses from parents indicate that most consider the amount of homework to be about right.
21. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is satisfactory overall. Teachers use their personal areas of expertise, for example in science, geography, history, music and physical education, to good effect, with high expectations for pupils' learning and challenging tasks. This expertise is shared with staff informally, but not in a systematic way. For children under five, knowledge and understanding of how young children learn is satisfactory, although there is not enough emphasis on purposeful play. Teachers make good use of practical resources to support pupils' learning, and they make very good use of the local area to enrich pupils' experiences. Learning support assistants are used well to support individual pupils and small groups. Lessons are well structured to maintain pace and pupils' interest.
22. Teachers' planning is satisfactory. Planning for literacy and numeracy appropriately follows the strategies and is beginning to be adapted to suit the needs of the school. Planning for different groups is better in numeracy than in literacy, where groups often have the same tasks over the course of a week. Planning for other subjects is adequate, although learning objectives are sometimes too general. On occasion, however, learning objectives are usefully shared with pupils, which effectively focuses the learning for that lesson. In addition, lesson plans over time are hindered by a lack of detailed subject guidelines with clear expectations for achievement in each year group, a key issue raised at the last inspection. Teachers know their children well and use assessments and daily informal observations suitably to influence grouping within the class and future lessons. Sometimes, through encouragement to evaluate their own work, pupils are motivated effectively to sustain their efforts, for example by choosing their 'best' jump in games or 'best' letter in handwriting practice. In general, however, pupils are not aware enough of their own learning and what they need to do to improve.
23. The quality of teaching has improved well since the previous inspection. Subject knowledge in art and history is now secure and contributes effectively to improved standards in these subjects. Pupils are almost always managed effectively. Assessment suitably informs lesson planning. The teaching and learning policy is adequate in providing a rationale to support to work in the classroom but is not a practical tool. Expectations for what pupils can achieve are satisfactory but continue to be hindered by the lack of clear subject guidelines.

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

24. The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum, which successfully promotes the all-round development of all pupils. It is suitably structured to ensure that pupils make sound progress and

that they are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage in their education and beyond. It is well balanced between the different subjects, with good links made. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. A particular strength is the efficient way in which the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been introduced throughout the school. Teachers are sufficiently confident in dealing with the literacy strategy to begin to adapt the procedures to match the particular needs of all pupils. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, including those with special educational needs. Short periods of withdrawal from the classroom for these pupils suitably support the lesson tasks.

25. Children in their first year in school, including those under five, suitably follow the nationally recommended curriculum. As their learning develops, they appropriately begin to work on National Curriculum work programmes, for example in science. However, although a variety of practical tasks are provided for these children, teachers do not place enough emphasis on learning through talk, enquiry and structured play.
26. Curricular provision is broad and balanced, but there is a significant weakness in the length of the school week, which is fifty minutes short of the recommended minimum for Key Stage 1. In a school year this amounts to one and a half weeks of lost teaching time, clearly restricting pupils' progress in their learning. In addition, some teaching sessions are too long for young pupils to be able to sustain full concentration. Examples of restlessness and lapses of concentration were observed at the end of some lengthy sessions.
27. Arrangements for personal, health and social education are good and are underpinned by the school's caring ethos. Suitable provision is made for sex education and the youngest pupils begin in science by looking at the life cycles of butterflies, frogs and plants. Religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus and all statutory requirements are met.
28. A good range of visits and visitors enhances the curriculum, making a significant contribution to pupils' cultural and social development. Good use is made of the local area to extend pupils' learning, as in the geography and history walks, and by visits, for example to the church and the war memorial. Other educational visits include museums and a farm, and visitors include puppet and theatre groups, international students, the fire service and representatives from local charities. Although there are no formal extra-curricular activities provided by the school, pupils' learning is extended effectively by these experiences, as too by the good variety of homework tasks.
29. A key issue arising from the last inspection was concerned with the development of schemes of work to ensure systematic coverage of the curriculum. Insufficient progress has been made in addressing this issue and, as the school is aware, the lack of detailed guidance on objectives for each year to support teachers' planning remains an important weakness. This limits the progress pupils make as they move through the school.
30. The school's provision for spiritual, moral and social development is good. Provision for cultural development is very good, and signifies a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Acts of collective worship take place daily and comply fully with statutory requirements. Along with religious education they are well planned and include opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and others' experiences and feelings. These make a major contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual awareness. Although not planned explicitly, pupils' spiritual development is also fostered in a variety of subjects across the curriculum. For example in science, pupils in Year 2 were fascinated by the discussion which arose from their attempts to describe the properties of living and non-living things. The teacher took full advantage of the opportunity to allow pupils to explore questions about the circle of life. In addition, younger pupils were amazed at the size of some African snails, brought in to support learning about mini-beasts in the summer garden.
31. A strong moral code is evident in all aspects of the school's life and forms the basis of the good behaviour evident in lessons and around the school. The school's values include respect, consideration and good relationships, and clearly reject bullying, harassment and dishonesty. As a result, pupils rapidly develop a clear understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable, and they are consistently expected to consider the impact of their behaviour on others. Teachers are

good role models, generally dealing with pupils in a calm and confident manner and therefore pupils respond in a similar way.

32. Pupils' social development is firmly rooted in the headteacher's strong view of the school as a community. Pupils are encouraged from an early age to share and to co-operate, and this is clearly evident in the good relationships formed across the age groups in the school. Teachers organise pupils to work and play together successfully, and constantly remind them to be sensitive to the needs of others. Frequently this involves not only co-operation but also competition, for example in physical education involving the development of self-discipline and fair play.
33. Arrangements for pupils' cultural development have been improved considerably since the last inspection and are now very good. Pupils' appreciation of their cultural traditions is very well promoted across the curriculum. The local area and community are used extensively as an excellent resource for learning, enabling pupils to acquire a deepening understanding of their own cultural roots. Through its teaching in religious education, the school ensures that pupils acquire knowledge of the key features of different faiths. For example, pupils learn about festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year in assemblies and in lessons. Classrooms and shared areas of the school overflow with evidence of western and non-western art, multicultural displays and artefacts, which broaden pupils' appreciation of the richness and diversity of society.
34. Links with the partner junior school, to which the significant majority of pupils transfer, are very good and well established, and are beneficial to pupils as they change schools. In addition, the very effective liaison supports curricular development, for example through shared training. Links between the schools, governors and parents have been further strengthened by the introduction of a joint annual general meeting. Links with the private nursery adjacent to the infant school are at an early stage of development. The headteacher is seeking to develop liaison for the benefit of children as they transfer to the school.
35. The school's very good links with the community make a very positive contribution to the learning opportunities available to pupils, and to their progress and attainment. Local residents come into school to hear pupils read, to assist with activities and, in one case, to play the piano in assemblies. The help of these residents is very much appreciated. Links with local business, for example a local pharmaceutical company, support areas of the curriculum, science in particular. The company also supports projects such as tree planting, making a positive contribution to pupils' learning by enhancing environmental awareness, and also to their personal and social development. The school further extends its involvement with the local community through events such as maypole dancing and the May Fair, and through the distribution of harvest gifts at the 'Coffee Pot' drop-in centre.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school has good procedures for admitting four year olds, including the option of home visits. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting reported that children settle well. Other new pupils are welcomed, in class and in assembly, and soon become familiar with school routines.
37. Procedures for promoting pupils' good standards of behaviour are good and are applied throughout the school. Simple rules are displayed and opportunities are taken to praise pupils for good work or good behaviour. The rules and expectations of staff are well understood by pupils, and as a result, they feel well supported and confident to approach staff with any problems. There is no evidence of systematic bullying or oppressive behaviour, although the school is aware that on occasions a minority of pupils may make unkind comments to others. Such incidents are closely monitored and quickly addressed. The effectiveness of the strategies employed ensures good standards of behaviour and good personal relationships. These have a beneficial effect in creating a positive learning environment.
38. The school has sound procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality and encourages parents to

take holidays outside term time. Staff suitably work with parents and the education welfare officer to address concerns. Registers are marked accurately although reasons for absence are not clearly indicated other than for the first absence in a series. This method of completion of the registers makes detailed retrospective analysis difficult.

39. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory. The school uses the local area protection committee's procedures, which comply with requirements. The recently appointed headteacher is responsible for child protection and is seeking, in liaison with the local education authority, to arrange to undertake appropriate training. There are good liaison arrangements with outside agencies. Staff, however, are aware of the procedures to be followed in the case of concern. The school exercises its responsibilities with care and vigilance.
40. The school has a satisfactory health and safety policy and safe practices are promoted. For example, when pupils in Year 2 were looking at 'historical Sandwich' and comparing it with the present day, they were safely escorted by the class teacher and adult helpers across roads and along narrow pavements. Pupils were involved in recognising potential dangers and were expected to behave and act sensibly for the safety of themselves and others. Although the school does not have a procedure to carry out and document formal risk assessments, there are regular safety audits to identify safety issues and any defective equipment is taken out of use immediately. Concerns such as the potential danger of falling snow and roof tiles have been recognised and action taken, through the governing body, and in this example snow-guards have been fitted to the roofs. Equipment and appliances are regularly tested and throughout the school there is a good day-to-day awareness of safety.
41. The arrangements for providing first aid are good and pupils are looked after well. Two members of staff are qualified in first aid and the midday assistants have also received basic first aid training. First aid boxes meet requirements and the school takes care to ensure the well being of pupils by, for example keeping a record of those pupils who have particular allergies. The recording of accidents is satisfactory.
42. The school works well with the local education authority, and with other specialists and support agencies. These links all make a good contribution to the provision of support and advice to the school and pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and provided with good and well planned support to help them make satisfactory progress towards their learning targets.
43. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are currently good. The headteacher has a good understanding of the purposes and uses of assessment and provides a clear direction for its future development within the school. However, many of the procedures are recent initiatives and therefore they are not yet firmly embedded as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. When children first enter the school they are carefully assessed and the information is used to form groups and to plan teaching programmes. The information that teachers gather on a day-to-day basis about pupils' attainment is collated and suitably referenced to curriculum programmes for all subjects. This builds into a clear picture of each pupil's progress as they move through the school, and is helpful to current and future teachers, manageable and easy to interpret. However, it is not used to monitor aspects of personal development such as attitudes, approaches to learning and behaviour in order to give teachers a fuller picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.
44. At present, the school makes satisfactory use of the information gathered through its assessment procedures. The headteacher's detailed tracking procedures are already being used to monitor the performance of groups and individuals, and to set targets for improvement, although the impact is not yet evident. Individual learning targets are shared with parents, but pupils are not directly involved in the process, limiting their responsibility in extending their own learning.
45. The school has made satisfactory progress overall in addressing aspects of assessment, a key issue identified at the last inspection. Good procedures have been established but some are still new and

are not yet influencing future work well enough.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents generally express positive views of the school and almost all parents state that they feel that their children like school. The good partnership with parents established by the school makes a beneficial contribution to its work, and supports pupils' learning at school and at home. It is promoted well through generally good communications and the active involvement of parents in the life and work of the school. Parents are supportive and feel comfortable in approaching the school with queries or concerns. This effective partnership has been maintained well since the previous inspection.
47. Parents play an important part in the life and work of the school, and staff and pupils value their involvement. A number of parents regularly provide effective assistance in classrooms, with activities such as reading, craft work and cookery. Reception children clearly appreciated the support of a mother who helped them to bake some butterfly cakes during the week of the inspection. Other parents help with the supervision of pupils undertaking trips and visits, such as that undertaken by Year 2 pupils studying Sandwich in the past. The Parent Teacher and Friends' Association supports school events, including the May Fair. It organises activities such as the Easter raffle, cream teas and the children's Christmas party to enrich the life of the school, and to raise funds to support its work, for example bookcases for the newly created library area and outside benches and tables.
48. The school has a home/school agreement, signed by all parents, which builds upon the good partnership. The reading record/contact book is used very effectively as a means of communication and the majority of parents hear their children read regularly. Parents are kept informed about events and activities through newsletters and, at the start of each term, they are provided with information about the curriculum areas and topics to be covered. Letters about visits provide good information, identifying how the trips are linked to learning in the classroom. All of this information helps parents to support their children's work at home and reinforce learning. Staff and the headteacher are readily accessible to parents. Open evenings, with an opportunity to meet with teachers, are held each term. Reports are written with care and detail pupils' knowledge and understanding, but they do not provide clear targets to help parents to support their child's next stage in learning. However, targets are provided verbally at consultation evenings. Parents who do not attend the consultation evenings are contacted and invited to make an alternative appointment to meet with staff.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The overall management of the school is satisfactory.
50. The headteacher is new in post this school year. She has made an excellent start in leading her colleagues, and in providing clear direction to the work of the school. In a very short time she has accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses in the school and, more importantly, has been very successful in sharing these with the school community and putting in place very good strategies to address the weaknesses. Very good management on her part has ensured that she is the leader of an effective team who work together well to improve standards through a commitment to improved provision. The school is very well placed to build upon its current provision and improve further.
51. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well, apart from weaknesses in linking financial planning to the school's priorities. Good systems are in place to give the governors an understanding of the school's work. They have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and provide sound support in shaping its overall educational direction. The school is strongly committed to the provision of good quality support for pupils with special educational needs, and

its arrangements are effectively managed. Provision for these pupils is good and the Code of Practice is carefully followed.

52. Subject co-ordinators give good support to colleagues through informal advice and discussion. However, their leadership of the different subjects is not generally supported by sufficiently detailed schemes of work to help teachers with their planning. This was a weakness at the time of the last report, and the head has accurately identified it as a major priority for development. Teachers plan together in year groups and this is generally effective in providing similar provision in similar classes. Co-ordinators monitor this planning effectively, to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum, and to identify any areas which need further work.
53. A useful start has been made on monitoring teaching by the headteacher. This has been well organised and of good quality. Indications are that this is effective in promoting good teaching. All teachers have been observed in the classroom and been given written feedback on their work, with clear pointers for development. This has given the headteacher a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching across the school. However, co-ordinators have had little opportunity to monitor teaching in their subjects in different classes, and thus lack a sufficient basis to target their support where it is most needed. Similarly, apart from the results of national assessments, little work has been done on monitoring the standards of pupils' work in different subjects. Co-ordinators have insufficient information about the strengths and weaknesses within their areas of responsibility.
54. The headteacher and her colleagues have carefully tracked the overall results of pupils' attainments in national assessments, and have set targets for improvement. However, pupils' performance in such assessments has not been analysed in sufficient detail to identify particular weaknesses in different aspects of performance, which might then be addressed by the school as a whole.
55. The school's aims are somewhat unclear, as they are different in different documentation. The five aims in the prospectus focus on the pastoral aspects of the school's work, and are met well. The two aims in the school improvement plan are briefer and more general. The first of these, which also focuses on pastoral aspects of the school's work, is met well. However, the school shows weaknesses in meeting the second aim, which concerns the best use of the school's resources through effective management of finances. Neither set of aims is sufficiently detailed in outlining what the school expects in terms of pupils' academic progress, and so does not give a clear yardstick against which to measure the school's academic achievement.
56. The current school improvement plan was produced largely by the headteacher, in consultation with colleagues, before being approved by the governing body. It is a clear document, which identifies issues that need addressing, often suggests strategies, time scales and success criteria for implementation, and gives some costings. However, some major items are not costed and the long list of issues is not sufficiently prioritised. This makes it difficult to plan spending in the long term and to react to any difficulties which might arise.
57. The management of day-to-day finances is good, and the overall planning of the budget is satisfactory. Specific funding, for example to support pupils with special educational needs and staff training are used appropriately. A recent auditors' report listed a number of minor concerns, which have been suitably addressed. However, the school maintains a very large surplus as "contingency", and has not fully thought through how this will be spent. Governors are able to list a range of items on which they might want to spend the money, many of which are in the school improvement plan, such as redecoration of the hall, or the improvement of equipment for information technology. However, as they have not decided which of these are the major priorities, nor costed the different options which might be available, they have no clear plans about how to spend the money. This means that pupils in school, who might benefit from improved provision, are missing out. This is unsatisfactory.
58. The staffing of the school is satisfactory, and staff are well deployed to support pupils' learning. Satisfactory use is made of non-teaching staff. Support for pupils with special educational needs is

good, but support for children under five is limited. Little work has been done on the formal appraisal of teachers' performance this year. However, the combination of the classroom monitoring above, and detailed professional development interviews with each teacher, has been successful in helping staff to improve their performance, as well as giving the headteacher a clearer view of the school's work. New staff, including those newly qualified as teachers, are given good support and training, enabling them to function successfully in the school.

59. The school is making a sound start in applying the principles of best value, and is particularly good at consulting all those concerned about its work. Money is spent carefully, and comparisons of the school's performance with other schools is undertaken conscientiously. However, best use is not being made of the money which the school has available.
60. The accommodation is satisfactory to meet the needs of the curriculum. The classrooms offer sufficient space, except for children under five whose classroom is too cramped and limits their active involvement in activities. Generally, standards of maintenance and decoration are good although some areas, such as the hall, are in need of re-decoration. A new library area has been developed recently with a view to providing a focus for reading activities and to stimulate pupils' interest in books. Outside there is sufficient space for outdoor physical education and play, including a delightful summer garden, a large enclosed and mainly grassed area. This is also used to good effect as a curriculum resource, for observing plants and mini-beasts, for example. Good displays are well used throughout the school to stimulate pupils' interest. Effective use is made of the accommodation.
61. Resources have improved since the time of the previous inspection. They are now appropriate to support all areas of the curriculum with the exception of English, where, as the school is aware, levels of non-fiction and research books remain unsatisfactory, and restrict pupils' research opportunities. Resources are readily accessible and used well throughout the school.
62. The school uses the local environment and the local community extensively to enhance and enrich the curriculum, in history and geography in particular. The first-hand experiences of local residents are valuable in bringing topics alive. In addition, local museums and other visitors are used to good effect.
63. In view of average unit costs, pupils' satisfactory learning overall, the good teaching and the sound and improving management, despite weaknesses in the curriculum and in financial planning, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to build on the existing good features of the school, and raise standards of attainment further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

1. As identified in the school improvement plan:
 - (i) improve subject guidelines and programmes of work so that they better support teachers' planning for pupils to build up their learning year-on-year; (Para. No. 10. 29)
 - (ii) improve monitoring (Para. No. 10) to include:
 - a detailed analysis of national testing to identify and address the areas of weakness in the curriculum (Para. No. 54)
 - monitoring standards in pupils' work (Para. No. 53)
 - monitoring teaching and learning in the classrooms (Para. No. 53)
 - the full involvement of subject co-ordinators; (Para. No. 53)
2. In planning for school improvement, establish and cost the main priorities, to inform spending decisions so that best use can be made of the current budget surplus for the benefit of pupils' education. (Para.

No. 56. 57)

3. Review the length of the school day in line with recommended guidelines, and make best use of the available time. (Para. No. 26)

In addition to the issues above, the following points should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

1. Improve provision for children under five by:
 - increasing opportunities for purposeful play (Para. No. 19. 25)
 - improving classroom support and accommodation (Para. No. 58. 60)
2. Review the aims of the school to include more fully the school's expectations for pupils' academic progress. (Para. No.55)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7%	55%	36%	2%	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		139
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		41

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	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	31	22	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	22	22
	Girls	19	20	19
	Total	39	42	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (80)	79 (84)	77 (76)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	26
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	41	42	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (82)	79 (84)	87 (92)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	136
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20 :1
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	123

Financial information

Financial year	1998 / 1999
	£
Total income	258686
Total expenditure	252122
Expenditure per pupil	1801
Balance brought forward from previous year	36745
Balance carried forward to next year	43309

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	142
Number of questionnaires returned	59

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	85	13	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	27	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	31	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	33	12	2	0
The teaching is good.	74	24	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	30	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	40	2	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	58	37	2	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	56	34	0	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	29	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	31	25	9	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

64. Children enter the two reception classes at the age of four in September of the year in which they become five. Summer-born children attend morning sessions for the first term only. At present there are eight children of non-statutory age in Class 1 who form about one third of the class. A well-briefed teaching assistant supports the class, but only for part of the week. There is a wide range of attainment on entry, but the attainment for most children is in line with expectations, as indicated by the baseline assessment. Most children are on course to achieve the desired outcomes in all areas of learning by the time they are five, and are making at least satisfactory progress. They are likely to exceed them in personal and social development, and in aspects of language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. In these areas of their work they are learning well. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and planned for appropriately. Provision for under-fives was not reported separately in the last inspection report.

Personal and social development

65. Personal and social development is good. Children's attitudes to their tasks are good. They settle readily to their activities, work purposefully and sustain concentration. They are confident, mature and polite, and are consistently well behaved. They work together companionably and help each other, as when looking for the mini-beasts, or offering suggestions about how to feel happy again when sad. They readily find partners in physical education sessions. Children become absorbed in their play, although opportunities are limited, hindering development of their ideas. Children treat

property and living things, such as the mini-beasts, carefully and with respect as a result of the teacher's kindly, but clear, guidelines. Children are secure within the class routines and are personally independent, as in changing for physical education lessons. Teaching and learning are good with the teacher's patient encouragement and praise. She clearly values the children's responses, fostering their self-esteem effectively. She has established clear routines, which successfully promote children's independence. However, the purpose of snack time is unclear and opportunities are lost to further develop children's social skills.

Language and literacy

66. Standards in this area of learning meet expectations overall. Children's listening skills are good, encouraged well by good behaviour management. Children listen attentively to each other and to the teacher and, as a result are clear about what they are to do. They listen carefully to stories, recalling the main points well. They listen out for rhyming words, which they often identify correctly. They become suitably involved in role-play, for example acting out a class story, or being a scientist. They talk about their work appropriately, but there are few opportunities for planned or spontaneous conversations. Some speech is unclear. Children handle books appropriately and enjoy the stories. Many children recognise familiar words and are beginning to use initial sounds. Some children are exceeding the expected outcomes as they know sufficient words to enable them to read a simple text. Most children copy-write with confidence and some are beginning to write independently, making reasonable attempts to build up words, using their knowledge of sounds. Most children can write their names. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall. The teacher pays good attention to teaching word-building skills, and makes effective use of her voice to capture children's interest and involvement, for example in stories. She uses role-play to good effect, but there are not enough opportunities for extended talk. Limited space in the classroom limits children's independent activities, for example the enjoyment of books in a comfortable book corner.

Mathematics

67. Standards in mathematics meet expectations. Most children count to ten, and some beyond. They write recognisable numerals to five and to ten, although they are not always correctly orientated. They have a secure practical understanding of 'one more' with numbers to ten, and to 20 with higher attaining children. Lower attaining children work with numbers to five. Children solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction, always practically, and sometimes pictorially, in their books. Children are familiar with basic shapes and are beginning to make comparisons, for example, by drawing snakes of different lengths. Teaching in this area is satisfactory with a suitable emphasis on a wide range of practical activities, which satisfactorily promote children's understanding of concepts. The teacher uses games to good effect to successfully reinforce learning points, and emphasises mathematical language appropriately such as 'more' and 'less'. However, opportunities are lost, for example when saying rhymes or during classroom routines such as snack time, for children to practise and consolidate developing mathematical skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. Standards are satisfactory overall in aspects seen. In scientific aspects of this area of learning, children exceed the expected outcomes. They are motivated well when collecting mini-beasts in the summer garden, carefully searching among the leaves and observing with interest. With support, they sort the bugs into different groups. They extend their learning effectively in the home corner, where they pretend to be scientists, using magnifiers, reference books and notebooks. Children suitably explore and talk about dry and wet sand, finding for example, how wet sand can be shaped like snowballs and dry sand is like flour. In information technology aspects, there are instances of good attainment, with confident manipulation of the mouse and secure understanding of the games. In addition, some children use the listening centre independently to listen to well-prepared interactive tapes. Classroom displays indicate that children have an appropriate understanding of past and present by painting school uniform as it is now and how it was in Victorian days. Teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in scientific aspects, when the teacher capitalises effectively on children's natural curiosity. Children's learning is also promoted well in technological aspects, by effective instruction and the preparation of resources. Sometimes, however, during play activities it is not clear what the children are intended to learn

and there is little adult intervention to extend their talking and ideas.

Physical development

69. Standards in this area of learning in aspects observed exceed expectations. In gymnastics, children have a good range of movements, and stretch, curl, twist, run, and jump with confidence, with a good awareness of space and of others. They practise movements and improve. They use pencils and crayons carefully, and often accurately. They use their hands well, for example to rake and dig the sand, to build with small construction apparatus, and to use pegs. Teaching and learning in these aspects are good. In gymnastics, the teacher uses her subject expertise to good effect to challenge and motivate children effectively. Her instructions are clear so that children know what they need to do. Her direct teaching methods suitably include safety, but opportunities are lost for children to explore apparatus and equipment imaginatively.

Creative development

70. Standards in creative development meet expectations. Children know a repertoire of songs and rhymes. They have an awareness of pulse. They can clap the rhythmic pattern of their names reasonably well, and those of the mini-beasts they have been observing. They make careful observational drawings, for example of the mini-beasts they have collected. Classroom displays indicate that children satisfactorily print, paint and use different materials to make a large collage picture. Teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory. In music the teacher gives suitable attention to rehearsing a song to improve performance, but the quality of the children's performance and responses are sometimes hindered by tiredness at the end of the day. No art or imaginative play activities were observed during the inspection.

ENGLISH

71. Results of national assessments in 1999 indicate that pupils attain broadly average standards by the end of Key Stage 1. In comparison with schools with similar numbers of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, results are below average. Results improved significantly between 1998 and 1999. A more detailed study of results shows that higher attaining pupils did well, and a significant minority exceeded the nationally expected Level 2. However, more than might be expected failed to gain Level 2. This corresponds to above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the school.
72. Attainment on entry to the school covers a wide range, but is average overall. Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of the current Year 2 pupils in English is broadly average, and that they have made satisfactory progress in their learning in the subject since starting school. Overall, satisfactory standards at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils show particular strengths in their achievement in handwriting, in phonics, in listening, and in their understanding of poetry. Weaknesses for some are in the speed and fluency of their reading and writing. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individual learning targets, enabled by effective classroom support.
73. Pupils' skills in listening are good. They listen attentively to the teacher and to each other and, even after quite long sessions, show by their work that they have understood what has been happening. For example, in a session some pupils in Year 2 talked about a favourite object, their classmates asked sensible questions because they had listened carefully to the explanations. Pupils follow instructions well and are able to recall, often in some detail, details of discussions. This contributes well to their learning in many subjects. Pupils' skills in speaking are satisfactory overall. Teachers provide some good opportunities for pupils to speak to the rest of the class, but many pupils appear shy about taking up these chances. Higher attaining pupils are keen to contribute, and often respond thoughtfully and at length on different topics. However, many pupils seldom put up their hands to offer suggestions, and others find it hard to express their ideas coherently when they do try. Teachers often structure lessons so that pupils need to discuss issues together and reach agreement, before they can get on with their work. Pupils do this well. They show good collaborative skills, sharing ideas and contributing their thoughts to the group. Few opportunities were observed during the inspection for pupils to practise their speaking skills through structured

drama or role-play, a less well developed aspect of the work.

74. Standards in reading are satisfactory, and pupils make steady progress in learning to read. A good programme is in place to develop their phonic skills (their knowledge of how different sounds are represented by different combinations of letters). This is done particularly well during class sessions in the literacy hour, and teachers are quick to draw pupils' attention to patterns in words, and encourage them to focus on the sounds represented in passages they study. Pupils show increasing skills in being able to identify words by working them out phonically, and are good at this by the end of the key stage. For example, one pupil in Year 2 correctly worked out the word "lintel" in a passage about Stonehenge, although it was not a word he had ever come across before. Conversely, the quick word-recognition skills of average pupils are relatively weak, and this can slow down the both the speed and accuracy of their reading. Teachers ensure that pupils' reading books are well matched to their attainment, giving a suitable level of challenge, but enabling them to tackle the book independently. Good use is made of a well-established programme for pupils to read at home with their parents. Most do so on a regular basis and this contributes well to their learning. Most pupils read aloud with suitable expression. A few higher attaining pupils show good skills in this, reading with enthusiasm and putting a lot of meaning into how they say the words. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has ensured that pupils are taught how to access information in books well. Most pupils gain a secure understanding of how to use the contents page to find specific information. By the end of Year 2, some pupils are very good at looking for specific items of information, or particular words, on a page. Others find this more difficult, and need help and prompting. A few higher attaining pupils are able to read a passage silently and remember specific items of information. However, most find this difficult and have to re-read the information if they are asked a question about it. In some instances, pupils' understanding of what they read is limited by lack of specific vocabulary, or they find it difficult to untangle complex sentences. This means that they sometimes cannot extract the full or exact meaning, even from a sentence which they are able to read aloud accurately.
75. Attainment in writing is satisfactory. The formation of pupils' handwriting is a strength. By the end of the school, most pupils write legibly in a joined, cursive script. They are encouraged to join letters from early in the school, and are given specific teaching about how this should be done. The successful application of their understanding of phonics means that they develop their spelling satisfactorily, improving steadily as they get older, and attaining sound standards overall. During their time in school, they become more fluent in their writing, increasing the amount they write and developing the complexity of their sentences. Their use of standard English becomes more accurate as they get older. They have some useful opportunities to write for a range of purposes, such as making lists or filling in charts, as well as more extended writing such as stories and poetry. However, scrutiny of pupils' work in other subjects shows that opportunities to practise writing at any length are too limited. Pupils often write only one-word answers. Few instances were seen of older pupils writing detailed accounts of what they had done in science, for example, or of writing about their very good knowledge of history. Some good work was seen in class books in Year 1, but pupils fail to build upon this sufficiently in Year 2, because they do not have enough practice. This, in part, contributes to the relatively slow speed at which many average pupils write. Pupils are developing sound skills in word-processing to draft and re-draft their work, and teachers make good use of opportunities for this in the group-work sessions of the literacy hour.
76. Pupils have a good understanding of poetry and its structure. Many opportunities to read and write poetry are included within literacy sessions, and pupils come to a good understanding of rhyme, rhyme structure and of how the shape of the poem on the page can contribute to meaning. This aspect of pupils' learning makes a positive contribution to their cultural development.
77. Teaching is satisfactory overall, enabling pupils to make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. Often teaching is good. The strengths of teaching are in the systematic teaching of phonics, consistent clear teaching of handwriting, and the teaching of poetry within both reading and writing sessions. This supports good learning in these aspects of the subject. The management of pupils is good, and is based securely on good relationships and clear routines which pupils understand and follow well. As a result, pupils behave well and enjoy their English lessons and co-

operate well. They listen attentively and work well collaboratively if required. Class sessions are often enlivened by enthusiastic presentation, and have a brisk pace. Challenging questions set a high level of expectation and many pupils make thoughtful contributions, although others seem shy about offering suggestions. Teachers generally show good subject knowledge. Planning is satisfactory and is based appropriately on the Literacy Strategy. Group sessions are managed well, and activities are chosen to suit the different abilities of the pupils. However, on occasions the activities for pupils who are not working with an adult are not sufficiently challenging, and as a result, some pupils mark time or coast. The final plenary sessions are usually used well to re-enforce the main teaching points of the lesson, enabling all pupils to consolidate their learning. Good use is made of skilled classroom support staff to help pupils in their learning, particularly those with special educational needs.

78. The subject is managed satisfactorily and the co-ordinator has worked effectively to support her colleagues in their introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Monitoring of teachers' planning has enabled her to ensure coverage of the curriculum and to identify areas where more work is needed. Good procedures are in place for assessment, and these are used effectively in planning work and in placing pupils into appropriate ability groups. However, the co-ordinator has little opportunity to systematically monitor teaching and standards of work in the different classes. Resources are satisfactory overall and are used well, but there is a lack of non-fiction books in the library to help develop pupils' independent investigative and study skills.

MATHEMATICS

79. Inspection evidence indicates that at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in mathematics are close to average. These findings are better than results from testing in 1999, which were below national averages overall and below those for similar schools. The better standards observed during the inspection are due to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Staff have worked hard to make a systematic start to its implementation, despite a lack of training and the extended absence of the co-ordinator. In addition, a contributory factor is the effective monitoring of mathematics lessons by the new headteacher. The school's predictions for testing in 2000 are realistic and reflect the year group. Standards are similar to those found during the last inspection.
80. Pupils in Year 2 have an understanding of the value of each numeral in a two-digit number and use this effectively to add together mentally two-digit numbers. However, many pupils do not know readily number facts such as $9 + 8$, and rely on the support of practical aids. Pupils are familiar with the values of different coins and in practical shopping problems can add two amounts competently. Higher attaining pupils work with amounts to £10. Pupils suitably recognise the number operation needed in a problem, for example, addition or subtraction. They are less confident, however, to explain their mathematical working. Pupils understand and interpret simple graphs, suitably using information technology on occasions. Pupils in Year 1 meet expectations more securely than in Year 2 because there are fewer pupils with special educational needs in Year 1. In some aspects, pupils in Year 1 exceed expectations, for example, by confidently beginning to identify lines of symmetry practically, and in ordering two-digit numbers successfully.
81. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory overall. However, there is scant evidence of pupils using numeracy skills to support learning in other subjects, for example timelines and dates in history, and some use of co-ordinates in geography. In some classes pupils mentally calculate register and dinner numbers.
82. The quality of teaching and learning is always at least satisfactory. Often it is good, in Year 1 in particular, when a brisk, snappy pace and challenging tasks motivate pupils well, and enable them to move forward effectively in their learning. In general, teachers' clear instructions, demonstrations and explanations enable pupils to understand their tasks; they know what they need to do. However, because of a lack of individual targets, pupils are not aware of what specific aspects of mathematics they need to get better at to improve overall. As a result of previous assessments of pupils' work, tasks are suitable, and different for the different ability groups.

Evidence suggests that since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, work is better organised and pupils are better enabled to build securely on previous learning. Lessons are well structured, although the learning points for each lesson are not always made explicit to pupils. During activity times, groups are supported appropriately to enable pupils to remain purposefully on task. Teachers use a good variety of teaching methods to promote learning, including games. They place a good emphasis on practical work to aid pupils' understanding. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers, enabled by the effective support of teaching assistants in individual and small groups.

83. As a result of the satisfactory, and often good, teaching, pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. They are motivated effectively by purposeful teaching. They work well together, and help each other, and in general work conscientiously when not directly supervised. Teacher's good relationships with their classes securely underpin the positive working atmosphere, and pupils behave well. On occasion, however, expectations for good behaviour are not clear enough, or sessions over-long, and pupils become restless.
84. The mathematics curriculum is supported effectively by the Numeracy Strategy, but the school has not yet started to adapt it to meet their own needs. In particular, last year's test results have not been analysed to identify areas of weakness to be rectified. The subject is being managed adequately by the temporary co-ordinator, who has a reasonable view of the needs of the subject. In addition, the subject is supported by the headteacher who has observed all teachers teaching a numeracy lesson. Resources are used to good effect, including classroom support.
85. Standards are similar to those found during the last inspection. The quality of teaching in the subject has improved. Work is now appropriately matched to different groups, but there remains a lack of planned emphasis on talking about mathematics, and its use and application.

SCIENCE

86. Results of National Curriculum assessments in 1999 show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was in line with the national average. The percentage attaining the higher Level 3 was above average. Compared to schools of similar background the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 was just below average, while results for Level 3 were above average. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the higher than average results for Level 3 indicate clearly the wide range of attainment levels found in the school. It also indicates that teachers are effectively meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that the attainment of pupils currently nearing the end of the key stage is in line with national expectations, again with a significant minority who are attaining better levels than expected. These standards are similar to those found in the last inspection.
87. As they move through the school pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning from year to year. This is better than at the time of the last inspection when progress was often unsatisfactory. Teaching has also improved, ensuring that in each of the lessons observed, pupils learned well. However, these improvements have not yet been effective in raising standards of attainment further. Throughout the school there is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' experimental and investigative skills. This practical hands-on approach which was evident in each of the lessons observed, and in pupils' past work, is of particular benefit to pupils with special educational needs, often enabling them to make similar progress to others. However, due to weaknesses in planning over time, these skills are not being developed systematically in order to ensure, for example, that pupils move progressively from describing events to explaining them, developing more sophisticated methods of recording their observations and communicating information. Older and higher attaining pupils especially are not given enough opportunities to practise extended writing, as frequently one word answers or drawings inserted into tables are all that is required.
88. The majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are working at least at expected levels. They describe the basic conditions needed by plants and animals for survival and recognise that different

living things are found in different places, such as the playground and the summer garden. Higher attaining pupils successfully use their knowledge of life processes to describe the differences between living and non-living things and identify ways in which animals are suited to their environments. In their study of materials and of physical processes, almost all pupils are again attaining at least expected levels although progress is slower in these aspects of the science curriculum. Scrutiny of pupils' past work suggests that greater attention is given to the study of life processes and living things. In addition, advantage is taken of opportunities in physical education, for example, to discuss health related exercise and this enhances pupils' learning in this area.

89. The quality of teaching was good in lessons seen, enabling pupils to make good progress in their learning. Good knowledge of science is a particular strength, which is clearly evident in teachers' skilful questioning and explanations. Because teachers plan interesting work, pupils show scientific curiosity and clearly enjoy their tasks. They have good attitudes to science and demonstrate responsible attitudes towards safety in practical activities. The subject makes a positive contribution to their all-round development and fosters positive attitudes about the beauty of the natural world. While setting up an investigation into contrasting habitats in the school grounds, pupils in Year 2 were able to respond quickly and confidently because they knew exactly what was expected of them. Through apt reminders, pupils showed care and respect for living things and the physical environment. The teacher evidently valued all pupils' contributions, creating a secure learning environment enabling pupils to ask relevant questions and make thoughtful suggestions. Teachers manage pupils effectively, who consequently behave well and work effectively in group and individual situations. Teachers select and manage resources carefully, and this results in good levels of interest and enthusiasm, which is well-channelled into effective learning. Pupils in Year 1 for example were provided with an excellent range of containers, including African artefacts, while exploring their suitability for a variety of purposes. However, their concentration lapsed towards the end of the lengthy session, adversely affecting the quality of learning.
90. An experienced and well-qualified teacher provides effective leadership of the subject overall, but her role in monitoring standards and the quality of teaching has not yet been systematically addressed in order to improve pupils' attainment. Shortcomings in the effective coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum identified in the last inspection have been addressed.

ART

91. The school has made major improvements in the work in art since the last inspection, when standards did not meet national expectations. Pupils now make good progress in art, including those with special educational needs, attaining good standards in some aspects of the subject. They undertake work in a good range of media, and show a good understanding of the work of a range of artists. They develop a good understanding of colour during their time in school. In the reception class this is exemplified by colourful pictures of kites, and in large collage of a pond in mixed media. By Year 2, pupils have developed their understanding well, as is shown in a collage of a "spring flower garden". This was based on Monet's painting of his garden at Giverny, and shows a subtle use of colour, delicately applied, and a good understanding of Monet's style. Pupils' drawing skills develop satisfactorily, and they have suitable opportunities to draw from life, such as the paintings of daffodils. However, their drawing when working in other subjects does not always show the same care and skill which they demonstrate in specific art lessons. Pupils develop their understanding of different artistic styles and techniques well. In a good lesson during the inspection, for example, pupils showed a good understanding of the techniques used in making a wide range of fabrics. The teacher had brought in a very good range of materials, and pupils showed a good understanding of which had been printed, woven or sewn, for example. In representing the patterns on particular pieces of work, they showed good skills, observing and selecting media and colours with care to make their own versions of the patterns.

92. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good management skills and provide a wide and exciting range of materials for pupils, which successfully gains their interest and enthusiasm. Pupils enjoy learning new techniques, such as the weaving observed during the inspection with Year 1 pupils, and take a pride in what they do. Lessons are well organised and have a good pace, so that pupils' concentration is maintained. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and behave well. They observe carefully, and show patience when working. Teachers make good use of examples of art and artists from different cultures, such as the African (and other) masks, which have been used as a stimulus for some good quality painted masks produced by the pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and expectations are high. Challenging questioning gets pupils to think through and explain their work, consolidating and enhancing their understanding.
93. The co-ordinator has worked hard since the last inspection in supporting colleagues. A useful scheme of work gives a good basis for progression in the different techniques, such as printing, and ensures a broad and balanced curriculum. The scheme is weaker in helping teachers to systematically develop the different elements of art, such as line and tone. The school's constantly changing system of topics makes planning for this difficult. The co-ordinator is well aware of this, and is currently planning how the scheme can be expanded to provide such advice.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. The school has maintained the standards in design and technology that were reported in the previous inspection. The majority of pupils throughout the school continue to attain standards which are in line with those expected nationally of pupils of similar ages. Pupils acquire a basic knowledge and understanding of both the designing and making processes, and develop sound skills within the range of opportunities provided.
95. From the outset, teachers create a learning environment in which the youngest pupils are effectively introduced to the particular skills of design and technology. In each class pupils experience a good variety of media including paper, card, textiles, food, reclaimed materials and construction kits. They make satisfactory progress in their learning as they move through the school, as teachers plan increasingly more complex tasks for them to complete. For example, in Year 1, they list the resources needed and carefully follow instructions to build a model house. In Year 2 they work more independently to produce sketches, clearly labelling axles, handles and string when designing a winding mechanism. Pupils also take part in focussed practical tasks such as making bread and chocolate muffins in which they develop the skills of following instructions closely. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.
96. Although no design and technology lessons were seen during the inspection, the quality of finished products and the photographic evidence provided by the school show that pupils have good attitudes towards design and technology. They clearly take pride in their work and persevere well to overcome difficulties and to complete tasks carefully.
97. Discussions with teachers, scrutiny of their plans, pupils' workbooks and finished products, indicate that effective teaching takes place throughout the school. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the distinctive requirements of the subject, and as a result achieve a good balance between the design and make elements of the curriculum. They establish clear links with other subjects in order to make learning more purposeful and they plan interesting and challenging tasks which arise from the current topic. As a result, pupils' progress in subjects such as science, geography and art is effectively promoted through design and technology. For example, pupils in Year 1 design and build Dogon huts out of clay and straw to support their learning about everyday life in West Africa. In Year 2, they make vehicles with axles and wheels in order to investigate friction in science lessons. However, there is little evidence of pupils recording the judgements they make about their finished products. Opportunities are missed therefore to further improve their understanding of how things work and to extend their writing skills.

98. The co-ordinator is an experienced and knowledgeable teacher who has a good understanding of her management role. She has identified the need to review and adapt the existing scheme of work to provide more detail to better support teachers' planning. In addition, the co-ordinator recognises the need to monitor teaching and learning in order to identify areas of weakness and to share good practice with colleagues. Overall, resources for the subject are adequate, although there is no software available in the school to enable the computer to be used to support and enhance the development of pupils' design skills.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Evidence from the two lessons seen, samples of work and talking to pupils, indicates that standards in geography are as expected for the ages of the pupils. Pupils in Year 2 can identify similarities and differences between features of the fictional Scottish Island of Struay and those of Sandwich. On a local walk, many pupils in Year 1 can locate where they are on a simple map. They draw arrows to mark their route and make good attempts to identify the direction of their turns, whether to the right or to the left. Through good cross-curricular links they are aware of some features of other countries. Standards are similar to those found during the last inspection.
100. The quality of teaching and learning in geography is satisfactory overall. Sometimes they are good, for example when pupils are well motivated by practical map reading on a local walk, or when good questioning stimulates their thinking about the features observed. There is a good emphasis on practical enquiry in the teaching of geography, and the local area is used to good effect. As a result pupils are interested, keen to find out, and learn effectively. They have good attitudes towards their work in geography. Teachers use a wide variety of teaching methods, including recounting the travels of a bear on holiday whose experiences capture pupils' imaginations. Teachers generally emphasise geographical vocabulary appropriately, although on occasion opportunities are lost, hindering pupils' learning. Teachers give clear explanations and instructions, and pay due attention to safety. Teachers are well organised. They manage classes in a firm but kindly way, and consequently pupils behave well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively, and enabled to make similar progress to their peers.
101. The geography curriculum is satisfactory overall, in providing an appropriate range of activities for pupils. Good use is made of teachers' individual areas of expertise and interest to enrich pupils' experiences, such as travelling to other countries and making contributions to pupils' cultural development. Useful links with other subjects, such as science, further enhance the curriculum. However, as the school is aware, teachers' planning over time is still unsupported by the continued lack of a detailed programme of work to make sure that pupils build on their learning steadily as they move through the school, as identified at the last inspection. The co-ordinator has good subject expertise and supports colleagues on an informal level, but her role is limited by the lack of procedures to monitor teaching and learning in order to gain an overview, identify areas for development and share expertise.
102. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection in producing a programme of work, but improvements in behaviour ensure that all pupils can learn equally well: previously, a lack of concentration by some pupils hindered progress of the whole class and this is now not the case.

HISTORY

103. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in history, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory. Pupils now attain good standards in their knowledge and understanding of the subject by the end of the key stage, although their written work does not always reflect this. Time available for the subject is limited, and the teachers concentrate on developing pupils' historical skills and their understanding, rather than on recording. Pupils have the opportunity to have good direct experiences of using

historical artefacts, as well as studying the local environment. This is successful in developing good standards. For example, pupils in Year 1 have studied the life of the African explorer, Major Powell-Cotton and have visited a museum and studied artefacts and pictures related to his adventures. They have a good understanding of the issues he faced, and of how his life was different from that of the present day. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good grasp of how things have changed over time, and are good at making connections between different aspects of the past. This was illustrated when pupils went on a walk to look at neighbouring buildings. They were able, for example, to identify that a wall was made of flints, and one pupil speculated that stone-age people might have used some of these in the distant past. On examining a boot-scraper in a doorway, they eventually guessed at its function, and were able to explain that in the past it would have been more useful because the roads would not have been so well paved. On being told by their teacher that the streets of Sandwich used to be cleared of rubbish by allowing the pigs to eat it, they explained that plastic bottles would not have been a problem, because they were not invented.

104. The quality of teaching is very good. In two very good lessons with the different Year 2 classes, teachers showed high levels of organisational skills and careful attention to safety when taking the classes on a walk. Good use was made of extra adults and the secure discipline, based on good relationships, ensured pupils' very good behaviour and safety. Subject knowledge was very good, and challenging questioning ensured high expectations and engaged pupils' keen interest and very good concentration. Good, joint planning ensured that the pupils in the two classes each received a valuable, parallel experience, which developed their understanding and knowledge very well. The use of the environment in this way, as well as the use of a wide and interesting range of artefacts, contributes well to pupils' understanding of the local culture in the past. Pupils enjoy their work in history, listen carefully to explanations, and show very careful thought when speculating about aspects of the past.
105. The subject co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and provides good support to her colleagues through discussion and advice. However, the scheme of work lacks detail, and it is not possible to see how progression and balance in pupils' learning is ensured, other than in an ad hoc way by the co-ordinator. As yet there has been little opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching and standards in other classes, and this means she has no systematic way of knowing where her expertise could most effectively support her colleagues.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

106. The satisfactory standards, identified at the last inspection in information technology at the end of Key Stage 1, have been maintained, supported effectively by recent national initiatives. Improvements have been made to the level, range and quality of resources since the last inspection, although subject co-ordinators have identified shortages of suitable software to support pupils' learning in other subjects, for example in mathematics, science and design and technology. While resources are adequate overall, the ratio of one computer to more than twenty pupils limits pupils' access and therefore the development of advanced skills.
107. Throughout the school, the quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory. They make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of essential knowledge, skills and understanding. However, they make better progress in handling text and graphics, and in developing their study and research skills, than in handling data, control and modelling. This is partly due to an imbalance in the attention which teachers give to the different strands of information technology and partly to identified gaps in resources. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress and frequently, as in literacy sessions, the use of the computer enables them to attain standards which match those of their peers.
108. Teachers introduce the youngest pupils to word processing and they produce simple unedited work and final draft. They successfully use a word bank to complete sentences and carry out basic editing such as back, delete and use the mouse competently to position the cursor. Older pupils

work with increasing control and accuracy to complete more complex tasks. With the effective support of the classroom assistant they locate, retrieve and communicate information, to combine text and pictures.

109. Pupils' attitudes are invariably good. They respond positively both to the subject and to using information technology as a resource for learning in other subjects. Their use of word processing and CD-ROMs is particularly effective in developing literacy and research skills, although, when they discuss their work, the language of information technology is often limited. The shared use of computers is an important factor in promoting pupils' abilities to work collaboratively and therefore to their personal and social development also. In particular, it contributes to the good relationships seen in all classes.
110. During the inspection no lessons were scheduled to take place and teachers do not generally have a regular timetabled session for information technology. As a result, there is insufficient direct teaching and formal instruction in new skills and techniques within the different strands of information technology to raise standards further. However, there were plenty of opportunities to observe pupils at work on the computers and from other evidence gathered it is clear that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan appropriately for the use of computers to support and enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum, and within the range of software available to them they provide opportunities for pupils to experience a variety of interesting activities. The use of a classroom assistant to support individuals and small groups each afternoon is an efficient strategy, which ensures that all pupils have regular and equal supported access to the computer.
111. Weaknesses in the subject are mainly concerned with teachers' uneven subject knowledge and the co-ordinator has quite correctly identified this as a priority for development. There are plans to address the matter of training for teachers, using the funding which is available nationally to all schools. The policy and scheme of work, which are due for review in 2001, do not provide teachers with sufficient guidance to enable them to make accurate assessments of pupils' work and to plan future work effectively.

MUSIC

112. Limited evidence indicates that standards in music are as expected for the ages of the pupils. Standards in singing in a whole school group meet expectations overall, although on occasion singing is weak. Pupils sing a repertoire of songs from memory, including some from other countries. They can vary their voices, and sing quietly, for example, in response to a peaceful song. Older pupils in Year 2 work well together in small groups. They experiment with untuned instruments, and compose an accompaniment for a poem. They can hold a simple repeated word pattern in two parts to accompany the teacher's song. Younger pupils in reception can clap a rhythmic pattern to flower names. Standards are similar to those found at the last inspection.
113. The quality of teaching and learning in music are satisfactory overall, although there is wide variation. Sometimes teaching is very good, where the teacher has strong specialist expertise, provides a stimulating and challenging task, and manages pupils and instruments effectively. Pupils are very clear about their task, motivated well and work purposefully together. They learn well. They listen carefully to each other, and sensitively support pupils with special educational needs. They rehearse their compositions and improve, and perform their piece appropriately before the class. Sometimes, however, teaching is not satisfactory, when subject knowledge is insecure and the pupils' task too difficult, and when strategies for class management are not clear enough, or sensitive to the pupils' needs. As a result, pupils become restless and unsettled and their learning is hindered. In whole school sessions pupils' singing improves noticeably with due attention to practice, repetition and encouragement. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.
114. As co-ordinator, the headteacher is aware that the curriculum for music is impaired by the lack of a

detailed programme of work, with clear expectations for the learning through each year to enable pupils to develop their knowledge and skills in a structured way. In addition, the teaching and learning of music are not monitored adequately. On account of her good subject expertise, the co-ordinator is well placed to rectify these weaknesses, as identified in the school's Improvement Plan, and to deliver staff training. The appropriateness and timing of formal music sessions for pupils in their first year in school needs review, on account of their tiredness at the end of the day. Noise disturbance from music sessions is a difficulty for adjacent classes.

115. Since the last inspection, subject guidance has been produced, but not in sufficient detail to adequately support teaching and learning year-on-year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. In physical education pupils are working at levels which are generally in line with those normally found in pupils of the same age. These are similar to the standards reported in the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school experience a well-balanced range of physical activities, including dance, games and gymnastics, and all three elements were observed during the inspection. In most of the lessons seen, the quality of pupils' learning was good, associated with aspects of the subject where teachers have particular expertise, for example gymnastics. But this good learning is not sustained as pupils move through the school and progress over time is satisfactory. This is largely because there is insufficient guidance for teachers on the systematic development of skills so that pupils' learning builds on their earlier experiences. Pupils with special educational needs are successfully integrated into lessons, and they make satisfactory progress, usually attaining standards in line with other pupils. Often this is as a result of the sensitive and effective support provided by classroom assistants.
117. In dance, pupils in Year 1 interpret characters, moods and actions successfully through a good range of movements involving changes of height, speed and direction. Close attention is paid to individual performance, and increasingly complex sequences of movement. Pupils in Year 2 show good levels of co-ordination in basic games skills such as dodging, turning and pivoting. Teachers are good role models for the pupils. They change into suitable clothing and become fully involved in pupils' experiences, making a significant contribution to the good quality of pupils' learning.
118. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good. In the most successful lessons, teachers convey high expectations by continually encouraging refinements to technique, rather than simply expecting pupils to repeat previously learned skills. In a games lesson, the teacher's clear explanations resulted in good learning by pupils of all attainment levels. She monitored and assessed their performance throughout the lesson, gave positive and constructive feedback. She expected, and received, a good quality response. All lessons were planned thoroughly and were well structured with an effective warm-up and recovery session to promote good attitudes to health related exercise. Teaching is less effective when there is insufficient emphasis on the linked elements of planning, performing and evaluating actions and movements, including pupils' own and others', in order to improve.
119. As a result of motivating teaching, pupils' attitudes to physical education are always good. They enjoy their lessons, taking part enthusiastically and working hard to better their skills. They respond to the teacher by listening attentively and following instructions carefully. Pupils are supportive of each other, and when given the opportunity, they work successfully as individuals, with partners and in small groups. They demonstrate effectively to help others improve. These carefully planned opportunities have a positive impact on pupils' personal development.
120. In view of the good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes, there is scope for attaining higher standards. However, there have been no opportunities for subject managers to monitor teaching and learning in order to identify and share the strengths and to address weaknesses. The recently appointed co-ordinator has clear ideas about developing the subject, including the adoption of a scheme of work to better guide and support teachers' planning for the development of pupils' skills from year to year.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. The standards in religious education generally meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning. Written work is variable in quality, and does not always reflect the extent of pupils' understanding. This is similar to the situation at the last inspection.
122. Pupils study a range of different religions, as well as Christianity, and show sound understanding of different aspects of these. Pupils in Year 2 have studied aspects of the Sikh and Hindu religions, as well as stories from Islam. They know, for example, about the five "Ks" of Sikhism, and about Mohamed's journey to Medina. However, there are differences in the type and quality of pupils' writing in different classes, and some writing shows a better understanding of the issues than others. The school makes good links with themes in collective worship to support work in lessons. During the inspection, the theme was celebrations and this was successfully taken up in different ways in different classes. Pupils in Year 1 studied weddings, making links between Masai and British Christian wedding ceremonies. They were familiar with many aspects of British weddings and could explain these, and during the lesson learned a good deal about weddings among the Masai. Links with other faiths were also made when pupils in Year 2 discussed birthday celebrations. They talked about the reasons for celebrating birthdays, and about how they felt about different aspects of the celebrations. Some pupils showed a developing understanding that people of different faiths have different views about what is important, and how they celebrate these in different ways.
123. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Often it is good where secure relationships mean that pupils are confident in expressing their views and feelings about different aspects, because they know their contributions will be accepted and valued. Subject knowledge is sound, and teachers take a great deal of time and trouble to provide interesting and exciting artefacts which engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm, such as the materials related to Masai weddings. Pupils are managed well, and as a result their behaviour is almost always good. They listen carefully to the teacher, settle to work well, and co-operate appropriately when asked.
124. The new co-ordinator is the headteacher, who has identified the lack of a detailed scheme of work as a hindrance to improving standards, She has sensibly decided to wait until September to introduce a new scheme, when a new agreed syllabus for the subject comes into force. Little monitoring of the subject has been undertaken, but the co-ordinator has already identified problems with the quality of writing which pupils undertake, and some improvement in this has been made. No monitoring of teaching has been undertaken, so the co-ordinator has no systematic basis on which to decide how and in what way her colleagues can best be supported. The major improvement in the resources for the subject since the last inspection contributes positively to pupils' interest in the subject, and supports effectively the standards they achieve. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development through the study of aspects of different religious faiths.