

INSPECTION REPORT

WYKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gillingham

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113743

Headteacher: Mr S B Crumpler

Reporting inspector: Dr Melvyn J Bradshaw
6169

Dates of inspection: 19th to 21st February 2002

Inspection number: 198955

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Deane Avenue Gillingham Dorset
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R George
Date of previous inspection:	6 th October 1997

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6169	Dr Melvyn Bradshaw	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13911	Mrs Julie Gallichan	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? - Care How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed? – Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
23048	Ms Diane Wilkinson	Team inspector	English Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed? – Leadership and management
16556	Ms Elisabeth Matthews	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Music Foundation stage	How well does the school care for its pupils? - Assessment
31218	Dr Tom Allen	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wyke Primary School is situated to the north west of Gillingham, Dorset. It has 219 pupils who attend full-time from Reception to Year 6. Children normally enter Reception part-time in September and all are full-time by the following February. The numbers of boys and girls are about equal. During last year, more joined the school than left it, and the school is over-subscribed, although the change to the school's roll was quite low. Virtually all pupils are from a white ethnic background. No pupil has English as an additional language. Two pupils (one per cent) are known to be eligible for free school meals. This figure under estimates the actual number of pupils eligible because no meals are served at the school. Over the past five years about nine per cent of pupils have claimed support for residential trips in Years 5 and 6. This figure gives a more accurate estimate of the level of need. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is about average; 47 (21 per cent) pupils in Reception to Year 6 are on the register of special educational needs (SEN). Two pupils have a Statement of SEN. Attainment on entry, as indicated by assessments shortly after children start school, is close to the average. There are relatively few children who exhibit very low, or very high, attainment when they start school. Language development and communication skills are the weakest areas. This represents a change from the previous inspection, which indicated that attainment on entry was average to above.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Wyke Primary School provides its pupils with a very good quality of education and is very effective. The headteacher provides the school with excellent leadership. Governors and staff give very effective support. The school is very successful in meeting its academic and personal aims. Good teaching leads to good learning and progress. Attainment is usually above average by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, and achievement is good. Teaching observed during in the inspection was good overall. Much was very good or excellent, and none was less than satisfactory. Pupils' personal development is promoted very effectively and, as a result, attitudes to school are excellent. Pupils are well cared for and very good assessment of their progress is used to set appropriate targets. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. The school's income per pupil is below average; it uses its resources well and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Governors and all staff work together as a very effective team.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, much was very good or excellent in the lessons observed. This results in pupils making good progress and their attainment is therefore above average by Year 6.
- The provision for children in Reception is a strength of the school.
- Very good provision is made to support pupils' personal development, and that for moral development is excellent. As a result, pupils' relationships and their attitudes to school are of a high quality.
- Assessment of pupils' academic progress, and the care provided, are very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress throughout the school.
- Much of the curriculum is good. It is strengthened by the range of extra-curricular activities and by the links with the community and partner institutions.

What could be improved

- In the context of the school's many strengths, there are no key issues to address. Minor areas that should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan include:
- Reviewing the time allocated to the curriculum and the use of time during the teaching day.
 - Improving the access to information for parents, who find it difficult to get into school, about pupils' progress and about what is to be taught.
 - Ensuring more consistency in the provision of homework and providing greater information to parents about homework.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Wyke Primary School was inspected in October, 1997 and found to have few weaknesses. Very good progress has been made since then. The weaknesses identified in the previous report have been dealt with, and the school's strengths have been maintained and improved further. Assessment, including marking, has improved and it is used very effectively to plan lessons and to set targets. Accommodation for children in Reception is much better, as is the range of outdoor equipment available. Other improvements to the school's accommodation have aided practical work in science and design and technology, and also for the development of library skills. Teaching has improved, in particular with a higher proportion of very good or excellent teaching. Attainment generally remains above average by Year 6, and there have been recent improvements by the end of Year 2. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and music is better. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are even better. Provision for, and the organisation of, special educational needs have improved.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	B	B
mathematics	A	A	C	D
science	A	A*	D	D

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

Since 1998, despite the lower attainment recorded in Year 6 last year, the rate of improvement has been broadly similar to that nationally. As a result, standards, when children leave the school at the end of Year 6, are generally above those found nationally. In 2001, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. When their results in Year 2 are considered, these levels of attainment represent good progress. When compared with the results of similar schools, that is those with between eight and 20 per cent eligible for free school meals, results were above average in English, and below average in mathematics and science. Recent results have usually been better than similar schools. The school is meeting its targets. Current pupils in Year 6 are likely to attain better than last year and are generally above average in English, mathematics and science. Results, at the end of Year 2, have been mostly similar to, or above, the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science since 1998. This year, attainment in Year 2 is also above average. In all other subjects, attainment is at least average by Years 2 and 6, and mostly higher than this. Children in Reception make good progress, and most will attain the expected standard, or exceed it, when they enter Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well during their time in school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have excellent attitudes, are well motivated and concentrate on all activities. They participate with great enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave excellently. They respond very positively to the high expectations set by teachers.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good and their relationships, with adults and other children, are excellent. They are willing to take on responsibility and show good initiative. They get on very well with each

	other.
Attendance	Attendance is well above average. Pupils are punctual, enjoy coming to school and are keen to get on with the day's activities.

Pupils are confident, polite and friendly. There are no significant weaknesses.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching has improved further since the previous inspection, and is good overall. All teaching observed was at least satisfactory, over four fifths was at least good and over a half very good or excellent. Good or very good teaching was seen in every class, and was of a consistently high quality in Reception, and Years 2, 5 and 6. The teaching of English is very good and, although more variable, is good in mathematics. Good links between subjects that teachers make help to enhance pupils' learning and understanding. Both literacy and numeracy skills are used well in many subjects. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is a major reason for pupils' excellent attitudes to learning. The management of pupils is consistently very good. Marking is mostly good, and the best is very helpful. The use of homework is not consistent from class to class. The good progress that pupils make is a result of the good teaching. Virtually all pupils are very interested and concentrate exceptionally well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and other staff and, as a result, their progress while in the school is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils. All subjects of the National Curriculum, and religious education, are covered. The curriculum is enhanced further with a wide and interesting range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by all staff. Their individual education plans are very good and support their needs very well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for pupils' personal development. The ethos of the school contributes to the excellent provision for the moral development of pupils. The spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils is promoted very effectively.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pastoral care of pupils is very good. Pupils are well known by all staff who care for their needs. Pupils' welfare has a high priority in the school. The attention given to the academic development of pupils is very good.

The commitment to ensuring all pupils are fully involved in the school's activities is exceptional. The local community and other educational organisations give very good support to pupils' learning. Except for those who find it difficult to come into school during the school day or shortly after it finishes, the school involves parents effectively in its work. The time allocated to the curriculum is below the recommended minimum, and some literacy and numeracy sessions are longer than the strategies suggest.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is an outstanding leader who is supported well by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff. He is leading a committed staff team, which is effectively helping the school to improve its provision and standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Through its well-organised committees, the governing body gives very good support to the school and fulfils its role very effectively. Governors know the school well and make very well judged decisions to help the school address its priorities and bring about good improvements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very effective at using test results and other assessment data to evaluate its performance. The information is used very well to help plan for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Through careful and effective financial planning, the school uses its resources very well. This is helping to bring about improvements in all areas of its work.

The school's aims and values are reflected excellently in all its work. The number and quality of teaching and support staff enable pupils to make good progress. The accommodation, quality and range of learning resources are generally satisfactory. The governors give very careful consideration to the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children's progress and behaviour are good. • Teaching in the school is good. • The good range of activities outside of lessons. • They are generally well informed about their children's progress. • The school is approachable. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consistency in the provision of homework. • Greater opportunities for working parents to discuss their child's progress, and to receive more information about what is to be taught.

Inspectors support parents' positive views of the school. Children have excellent attitudes and enjoy their time at school, their behaviour is excellent and they become mature and responsible. Their progress is good because of effective, well-organised teaching, and supported by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are expected to work hard. Staff are very approachable and the school generally works well with parents. Management and leadership by the headteacher are excellent. Inspectors agree that the provision of homework is inconsistent from class to class and that links with working parents could be improved further.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Over the period 1998 to 2000, in National Curriculum tests, at the end of Year 6, pupils' results have improved at a rate greater than the national improvement. In 2001, results fell and were above the national average in English, about average in mathematics and below the average in science. Compared with similar schools, pupils usually achieve well, although this was not the case last year. However, when their attainment at the end of Year 2 is considered, it is clear that these pupils made good progress. Inspection evidence shows that standards are currently above average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. The targets set for Level 4 and Level 5 attainment in English, mathematics and science are challenging and usually achieved. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
- 2 Over the period 1997 to 2001, in National Curriculum tests, at the end of Year 2, pupils' average results have increased at a rate greater than the national improvement. They have tended to be similar to or above the national average in reading, writing, and mathematics. In 2001, overall attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the average, in writing it was above average. Results are generally similar to or better than those of similar schools. Last year, teacher assessments in science indicated that pupils' results were above average. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average. There is no significant difference between the results of boys and girls.
- 3 The previous report indicated that standards were about average, or better, in most subjects in both key stages. In information and communication technology (ICT), attainment was only just satisfactory by Year 6. Attainment is similar or has improved in most subjects. Improvements are most marked by Year 2; by Year 6 attainment remains mostly above average. In ICT, the school has made good progress as attainment now meets the standard expected by Year 6. This is despite the demands being much greater.
- 4 Attainment on entry to Reception is about average, although there is little very low or very high attainment. The greatest areas of weakness are in communication and language skills. The high adult to child ratio helps to ensure that children make good progress. As a result, when children join Year 1, most will achieve or exceed the standards expected. In communication, language and literacy, children's speaking and listening skills improve very well. They handle books with understanding and they know that words have meaning. Some of the older children in Reception read simple text. They write most letters, and their name, clearly. Children have a good knowledge of numbers and most count beyond ten. Their knowledge of the world increases well, and is likely to be above that expected by the time they enter Year 1. Children describe clearly how they have changed from when they were babies. In creative development, children's work should be above the expected standard by the time they start Year 1. They use a range of media, including paint, well and with good control. Virtually all children hold their pencils and paint brushes with good control. Physical development is good, although the current lack of access to the outside area is restricting some areas of work.

- 5 Pupils in Year 2 are achieving above average standards in English, mathematics and science. They are about average in ICT and religious education. Pupils read with good accuracy and fluency. They understand what they have read and talk about it knowledgeably. Writing skills are above average, and helped by the use of literacy in other subjects. They use correct punctuation and spell most common words accurately. Handwriting is very neat, and letters are well formed. Pupils speak very clearly and almost all listen attentively in all lessons. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is above average. They handle numbers up to 100 accurately and confidently, and higher attaining pupils beyond this. They measure and estimate lengths correctly using standard units. Almost all pupils in Year 2 complete simple multiplication tasks, based on the two, five and ten times tables correctly. They apply their knowledge well to real life problems, such as using money for shopping. Pupils' numeracy skills are used well in other areas of the curriculum, particularly in geography and science. Pupils have a good knowledge across all areas of science. They have developed their skills well and tackle problems, such as which are the best materials to use to make a cage for a hamster, very well. In ICT, pupils' work is about average. They input text satisfactorily and produce simple bar charts. By Year 2, pupils have a good awareness of a range of faiths and about the use of symbols, such as the Cross, in Christianity.
- 6 Attainment of pupils in Year 6 is above average in English, mathematics and science, which is better than last year. Pupils read with good understanding and accuracy. Their writing is good, with examples of using writing for many different purposes, such as for reports, poetry, diaries and stories. Handwriting and presentation are currently very neat in Years 5 and 6. The good standards of presentation seen in Year 2 are not consistently maintained in Years 3 and 4. Speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils are confident and articulate speakers, answering questions clearly. Pupils' literacy skills are used well to support learning in other subjects. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is above average. They have good number skills and solve problems accurately. They draw and interpret simple block graphs, histograms and line graphs with accuracy. They understand the types of data displayed by line graphs. The most consistent weakness is that lower attaining pupils are not quick and accurate in their mental recall of number facts. Numeracy skills are used well in science. Pupils tackle scientific investigations systematically and record their work well. They have a good knowledge of all areas of science, such as food chains, life cycles, electrical circuits and the cause of night and day. In ICT, attainment is about average, and pupils use their skills well, where relevant, to enhance learning across much of the curriculum. In religious education, pupils' attainment is above average. They have a good understanding how a religious belief can influence an individual's life and of a range of faiths.
- 7 Throughout the school, pupils achieve at least average, and often better, standards in other subjects. In art and design, in both key stages, pupils develop very good skills and use these well when working with two- and three-dimensional media. The quality of work in design and technology is above average; pupils tackle design problems with enthusiasm and evaluate their products well. In music, standards are well above average by Year 2, and above average in Year 6. Pupils sing particularly well, and appreciate rhythm and dynamics. In some areas of geography and history, there is good depth in pupils' understanding and skills are well developed. On other occasions, the amount of recorded work in these subjects is limited, although pupils are enthusiastic and interested in them. In physical education, pupils attain average standards in gymnastics by Year 2. Strong progress for older pupils is resulting in an improvement in standards in areas such as dance and gymnastics by Years 5 and 6.
- 8 Pupils' achievement during their time in school is good because of the good, and often very good or excellent, teaching. Achievement is also helped by pupils' excellent

attitudes for school. Although there are minor variations, pupils' progress throughout the school is usually good, and in some individual lessons it is very good. Progress in some subjects becomes limited by the low amount of time available. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The very effective individual education plans and good support given by all adults who work with these pupils ensure that they are included well in all learning activities. As a result, they achieve well and make good progress. The assistance provided by learning support staff is especially effective, and contributes significantly to the good progress made. This includes the efforts made to ensure pupils with specific disabilities are fully involved in physical education lessons. Pupils with special educational needs rarely fail to achieve Level 3 by the end of Year 6, the lower end of the expected range. The majority achieve at least Level 3, and some the expected Level 4, in English and mathematics. In science, virtually all pupils achieve at least Level 4, confirming the particularly good progress made by pupils with special educational needs in the subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 9 Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are excellent. This positive picture has been maintained and improved upon since the last inspection and is a strength of the school. Pupils gain maximum benefit from the high quality teaching because they are interested in their work and give teachers their full attention. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that their children behaved well whilst at school; they are certainly right and can be proud of them in this respect. Pupils' personal development is very good. Attendance levels remain very high with minimal unauthorised absence recorded. Pupils are punctual and keen to get on with their lessons. No pupils were excluded last year.
- 10 Excellent attitudes and behaviour are established at the very beginning in Reception. These children work calmly and quietly, and move around their classroom sensibly and with growing confidence. They listen and concentrate well when required. During a music lesson, they responded with obvious enjoyment and remained on task throughout the lesson. Reception children enjoy joining everyone in the main playground at breaktimes and are quickly learning all about school routines, such as standing still when the whistle is blown. Children's personal development is very good. They continue to work purposefully even when not directly supervised, and organise themselves with the correct coloured band when they want to undertake activities in the related coloured area.
- 11 Attitudes to learning and the interest that pupils show in their work right across the school from Year 1 to Year 6 are excellent. Pupils enjoy coming to school and participate with obvious pleasure in a wide range of activities, for example performing in the orchestra, playing football, practising with the choir or joining in art club activities. Pupils concentrate for sustained periods and work at a good rate. They listen well to one another, as well as to their teachers and classroom assistants. Excellent attitudes are directly linked to high quality teaching. In a Year 5 history lesson, the well planned and paced activities, supported by interesting and relevant resources, captured and maintained pupils' attention throughout the session. The teacher's enthusiasm was infectious, resulting in pupils who were keen to discuss and make their contribution. Every pupil was included in the challenging activities that were well matched to their level of attainment. Special educational needs pupils are supported well in lessons with work well matched to the level at which they are working. As a result, they develop the same very good attitudes to their work as other pupils and very nearly all behave at least well. On the very few occasions when teaching is less than good or when lessons are overlong, some become restless and lose concentration.

- 12 Pupils are very well motivated and work hard to complete the tasks set for them by teachers, especially if they are given very specific time limits. Pupils want to answer teachers' questions and contribute their ideas. Many hands shoot up when a question is posed. Teachers skilfully include as many as possible during discussions and pupils know their contribution, even if incorrect, will be received with respect and valued. This excellent role modelling results in pupils adopting similar attitudes when talking and discussing idea with their peers.
- 13 Pupils behave very well at all times, responding to the high expectations set by all adults who teach and support them. Behaviour in assemblies held in the hall is exemplary. Pupils play happily in the playground with older pupils often looking after and caring for their younger friends. Pupils line up and enter the hall to eat their sandwiches sensibly. They sit and wait quietly until everyone is ready to say grace and to begin eating. Lunchtimes conducted in this manner are valuable sociable occasions when pupils can talk with their friends.
- 14 Relationships are excellent. Pupils work well with one another, care for each other and respect one another's points of views and feelings. It was lovely to observe the spontaneous applause of appreciation following the performance of the orchestra in the assembly. Pupils work well in pairs and small groups. In a Year 4 physical education lesson, pairs of pupils worked happily and constructively to produce good quality dance sequences. A physically disabled pupil was included naturally by his friends in the activities. They gave thought to how he could be part of their routine, given his range of movements; he participated fully. Pupils negotiated and agreed their sequence and were keen to produce high quality work, which they then proudly performed to the rest of the class. Pupils sensibly evaluated each other's work. They were always positive and made helpful constructive comments for improvement.
- 15 Pupils take on increasing responsibility as they move through the year groups. Year 6 pupils organise the hall for assemblies and those in Year 5 help keep the library in good order. Year 4 is responsible for looking after the gerbil. Across the school pupils help themselves to equipment and resources they need and tidy away after themselves. They are quick and willing to help visitors and are extremely polite and friendly. The new School Council is quickly becoming part of school life and pupils feel they have a voice in decisions that affect them. They are very excited about putting their ideas forward. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they show sensitivity and thoughtfulness in their writing. A pupil wrote very honestly about how he felt when a close friend was ill, another wrote about being new to school having just arrived from another country. Pupils' personal development is very good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 16 Pupils are well taught in the school, this is helping to ensure good achievement and interest in learning. All teaching observed was at least satisfactory, over four fifths was good or better, and over a half very good or excellent. In all classes teaching was at least good, and in Reception, Years 2, 5 and 6 it was often very good or excellent. The quality of teaching is better than that described in the last inspection report, this is partly due staff changes, more detailed planning and better use of marking and assessment information.
- 17 The teaching for Reception children is very good. Its quality is helped by the high adult child ratio. The teachers provide an interesting classroom with a wide range of activities that stimulate interest and independence. All areas of learning are planned carefully, and the children are well prepared for entering Year 1. Although planning is closely based on the national 'Foundation Stage' guidance, it also links with the programmes children will follow in Year 1. Personal, social and emotional development is carefully planned and, as a result, children share resources and co-operate well. The high number of adults ensures that children are given the necessary

support, but not at the expense of opportunities for independent activities. A good range of activities, which effectively promotes learning in language and mathematical development, is provided. As children's communication skills are relatively weaker when they start school, this area is given a high priority. Assessment of the progress of individual children is very good. The ability for small groups to be supported, coupled with the teachers good knowledge of young children, and how they learn, help to ensure a good pace to activities. The limited access to the outside area currently possible slows progress in some aspects of physical development.

- 18 The quality of teaching in the remainder of the school is good overall, and none observed was less than satisfactory. Teaching of English is very good, and that for mathematics good throughout the school. In other subjects, teaching is never less than satisfactory, and usually good. The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is helped by the effective use of individual teachers' skills. The strengths of teaching are similar throughout the school; there are few weaknesses. Owing to the good teaching, pupils' learning in the lessons observed was generally good or better. A consistent feature was the way teachers encouraged pupils to reflect on their own learning. Careful attention is given to ensuring that all pupils, especially those with special educational needs, are helped to achieve their best. Teachers' subject knowledge is usually good, and teaching in the school benefits from the high level of subject expertise amongst the staff. Pupils are usually challenged effectively in their work, both in relation to the level of work expected and the amount to be completed. Occasionally, more able pupils, particularly in mathematics, could be challenged more in Years 3 to 5. Teachers' expectations about presentation are generally high, and this results in much well presented work. This is not always the case in the work of pupils in Years 3 and 4. Literacy is usually very well taught, although learning tends to slow where the time exceeds the recommended time. Literacy is mostly used well in other subjects, although shortage of time sometimes results in limited recorded work in subjects such as history and geography. The teaching of mathematics is good, although again learning can slow where the length of the lesson exceeds the recommended time. Mathematical skills are used well in science, and in parts of geography, such as map work.
- 19 Significant strengths in virtually all lessons are the quality of pupil management and the relationships between teachers and their pupils. Teachers make learning fun. Planning is detailed and helpful. A wide range of methods is used well, and teachers are very effective at making links between subjects. This helps learning by making the topics relevant to the pupils. The pace of lessons is usually good, except where individual lesson times are excessive. Resources, including ICT, are used effectively to support learning. Teachers know their pupils very well and assessment during lessons is very effective. The quality of marking is mostly good and often provides pupils with good guidance of how they can improve. It is not always used sufficiently to raise expectations about presentation of work. Homework is not sufficiently systematic. In some classes it is set regularly and covers relevant topics. In other classes, it is much more spasmodic. Targets are set which inform specific homework tasks, such as learning specific multiplication tables, but parents do not appear to appreciate that this has been done.
- 20 Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are at least good and often very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge of these pupils and plan good activities well matched to their needs identified in the individual education plans. Learning support assistants give very good support in many lessons and also when working with small groups, for example on Early Literacy Support. In the small group or individual activities taught by the special educational needs teacher and the teacher from the literacy and numeracy support service, teaching and learning are very good. On a very small number of occasions, when learning is less interesting or when lessons are over-long, some pupils with special educational needs lose concentration. In some physical activities, such as art and design, music and physical

education there is little extra support given to pupils by learning support staff. While pupils with special educational needs still make at least satisfactory progress in these lessons it is not as good as when they work more closely with an adult. Learning support assistants are used very effectively to support individuals or groups of pupils. This helps to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs or a disability, are fully involved in all the school has to offer. During group sessions, classroom assistants give particularly good support to groups pupils, but this is not always the lower attaining group. As a result, all pupils are learning the importance of being able to study independently.

- 21 The good teaching in the school is helping to promote good learning in each class. As a result, most pupils make good progress by the time they reach Year 6 and standards are usually above average. Pupils concentrate very well and work hard. They settle quickly to their tasks and learning is therefore enhanced. They persevere with tasks, even when they are experiencing difficulties, often discussing sensibly with their fellow pupils about what to do. As pupils move through the school, they develop a good understanding of what they have learnt. All pupils are included in the wide range of activities offered, they learn well and make good progress.

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

- 22 The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. There has been an emphasis over the past few years on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies that has limited developments in some other subjects. The time allocation for some subjects inhibits the depth of study, whereas that allocated to English and mathematics is longer than is normally expected and sometimes results in falling concentration. The length of the teaching day is below the recommended minimum. However, this has been acknowledged by the school and is to be dealt with. For children in Reception, the school provides a very good curriculum. It is securely based on recent national guidance for this group of children, cover all areas of learning well and links closely with the curriculum in Year 1.
- 23 There have been a number of good improvements since the last inspection. Planning is more detailed, assessment systems have been developed, ICT has been significantly improved through the provision of new computers which are networked, schemes of work have been updated in line with 'Curriculum 2000' and new accommodation has enabled the curriculum to be delivered more effectively.
- 24 The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has resulted in effective approaches for teaching literacy and numeracy. All subjects emphasise vocabulary development and use literacy strategies in the teaching, for example letter writing in Year 3 history and advertising and poster writing in Year 5 science. In Years 1 and 2 giving instructions is incorporated in locating features on maps.
- 25 Pupils with special educational needs are included very well in all that the school has to offer. Pupils' individual education plans are very good. They meet the needs of pupils very well and are effectively used to help teachers in lesson planning. The school has bought in the services of a teacher from the local education authority literacy and numeracy support service. This provision is of a very good quality and providing very well for those pupils who receive the support. The school uses different strategies to cater for the needs of pupils. Support within lessons, as well as in small group or individual withdrawal, is good. In most cases pupils do work in class appropriate to their level of attainment. Specialist help is sometimes arranged through outside agencies.

- 26 The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities that enhance the curriculum. These include sporting clubs, such as netball, football and basketball, book club, environmental issues and musical instrument lessons. In addition, outside agencies provide opportunity for ballet dancing. Visits, for example to museums and to other places of historical and geographical interest, broaden the pupils' learning opportunities.
- 27 There is a strong and effective policy for promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs as well as for pupils with specific physical needs. The school's statement on equal opportunities declares a commitment to the fundamental principle of equality of access and opportunity, unbiased treatment and equal value of all individuals. This is reflected in the admission arrangements and policy documents. Boys and girls are given the same opportunities. A football club for girls was set up in the lunchtime as the session for boys coincided with the netball club. The choice of the text 'Bill's New Frock' was made specifically to address the issue of gender stereotypes. The school's policy on residential educational trips is that no pupil is excluded on grounds of ability to pay and parents are made aware of this.
- 28 The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. There are timetabled sessions for personal, social and health education up to Year 3. A new citizenship policy and programme of work is being introduced. This programme encompasses many elements of personal, social and health education, teaching pupils how to look after themselves, make sense of the world around them and to identify how they, as members of various groups within the wider community, can make their contribution. Many aspects of this programme are already taught through a variety of subjects but an increased emphasis on some aspects of citizenship is planned. There is an effective health education policy for the whole school. Pupils are made aware of issues relating to use of medicines and drugs. This is enhanced by the work of the Dorset County Life Education van that visits every year. The school nurse assists with issues relating to sex education for the older pupils. Parents are kept fully informed by the governors about these areas.
- 29 Community links are very good. The hall is well used by local groups such as the History Society and Wessex Pipers. Outside agencies run a photographic club, ballet and gymnastics classes. A local press prints the school prospectus free of charge. The Women's Institute helped to produce story sacks for Years 1 and 2, and the school has been involved in a host of other activities involving the local supermarket, the museum and the Wessex Water Authority among others. These make a strong contribution to the pupils' curriculum.
- 30 Very good partnerships exist with associated institutions. Students from the University of Exeter School of Education do some of their teaching practice here. Indeed a member of the teaching staff recently did part of her training in the school. There are regular meetings with primary and secondary headteachers, and the head of Lower School from the local secondary school visits the school to meet the teacher and pupils of Year 6 before they transfer. Secondary school pupils come to Wyke School each year on work experience.
- 31 The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Through sensitive awareness and support, pupils with special educational needs are developing confidence and self-esteem. The provision for spiritual development is very good. Spirituality is well promoted through assemblies and acts of collective worship. The themes for assemblies provide opportunities to think about the purpose of life and the possibilities of a superior being. They consider how individuals feel about themselves and provide insights into values and beliefs of others. During acts of collective worship pupils are always given time for reflection on the themes for the

day. They end their assembly with a prayer, said in an atmosphere of serenity and respect. The school has an egg incubator looked after by Year 6. Pupils are to experience the wonder of life when they see chicks peck their way out of the shell when the eggs complete the period of incubation. They also share in the joy of life when parents bring their newborn babies to school. Religious education lessons contribute well to the spiritual development of the pupils. Year 6 pupils were encouraged to reflect on the force of gravity and the contribution of Sir Isaac Newton to our understanding of it. The excellent ethos of the school and the relationship between adults and pupils contribute much to the feeling of self worth that pervades the school.

- 32 Excellent provision for moral development is provided. The pupils have a very strong sense of right and wrong. During the inspection, one assembly focused on the need to follow rules. The pupils were captivated at the demonstration of the consequences that result from not following rules. On this occasion, it was the need to follow closely the instructions for making a jelly. They were firm and clear in their response to challenges. During lessons, even the youngest pupils discuss right and wrong, as for example in their literacy lesson on the Three Billy Goats Gruff. The school has an established code of conduct that is respected by all. They know what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The exceptionally high standard of behaviour of pupils both in and out of lessons is testimony to the air of morality that exists in the school. On a wet play day during the inspection, the pupils were observed to show respect for others and for property with noise levels at a minimum. They discuss world issues, such as poverty, and take the initiative to raise funds for charity. In February, two Year 6 pupils wrote to the headteacher asking permission to use the hall for fundraising activities for children in need and cancer research. In considering care for the environment the Heron Clubs plan ways of improving the school environment and discuss the problems of endangered species.
- 33 Pupils are given very good opportunities for social development. There is a whole school ethos of caring for one another. Pupils work together amicably, sharing and helping one another in lessons and outside. Year 6 pupils look after the younger pupils, taking care of Reception children after break. All pupils are encouraged to take part in after-school clubs. As a result, there is a relatively high take up rate. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to take part in out-of-school activities through residential visits, day trips and social events arranged through the school year. In the School Council pupils learn about social responsibilities and the need to consider many points of views. The wide range of sporting events gives opportunities to work as members of a team and pupils feel very much a part of the whole-school community. They show pride in their school.
- 34 The provision for cultural development is very good. All subjects make pupils aware of their own cultural heritage and that of others. The study of art and design extends beyond Europe to encompass art linked with Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. African music, as experienced during assembly, provides contemplative moments of insights into other cultures. The study of the geography of Kenya provides knowledge and understanding of African culture and the study of Victorian England enabled pupils to relate aspects of the past, such as inventions, which have helped to shape our present culture. In science, pupils considered the work of Sir Isaac Newton and were encouraged to become aware of the scientific culture of the day. Year 6 pupils perform one of the plays of Shakespeare each year in the summer term. Many stories used in assembly reflect aspects of a wide range of cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 35 Pupils receive very good support and guidance from all adults who look after and teach them during the school day. Their care and welfare are of the utmost

importance to all adults and are considered in relation to all daily routines and school activities. This strength of the school has been built upon since the time of the last inspection. Children in Reception are cared for very well. Good procedures help to ensure that their move in to school is easy and enjoyable, and this is successful, as was evident in the children who have just started full-time.

- 36 Good attention is paid to matters of health and safety. Regular checks are made of the premises and concerns dealt with promptly. Risk assessments are carried out for residential visits, and for science and design and technology activities. Care has been taken to ensure that the wall close to Reception outdoor area, which is unstable, is not a hazard to the children. First aid arrangements are very well organised and a good number of staff hold first aid qualifications. Records are kept of all first aid treatment and pupils with specific medical needs, such as a severe allergic reaction, are well known by all staff, including lunchtime supervisors. Supervision at play and lunchtimes is good. Procedures for child protection are secure, the designated teacher is well qualified to carry out her role and all staff are updated regularly to ensure everyone is clear about their responsibilities in this respect. All requirements are met. The staff handbook provides all staff with good guidance on general care and welfare issues to help ensure consistency of approach.
- 37 The school is conscientious in recording attendance accurately and unexplained absences are followed up promptly. Parents report that the school contacts them if they have forgotten to telephone or send a note. The school has regular contact with the educational welfare officer and good use is made of the computerised attendance records to analyse patterns of absence, which might raise a concern. Good promotion of the importance of regular attendance results in levels of attendance well above the national average.
- 38 High expectations of the teachers for behaviour and self-discipline and the strong supportive ethos, which permeates the whole school, are the main influences in achieving excellent behaviour throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged by individual reward systems within classes matched to their needs and maturity, for instance, stickers for younger pupils and effort points for the oldest. There are sanctions, such as being sent to the headteacher, but usually an appropriate word from teachers stems any deterioration in behaviour. If pupils have specific behaviour difficulties, individual strategies such as home/school behaviour log books, or star charts, are devised to motivate the pupil and support them as they improve. Bullying or aggressive behaviour are not tolerated and dealt with promptly and effectively on the rare occasion they do occur.
- 39 Pupils who have special educational needs are identified early and effective use is made of data to set targets. The monitoring of their progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans is very good. Class teachers, learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator undertake this task very competently. The monitoring of pupils' progress is also supported particularly well by the very good procedures throughout the school for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress. The school aims to meet the individual needs of all its pupils and to include them fully in all its activities. It does this very well, and this means that the care given to pupils with a specific statement of need is very good. There is good liaison with outside agencies, in particular the local authority special educational needs support service, which is very effective in helping pupils' progress.
- 40 Reports sent to parents are collated together in profiles of each pupil and form a year on year record of personal, as well as academic, achievement. They are detailed and helpful. Teachers know their pupils well and offer each individual a high level of support and guidance during each day at school.

- 41 The school took the findings about weaknesses in assessment from the last report very seriously. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainments and progress have improved and are now very good and effective. The staff use the assessment information to guide their lesson planning and this has proved particularly helpful in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In the other subjects, assessment is mostly good and manageable with teachers keeping clear records of work covered and of progress made by individual pupils.
- 42 Targets are now helpfully set for each pupil, which take account of the baseline assessment made in Reception. The results of National Curriculum tests in Years 2 and 6 are critically analysed and, amongst other information, the performance of boys and girls is looked at closely. As an outcome, the pupils now achieve equally.
- 43 In order to check on the outcomes from National Curriculum tests, the school gives Cognitive Ability Tests that are taken in Years 4 and 5. These tests are marked externally. As a result of testing, the school has produced a booklet entitled 'Critical Pathways' which shows expected progress for the above average, average and below average pupils as they move through the school. Individual targets are then collated in order to set targets for each year group. Pupils are also set personal targets, which are discussed with both parents and pupils at the parent consultations. All of these above initiatives are very effective.
- 44 This is an effective school and all teaching and non-teaching staff know in detail about the different needs of pupils. They keep precise information about what pupils do well or where they need help. Pupils receive very good academic care and provision.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 45 The analysis of the pre-inspection questionnaire and the comments at the parents' meeting before the inspection demonstrate clearly how positive parents feel about the school. Parents conclude that their children enjoy coming to school, behave well, are taught well and consequently made good progress as they are helped to mature. All recognise how well the school is led and managed and appreciate the number of opportunities offered to their children out of lessons. Although good at the time of the last inspection, the partnership with parents has improved further and is now very good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Very good links are established with home before children start in Reception, and these strong links are maintained during children's first year in school.
- 46 However, a number of parents have concerns about arrangements for homework and inspectors agree with them. Parents of Reception children receive good guidance on how best to help them as they begin to learn to read. Their subsequent support helps the children make good progress. Homework is well organised in Reception, Years 1 and 2 and for pupils in Year 6, but there is a lack of consistency in Years 3, 4 and 5. Pupils, as well as parents, are unsure about what is expected. It is some time since the school communicated with parents about homework. It is acknowledged that improvements both in consistency of setting homework and letting parents know exactly what is expected, are now needed. Parents' support of their children's learning at home is good but could be improved further. Curricular information is posted on class windows or notice boards, but might not be seen by parents who are not regularly dropping off or picking up their children from school. Without this information parents are not given the best opportunity to support their child's learning at home.
- 47 Parents feel well informed and are comfortable about approaching the school. Written information provided is of a high quality and teachers make themselves available to talk with parents. Newsletters are sent home and are numbered so parents can quickly identify if they have missed one. These are frequent, informative and written in

a clear, friendly manner. The prospectus and governors' annual report are very well presented and include all that is statutorily required. The prospectus provides new parents with a good overview of life at Wyke Primary.

- 48 Parents are invited to formal consultation meetings each term, although these are offered on several days each term, the timing of them is inconvenient for working parents. Reports meet requirements and give a good account of pupils' achievements and progress in each subject, as well as targets to achieve further improvements. Useful additional information is now sent to parents, which specifically indicates pupils' level of achievement in English, mathematics and science.
- 49 The school encourages parents whose children have special educational needs to become fully involved in their support. When parents are able they help with homework specifically designed to help their children make progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. There is good liaison at all time between the school and parents, much of this takes place through the class teachers but the special educational needs co-ordinator is also readily available. Exceptionally good arrangements have been put in place for parents to receive help and support via the special needs teacher from the local education authority support service. Parents receive very good information on the school's provision for special educational needs in the governors' annual report to parents.
- 50 Parents are invited into school regularly for assemblies, open days and curricular workshops, giving them opportunities to find out more about the life of the school. Many parents help in classes regularly and others help with swimming, out of school visits and extra-curricular activities. The Parents' Association currently has a very large committee. Events organised are supported well by other parents and funds raised have been used effectively to enhance facilities for pupils. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is very good and the staff appreciate their active support.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 51 The school has improved on the strengths in this aspect of its work since the last inspection. Parents are fully aware of the strengths in the leadership and management and all who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the pre-inspection meeting fully agreed that the school is well led and managed.
- 52 The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding and, as a result, the school's aims and values are exceptionally well reflected in all its work. The headteacher has an excellent understanding of the needs of the school and a very effective vision for its future. He is particularly well skilled in steering its work to achieve this. The hardworking deputy headteacher and senior staff support him very effectively. The vision and commitment are shared throughout the school by an effective and committed staff team that works towards a common goal. As a result, the curriculum is rich, interesting and stimulating and there are high levels of very good teaching. Consequently, pupils make good progress and achieve above average standards. The few weaknesses identified in the previous report have been dealt with and the school's strengths have been maintained and, in many instances, improved further.
- 53 Teachers who have responsibility for the leadership and management of a subject are fulfilling their roles well, particularly where they have led this area for a length of time. Some have just taken over the role or are relatively new to teaching, but all have a clear idea of how to monitor their subject and develop it further. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good. The Reception class is managed effectively and all adults are used to very good effect. The school is firmly committed to equality of opportunity for all its pupils and works very hard to ensure that all receive the best education possible. The procedures for the management of special educational

needs are very good and allow for the early identification of pupils who may need special support. The school is already well on the way to implementing fully all the requirements of the new Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. The provision is very well managed by the part time co-ordinator, and class teachers receive good support. Learning support assistants are effectively managed, at present through very good liaison with the classroom teachers. The co-ordinator now plans to become more closely involved in their management, deployment and training.

- 54 The school aims to provide high quality teaching and learning for all its pupils. This is undertaken well in all subjects, and especially well in Reception and in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There are plans to increase classroom observations in mathematics now a new subject co-ordinator is in place. The monitoring of teaching is significantly supported by the work undertaken by the headteacher, both formally and informally. The very good knowledge obtained of what is happening in the school is used particularly well to help bring about improvements.
- 55 The support given to the induction of new members of staff and to their professional development is good. The headteacher has outstanding skills in analysing how improvements in teaching and learning can help to improve standards further. As a result, he has made exceptionally good arrangements to link teachers' performance management targets to raising standards.
- 56 The school has a good development plan that is detailed, clear, focused and relevant, and it provides good support for further improvement. The plan includes a very effective rolling programme for the review of all its work and also a good calendar to support target setting and monitoring. The expected impact that strategies will have on improvements in both the provision and standards are clearly identified and easy to evaluate. Current priorities indicate a particularly good awareness of the school's needs and also a very good awareness of the need to support individual members of staff in specific areas. The governing body is also fully involved in the developmental and monitoring processes.
- 57 The school's financial planning is very good and funds, including grants for specific purposes, are allocated very effectively to support current priorities. In some areas, for example special educational needs, the school augments the funds it receives specifically for them. In all cases, its spending is having a very positive impact on the education of all its pupils. In the last two years, there has been a fairly large underspend in the budget. The school has made very good plans for the use of this, mainly to improve the fabric of the building, the learning environment and learning resources. Where this money has already been spent the benefits to pupils are obvious. The headteacher and governors are provided with regular and accurate financial information, which helps them to monitor the effectiveness of the school's spending. The school applies the principles of best value particularly well. This is not only through ensuring that the money they spend is of the best value, but also that it will have the best impact on provision and standards. In addition, very good decisions are made when selecting staff to ensure that they will provide the best teaching possible. Both the school's administrative and financial support staff are effectively ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The school uses new technology particularly well, with most systems and records being computerised. This is very effective in helping the school's work.
- 58 The support of the effective governing body continues to be a strength of the school and it carries out its role particularly well. Governors are very supportive of the school and their work is efficiently organised through committees, reporting to the full governing body. This allows them to fulfil their statutory duties very effectively. Many governors visit the school regularly, often to help in its work, and this, together with the high quality information they receive from the headteacher, ensures that they have a

very good knowledge of all the school's work. There is an effective programme for governors to review policies regularly and new curricular plans, as well as to help the school in planning and monitoring its developments. The detailed analyses of the impact of the school's provision on pupils' standards, which the headteacher presents to the governing body, allow governors to make good decisions on the allocation of resources. It also ensures that they make clear judgements about the effectiveness of their targeted spending. The governing body is giving good support to the headteacher and senior management team in directing the future work of the school.

- 59 The school is well staffed with committed and well-qualified teachers who are supported extremely well by dedicated learning support assistants. Across the teaching staff there is a good range of subject expertise and subject responsibilities are carefully matched to teachers' expertise and interest, making the best use of their talents. Two teachers are currently working in Reception, where the number of children is large. To ensure high quality support and attention for them. The part-time special educational needs co-ordinator does not have a class responsibility so can, quite rightly, devote her time and expertise to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties, as well as to supporting and advising teachers and classroom assistants in their work with these pupils.
- 60 Induction procedures are well organised. New teachers to the school receive good support and advice to help them become part of the strong teaching team which is committed to developing and improving teaching and learning continually for the benefit of pupils. Trainee teachers would benefit greatly from any training experience at this school.
- 61 Accommodation is satisfactory overall for the current number of pupils on roll. It has many good features but also restrictions. The hall is adequate but can only just accommodate the whole school for assemblies. The building of the new cloakroom area adjoining the Reception class means the youngest children can now enjoy a classroom free from the clutter of coats and bags. Currently their outside play area cannot be used owing to an unsafe wall and this is restricting some opportunities for play outside and their physical development. This needs to be resolved as quickly as possible. Classrooms for Year 1 through to Year 4 are of adequate size now that many resources and computers have been moved to the newly created covered resource area. Although this improvement has created more space for a well-organised and comfortable library, classrooms for the oldest pupils are still far too small. Teachers have to work harder than they should to ensure all subjects can be taught effectively. They are determined lack of space will not restrict pupils' opportunities.
- 62 Outside facilities are good. The large level playground has some interesting markings, and covered areas with picnic benches provide pleasant shaded areas in the summer, when the playing field can also be used both for physical education and play. The environmental area is now mature and is suitably fenced.
- 63 Displays around the whole school are excellent. The vibrant, interesting displays that celebrate pupils' work provide stimulating information to enhance and support learning. The premises are well maintained and cleaned to a high standard.
- 64 Resources for learning are satisfactory overall. Deficiencies reported at the time of the last inspection have been resolved. Book stock is now good and organised well in the new library and outside play equipment has been purchased, although this cannot be used at the moment because of the unsafe wall in the outdoor area adjacent to the Reception classroom. Resources are well organised, stored appropriately and accessible. Good use is made of the County Library Service for topic boxes and additional fiction books.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?

- 65 The school has no major weaknesses. The time allocated to the curriculum is below the recommended minimum and some literacy and numeracy sessions extend beyond the time advised. Parents who are working, and who find it difficult to get in to school during the day, do not get enough information about what is to be taught or their children's progress. Homework is not consistent from one class to the next.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 66 There are no key issues for the school to address; but in the context of the school's many strengths the following areas should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan.
- (1) Reviewing of the time allocated to the curriculum and the use of time during the teaching day.
(Paragraphs 8, 11, 18, 20, 22, 83, 84, 92, 100, 117, 122, 128)
 - (2) Improving the access to information for parents, especially those who find it difficult to get into school, about pupils' progress and about what is to be taught.
(Paragraphs 46, 48)
 - (3) Ensuring more consistency in the provision of homework and providing greater information to parents about homework.
(Paragraphs 19, 46, 84, 93)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	23	17	7	0	0	0
Percentage	11.3	43.4	32.1	13.2	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	47

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
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 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	18 (19)	15 (13)	33 (32)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17 (17)	17 (19)	18 (19)
	Girls	15 (12)	15 (12)	15 (13)
	Total	32 (29)	32 (31)	33 (32)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (91)	97 (97)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17 (19)	18 (19)	18 (19)
	Girls	15 (12)	15 (13)	15 (13)
	Total	32 (31)	33 (32)	33 (32)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (97)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15 (16)	18 (13)	33 (29)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12 (13)	12 (12)	15 (16)
	Girls	16 (12)	13 (13)	17 (13)
	Total	28 (25)	25 (25)	32 (29)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (86)	76 (86)	97 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11 (12)	14 (12)	15 (15)
	Girls	16 (12)	13 (12)	18 (13)
	Total	27 (24)	27 (24)	33 (28)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (83)	82 (83)	100 (97)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	198
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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-Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	31.3

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	415564
Total expenditure	377596
Expenditure per pupil	1694
Balance brought forward from previous year	18000
Balance carried forward to next year	55968

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	219
Number of questionnaires returned	104

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	26	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	34	2	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	43	5	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	45	22	3	5
The teaching is good.	67	31	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	47	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	23	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	34	3	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	46	40	12	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	41	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	46	4	0	1

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

67 Children entering Reception at Wyke School are fortunate. The Foundation Stage at this school is a strength. The quality of teaching is very good. Lessons are well planned, well resourced and all staff are very aware of the needs of young children and of the importance of making the start to school successful. Children come happily to school. Children normally enter Reception part-time in September and all are full-time by the following February. At the time of the inspection, some children had only become full-time that day and yet all were settled and confident enough to ask questions and to make comments. The good quality teaching has a direct impact on the quality of learning. Children trust their teachers, enjoy the tasks set for them and readily make friends. They are quick to learn school routines and are confident about going into the playground as well as going into assembly or in to lunch. The children's natural curiosity is given free rein and they are provided with a range of interesting and challenging activities so that they can give of their best. Children's attainment on entry is close to the average. Language development and communication skills are the weakest areas.

Communication, language and literacy

68 Children come to school with about average, or above, linguistic ability, although there are some weaknesses in language and communication skills. They enjoy all the language activities that the staff offer. Pupils make good progress and are well prepared for their start into mainstream school the following September. It is a large class, and the two teachers and their assistants work very well together to give all children the best opportunity possible to extend their speech and language while in Reception. As a result, children are attaining beyond the expectations for their age. They are making good connections between sounds, letters and the printed word; they listen well and are eager to follow stories and to suggest an ending. Children are beginning to write. Most can write their names and can make an attempt about writing captions to their pictures. They take a pride in their work and are pleased to talk about what they have done. Teaching and learning in this area are very good.

Mathematics

69 Children make good progress in mathematics as soon as they enter school. They count everyday objects reliably up to ten and recognise numerals 1 to 9. Children are reaching standards above those that might be expected nationally. They are well prepared for the beginning of Year 1.

70 The children in Reception talk about more, less, heavier and lighter in the right context. They can name shapes such as circle, square and triangle. Children recognise and reproduce simple patterns and talk about time, such as morning, afternoon, evening, night and bedtime. They know and can name the days of the week and they keep regular day and weather calendars. Children are interested in numbers and often use numerals in their hospital or sand and water play. The quality of learning and teaching is good. Teachers are always well prepared and use time and resources to the full. Children enjoy mathematics and are eager to explore and to investigate all the opportunities offered. They behave well and co-operate willingly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 71 As a result of very good teaching, the children attain well in this area of learning and make very good progress. They are confident about investigating, and use their curiosity well to find out about living things, as well as about their immediate environment. They are competent at describing their homes, streets and town and the places they visit. The class teachers provide them with floor maps and small world toys, and give them time to discuss why things happen, such as a car crash, and how vehicles work. They are well taught to develop their designing and making skills. Children can draw their own locality. They make models of vehicles using axles and wheels, and can explain how they work. Children use technology well as they work. A very good lesson was observed where the programmable toy, known as the 'Roamer', was used by various groups to come to terms with direction, the limits imposed by available space and how to predict a result. The computers are also well used to support the learning and the finding out about their uses in everyday life.
- 72 As well as the early stages of geography, history also has its place in the Foundation Stage. The children bring in stories about their grandparents when they were young. They know about old and new toys, and about old and new methods of transport. They talk about what they remember from their own early lives and how this memory has focused their confidence in thinking about the past, present and future. Teaching and learning in this area are very good.

Physical development

- 73 In Reception, children move imaginatively in their physical education lessons in the hall and are gaining in confidence as they respond to the teachers' directions. They use pencils, crayons and construction toys skilfully in class so that their control skills develop effectively. Overall, children are gaining in sound bodily awareness and co-ordination. Unfortunately, children in Reception are unable to use their own outdoor area as the school waits for the playground wall to be repaired. This puts considerable restrictions on the opportunities offered for physical development. Children join with the whole school at break times but are prevented from enjoying the free and important outdoor experiences as a normal part of the Reception year that should be a daily part of the programme for the Foundation Stage. Despite this, progress is satisfactory overall. In other areas of physical development, teaching and learning are good.

Creative development

- 74 While in the Reception class, children work hard in this area of the curriculum. Owing to good teaching, they attain well for their age and make good progress. They are well prepared for the beginning of mainstream school. Children experiment with a variety of media and materials, and know about colour, texture, shape and space in two- and three-dimensions. They are imaginative, as was shown in a music lesson when asked to describe their feelings after listening to a lively piece of music. They draw and paint to good effect as they illustrate their story ideas and impressions of family and home life. Children are exceeding the expectations of the early learning goals and are helped by the enthusiasm of the adults around them. This was very apparent in the hospital role-play when children dealt with a patient's hole in the head and severe stomach pain. Resources for each area of development at the Foundation Stage are good. Teaching and learning are good.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 75 This is possibly the strongest area of provision for these young children. All staff have a care and concern for the all-round development of each child and children attain beyond the expectations for their age and make particularly good progress. Those children with special educational needs are given very good support and they grow in confidence and self esteem and reach their potential. The very good learning is due to well-organised teaching, and the particularly effective contribution of all adults.
- 76 There is a regular group time, known as 'circle time', when children can take a turn in expressing a particular excitement, fear or pleasure to the whole class. During the rest of the day, the adults are constantly looking for ways of encouraging the children's confidence and well-being. Some children have behavioural difficulties, but each and every one receives kind, firm and consistent handling from staff. All children benefit from the care and informed knowledge of their teachers. They make good relationships with adults and other children, behave well and become increasingly independent and responsible. The Reception class is a happy, cheerful and exciting place for children who are starting school.

ENGLISH

- 77 The school has improved upon the good standards seen at the last inspection. The above average standards seen at that time have been maintained and, in addition, standards in reading in Year 2 are now also above average. In both Years 2 and 6, current pupils reach above average standards in all aspects of the subject. The above average standards are the result of the good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the very good teaching seen and the school's commitment to maintain and improve pupils' achievement.
- 78 Over the past few years, in the National Curriculum tests, standards have risen for pupils in Year 2, particularly in writing, where the school's performance is now above that of most schools, and well above in reading. For pupils in Year 6, the school's performance in English is above most schools and also schools in a similar context. This is because the school addresses the needs of all its pupils particularly well, and all make good progress to achieve well. There are fewer pupils on the below average levels than is seen in the majority of schools and this is because of the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. In addition, a higher proportion of pupils reach the above average levels than is seen in most schools. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests show that boys consistently achieve at least as highly as girls, which is not the national picture. The school is particularly good at ensuring that individual pupils' needs are met well. Therefore any differences in attainment are due to prior ability.
- 79 When they enter Year 1, the majority of children have language skills that are above the national expectation, although increasingly a number have speech and language problems when they enter Reception. The very good start children are given in Reception is built on well as pupils move through the school and, by the end of both Years 2 and 6, pupils reach standards which are above the national expectations in both speaking and listening. The school also makes very good provision for the teaching of drama, especially for pupils in Year 6, and this helps them to develop very good oral confidence. The fact that the teaching of English is very good means pupils develop very good attitudes to the subject and so they concentrate hard and listen well. The excellent relationships seen mean pupils always listen carefully to whoever is speaking. This results in very high quality discussions across a range of subjects. Pupils in Year 2 are confident speakers. They are becoming effective communicators, making their views clearly known and increasingly using an interesting range of vocabulary. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a very good knowledge of the oral language needed for a variety of situations. They easily respond to the main ideas and arguments put forward in a discussion, logically and effectively responding

to them. The excellent relationships seen mean that the views of all pupils, whatever their ability, are valued. This gives exceptionally good support to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs in this aspect of their learning and very nearly all reach standards that are in line with the national expectation. Higher attaining pupils speak very clearly and confidently.

- 80 Throughout the school, reading is very well taught. The foundations for learning to read begin well in Reception where children are taught to recognise the different sounds they will use to help build up words. This is built on well as pupils move in to Years 1 and 2 and helps to ensure that, by the time they leave Year 2, pupils have made good progress to achieve well, and most reach at least average standards in reading with a high proportion above this. This aspect of teaching is particularly helpful to pupils with special educational needs as they are gaining the skills to tackle unknown texts confidently. Through very good literacy lessons in both Years 1 and 2, pupils gain a good knowledge of the different features of texts and a range of cues to help them understand what they are reading. Pupils use both the pictures in the book, as well as the sounds in a word and the context of the story, to help them. Most pupils explain the difference between a storybook and a book about facts, and are developing good attitudes towards their reading. The good knowledge pupils have of the basic skills needed for reading are built on well as they move through Years 3 to 6 so that they continue to make good progress. This ensures that, by the time they leave the school, the vast majority of pupils reach at least average standards and around a third above this. All pupils accurately describe the setting and plot and make well judged assumptions about different characters, referring to clues in the text. Most pupils begin to predict what might happen, referring to the plot and characterisation. They are gaining a sound knowledge of the features of different genres and are beginning to develop preferences for different authors. Most pupils can easily locate a book in the library and extract the information they need to help their work. More able pupils are challenged well and attain above average standards in all aspects of their reading.
- 81 Standards in writing at the end of both Years 2 and 6 are also above average. The school's current focus on improving handwriting and spelling is having a positive impact on standards. Cursive handwriting is taught from an early age and, by the end of Year 2, pupils have made very good progress, with very nearly all of them reaching at least average standards in this aspect of writing and a high proportion exceeding them. Less attention is paid to continuing to build well on these skills in Years 3 and 4 and progress slows, before continuing well throughout Years 5 and 6. Most pupils reach at least average standards by the time they leave the school, although standards are not as good as might be expected in comparison with the achievement at the end of Year 2. This is largely due to the slower progress made in Years 3 and 4. A good strategy for teaching spelling, through learning programmes exceptionally well matched to individual pupils' needs, is having a very positive effect on the standards pupils achieve in this aspect. By Year 2, only a small number of pupils do not spell common words correctly and a good proportion of pupils accurately spell more complex words. By Year 6, most pupils spell accurately, although some marking omits to correct errors in the written work of younger pupils. Throughout the school, pupils are given many opportunities to write in a range of forms, including in other subjects where it is especially good in science and religious education. Good teaching of punctuation means that this aspect is also above average with the higher attaining pupils accurately using speech marks and more complex and subtle forms of punctuation, such as the use of dashes.
- 82 From Year 1, there is a good focus on writing for a range of purposes and in different forms. By Year 2, pupils can write a good description in a "Wanted" poster for "The Big Bad Wolf". They also retell the story from the wolf's point of view and write a wish list for Cinderella. In Years 1 and 2, teachers are especially good at making links between different subjects and pupils use their literacy skills well in many subjects, for example when Year 1 pupils wrote a "Fact Book" about chickens. This is not always

as good in Years 3 to 6, although some effective diary writing was seen as part of a history topic on The Tudors and in a "Weather Sayings Book" as part of a geography topic. However, in their English work, pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good gains in writing for a range of purposes and audiences, as was seen in the formal letter writing by Year 6 pupils. They also write poetry using an effective style and imagery, for example in school poetry in the style of Roger McGough in Year 4 and in the metaphoric poetry on "My Best Friend" in Year 5.

- 83 Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and behave well in lessons. This means that learning is always at least good and often very good, even when the lessons are rather long, particularly in Years 1 and 2. This is largely because of the very good quality teaching. In an excellent lesson, pupils asked to do a particular task, before the teacher had even reached it. Lessons give very good support to pupils' personal development because of the very good opportunities for paired and group work, and the particularly good quality discussion.
- 84 Teaching and learning are very good, especially for the youngest and the oldest pupils. Throughout the school, the basic literacy skills are particularly well taught. This allows teachers to explore the creative and organisational side of language in greater depth that helps pupils to write effectively and with a very good understanding of the audience. Lessons are very well planned from a thoughtful and effectively designed curriculum and activities are well matched to the needs of individual pupils. This is a significant factor in the very good provision made for pupils with special educational needs and the fact that they are included in all that the school has to offer. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, and the good attitudes pupils have to the subject ensure that they respond well, concentrating and working hard. As a result, they achieve well. In the very best lessons, teachers use excellent methods for helping pupils to learn. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher used both music and dance rhythms to help pupils understand the narrative oral tradition of the poem Hiawatha. The excellent relationships seen throughout the school mean that lessons are always well organised and managed, and that they are well paced. Teachers have a very good sense of the pace at which pupils are working and this helps to ensure that they organise the lessons well in Years 1 and 2, even though the sessions are rather long. Resources are often used exceptionally well, as in the choice of the examples to contrast formal and informal letter writing in an excellent Year 6 lesson. Teachers' marking and assessment are always at least good. In Years 1 and 2, the learning support assistants work very effectively in assessing pupils' achievements, especially for those with special educational needs. For the youngest and the oldest pupils marking is good. Perceptive comments are made about the strengths and weaknesses, with good advice given on how to improve. At its very best, the marking is a dialogue between the teacher and pupil. This is one of the reasons why pupils are developing a very good knowledge of what they are learning. Homework is given throughout the school, although this is not systematic. In particular, it is not designed to increase in type or length as pupils move through the school and this was a concern raised by a number of parents. It is at its best in Years 1 and 2 where parents are giving good support in reading and spelling. Good attention has been paid to adapting homework to the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs, especially for those who work with the teacher from the local authority support service.
- 85 The curriculum is good. It has been well planned around the National Literacy Strategy although good emphasis is also given to developing speaking and listening skills both in literacy lessons and in drama activities. It is also effectively cross-referenced to National Curriculum requirements. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and results in a high proportion of these pupils reaching average standards. Assessment procedures are very good. They are also used to help monitor pupils' progress and to set challenging targets for individual pupils. The

particularly good quality and use of assessment are helping the school in its drive to improve standards further.

- 86 The subject is effectively led by a hard working and very knowledgeable co-ordinator who is supported by the whole staff. This good teamwork and shared commitment to improvement are helping to move the school forward and achieve success. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's provision are very good and clearly identify where further improvement needs to be made. Learning support assistants provide good support. The accommodation, recently enhanced by the new library, is good overall. Some classrooms, particularly for the oldest pupils, are small, and it is due to the good organisational skills of staff that this does not have a negative impact on learning. Resources are good and are used effectively to help teaching and learning.

MATHEMATICS

- 87 From 1996 to 2000, at the end of Year 6, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests, apart from a dip in 1998, rose at a rate similar to the national improvement, and was above average. In 2001, results fell to about average, but this represented good progress from the results these pupils recorded at the end of Year 2. The school does as well as similar schools with relatively few pupils claiming free school meals. Over the period from 1996 to 2001, at the end of Year 2, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests has fluctuated considerably, ranging from below average to very high. The improvement has tended to be better than that seen nationally. In 2001, results at the end of Year 2 were well above average. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the performance of boys and girls has been similar.
- 88 The previous inspection found that attainment was average at the end of Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Inspection evidence confirms that standards are now better than this at the end of Year 2, and broadly similar, when compared with the national picture, by Year 6. Teaching continues to be good overall. Assessment has improved and is used very well to set targets.
- 89 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress because of effective teaching. These pupils are achieving very well. By the end of Year 2, all pupils are confident when adding numbers up to 99, and about a third of pupils beyond this. Their use of numbers and recognition of patterns of numbers are above average. Pupils know the names and properties of a range of two-dimensional shapes, including irregular examples. Higher attaining pupils sort numbers correctly according to their characteristics. Pupils apply their mathematical knowledge to real life activities, such as shopping and working out the change. In Year 1, over half the pupils count accurately to 30, or beyond, recording their work as number sentences. They know some basic two-dimensional shapes and complete repeating patterns based on colour and shape accurately. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well, with most likely to attain close to the expected standard.
- 90 Satisfactory to good teaching in the early years in the junior section builds securely on the strong base achieved by Year 2. Very good teaching for pupils in Year 6 helps to ensure pupils achieve well. Pupils are usually expected to complete a good volume of work, and this helps to ensure numeracy skills are well developed by Year 6. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in problem solving exercises. Pupils in Year 6 handle numbers confidently, multiplying or dividing large numbers correctly. However, lower attaining pupils, although completing most of their addition and subtraction work accurately, make some errors because they are not always quick and accurate with their mental recall of number facts. The school is aware of this and specific support by the headteacher is helping to overcome this

weakness. Most pupils work accurately with numbers to one or two decimal places and all pupils handle negative numbers accurately when describing temperature or using co-ordinates. They acquire a good understanding of fractions, and the link with percentages. Lower attaining pupils are not always confident when converting equivalent fractions. Throughout Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress overall, and it was at least satisfactory in each lesson seen. In Year 3, higher attaining pupils calculate simple fractions of numbers, lower attaining ones recognise some features of three-dimensional shapes, but make errors with addition beyond 100. In Year 4, pupils complete a good volume of work and understand how to calculate the area of a rectangle or square. They use thermometers accurately to measure temperature. By Year 5, pupils are mostly accurate in their use of the four rules of number when tackling written problems. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, measure lengths to millimetres accurately and know the names, and properties, of different triangles.

- 91 Throughout the school, pupils enjoy their mathematics, and their attitudes are very good. Older pupils complete a good volume of work and presentation is careful in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. Not all pupils in Years 3 and 4 take sufficient care in presenting their work, and this can affect accuracy. Pupils settle very quickly to group or individual tasks. On occasions, very effective use of questions, such as at the end of a session in Year 6, helps pupils reflect on what they have learnt. Pupils are attentive, and behaviour is very good in both whole class and group activities. Teachers and support staff ensure that lower attaining pupils are fully involved in the whole-class part of lessons.
- 92 The quality of teaching is good overall, and in Years 2 and 6 it is consistently better than this. Teaching is helped by the effective use of learning support assistants and, in Year 6, by the headteacher taking a small group of lower attaining pupils twice a week. The good use of questions, very clear explanations and challenging work are consistent features of the best lessons. In these lessons, teachers aid pupils' learning by getting them to explain the strategies they have employed, such as for a wide range of addition and subtraction problems that included decimals. In all classes, the relationships between teacher and pupils make a very positive contribution to learning. Good attention is usually given to meeting the needs of the range of pupils in the class. Occasionally, such as in a Year 4 lesson, the task did not challenge more able pupils enough, especially as this was the group the teacher was to support. On the other hand, the average group did not receive sufficient explanation initially and some struggled to complete the task successfully. Teachers have implemented the National Numeracy Strategy effectively, although the length of lessons can go beyond the recommended time and in these circumstances learning slows towards the end. Using a range of techniques, such as the use of number fans and mini-white boards, teachers ensure that all pupils are involved very effectively in whole-class sessions. In the best lessons, the whole-class session at the end of a mathematics session is used well to help pupils apply their learning to a new or extended problem. Good marking, particularly of number work, provides helpful guidance on how pupils can improve. Learning support assistants aid lower attaining pupils well in their group tasks and this makes a positive contribution to their learning. Although some relevant homework is set, there is a lack of consistency from class to class.
- 93 The curriculum is based on the National Numeracy Strategy, with especially good opportunities to use mathematical knowledge in practical examples. Pupils' numeracy skills are used well in a range of subjects. Very effective use is evident in science and geography. These opportunities include weighing, measurement, graph work and map co-ordinates. Assessment procedures have improved. They help teachers gain a clear picture of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses and include the use of optional National Curriculum tests. Pupils' work in National Curriculum tests has been analysed in general terms, but has not yet been used to analyse the key strengths and weaknesses exhibited by Year 6 last year. This is partly due to staffing difficulties

and the headteacher having to teach Year 6 this year until Christmas. Mathematics makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, especially when pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they have learnt, to co-operate and work in pairs or groups and to work with independence. Two co-ordinators have recently taken charge of the subject. Leadership is now good. The co-ordinators have already observed teaching, and examined planning and pupils' work. They have established a good improvement plan to be implemented over the next year.

SCIENCE

- 94 From 1998 to 2000, at the end of Year 6, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests has risen at a faster rate than the national improvement. Attainment in 2000 was very high, being in the top five per cent in the country. The results for pupils tested in 2001 fell because of the particular characteristics of the group and were just below the average. This represented good progress from their results when in Year 2. The school usually does better than similar schools with low numbers of pupils claiming free school meals. Over the last three years, in the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2, all pupils have achieved at least the expected Level 2, and about a quarter higher than this. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment is above average in both Years 2 and 6.
- 95 The previous inspection found that attainment was above average in both key stages, with pupils making good progress. Teaching was good and assessment procedures were developing. Accommodation restricted the opportunities for aspects of practical work. The school has made good progress in science, in particular it has maintained good standards of attainment and quality of teaching. Assessment is now very good and improvements in the accommodation have helped to extend some of the opportunities for practical work.
- 96 By the end of Year 2, all pupils achieve at least the expected standard, and between a third and a half higher than this. Teacher assessments tend to under-estimate the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. In Year 2, pupils describe very well changes to water when it freezes, noting that it has expanded. This good use of scientific vocabulary results from the teacher's particularly good use of scientific terms. Higher attaining pupils use very good language to describe the irreversible changes to bread when it is toasted. Good use of numeracy is made by pupils when they weigh the bread before and after toasting, noting that it gets lighter. They then hypothesise that this is because 'the heat dries up the water.' Well-organised tasks help lower attaining pupils make good progress. During the investigations of change, they examined the effect of cooking pasta in water, noting that it had gained weight. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of the parts of a plant, and they use good descriptive terms for different materials, such as opaque and translucent. Good teaching is therefore helping pupils acquire a good range of scientific skills and developing very secure knowledge. In a very good Year 1 lesson, pupils investigated the properties of a range of material; plastic, brick, metal and wood; with great enthusiasm, and suggested which would be best for a hamster's home. Learning support assistants aid pupils very well, and this helps those with special educational needs persevere with their work and extend their knowledge and skills.
- 97 During Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their knowledge and skills owing to well-organised teaching. Good learning ensures that attainment is generally above or well above average by Year 6. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a good understanding of forces. They recognise gravity as a force, and describe the effects of air resistance. Pupils also know about some famous scientists from the past, such as Sir Isaac Newton. They have a good understanding of dissolving. Their skills are also developed so that pupils make sensible predictions when investigating forces and sliding. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills, measuring, recording and evaluating the results of investigations well. Year 5 pupils have a good understanding

of the human body and how the digestive and blood systems work. Year 4 pupils use magnifying glasses well to examine the structure of different fabrics and investigate strengths of these fabrics well. In Year 3, pupils know the roles of different parts of a plant, such as the root, leaves and stem. Teachers use accurate scientific vocabulary and this aids pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs are given effective support, and this helps them make good progress. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, have well-developed experimental skills.

- 98 Pupils are very enthusiastic in science lessons, contributing to class discussions willingly and completing practical work with concentration. They share resources well, such as when pupils in Year 1 investigated the properties of different materials. As a result of well-planned and interesting lessons, pupils' attitudes to science, and their behaviour in lessons, are very good.
- 99 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and hence pupils' learning is good. A number of lessons observed featured very good teaching. Careful attention is given to the correct use of suitably challenging scientific vocabulary. The development of scientific skills, and opportunities to learn through practical experiences, are well planned. Learning throughout the school is good because teachers are confident when discussing science and because relationships within lessons are very good. In a good lesson in Year 4, effective use of demonstration, videotape and questions helped pupils understand the causes of night and day. Teachers make good use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to aid learning. Marking is generally helpful and accurate, although occasionally key scientific words that are spelt wrong are not corrected. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and helped very effectively by learning support assistants.
- 100 The good curriculum helps to develop pupils' knowledge and skills in a systematic, interesting way. Effective links are made with other areas of the curriculum, for example in physical education teachers often explore the effects of exercise on the human body. A helpful health and safety policy statement raises teachers' awareness of the need to complete risk assessments for all practical work. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils work together, and are encouraged to share ideas and resources. They are introduced to the wide variety of living organisms and the care that some need, such as household pets. Assessment has developed very well since the previous inspection and is very good. The procedures are detailed and cover all attainment targets. Results of these assessments are used effectively to set specific targets. Good use of pupils' self assessment, such as in Year 4 about their knowledge of 'Earth in space' helps raise awareness of their own learning and areas they are unsure of. A thoughtful and very well informed co-ordinator leads the subject very well. Her analysis of work and observations has resulted in her recognising the possible impact of literacy and numeracy on science, in particular the development of scientific skills. She has plans to monitor this to ensure that pupils continue to receive a balanced scientific curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

- 101 Provision for art and design, and pupils' standards of attainment, are a very positive feature of Wyke School. Pupils and staff work hard to attain high standards and good progress is made from Year 1 to Year 6. At the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils are reaching levels of achievement that go beyond national expectations. Since the last inspection, the good levels in classes, which were recorded, have either been sustained or have been improved.
- 102 The school, as a whole, benefits from the good quality of teaching and learning and the displays both in classrooms and shared areas contribute much to the bright and

colourful visual impact for pupils as they walk through corridors or go from class to class. The displays are not only pleasing but also informative. They represent current work and the printed questions beside them cause pupils to pause, think and examine them closely. Such a high standard of display represents considerable time spent by staff in out-of-school hours.

- 103 In every class, pupils are given opportunity to work with a variety of media that includes pencil, crayon, pastels, charcoal, fabric and clay. They examine the work of famous artists, such as Klee, Kandinsky, Matisse, Picasso, Monet and Hundertwasser. The works of Hundertwasser had been linked to a computer program called Dazzle and the pupils' printouts were arresting and of a high quality. The use of technology in learning about art and design is well developed but, just as importantly, the practical experience offered to pupils is equally beneficial. The pupils' work on reflections, after looking at those of Matisse and Monet, are very good, and so is the work in Year 2 as they painted spring flowers from direct observation.
- 104 The pupils are given experience in the art of other faiths and cultures, as shown in Year 4 with examples of art associated with Islam and Judaism. In Years 1 and 2 pupils begin to enjoy painting their own imaginative designs and drawing illustrations to accompany texts and to working with a range of materials which help to encourage their artistic abilities. Pupils with special educational needs reach their potential through good support.
- 105 Art and design permeates every subject and is a very good example of linking the subjects of the curriculum to good purpose. The work displayed with reference to a project on the Romans is not only aesthetically pleasing but is also informative. The displays linked to the stories of 'The Ugly Duckling' and to the story of 'Cinderella' give immediate connection with language and literacy.
- 106 The quality of teaching is good, with some that is very good. The constrictions of the timetable prevented observation in every class, but where lessons were seen teachers had planned the lessons well, managed time and resources competently and were secure in their subject knowledge. Teachers now assess the pupils' progress accurately in their developing skills and techniques. While assessment in art and design is not formalised throughout the school, every teacher is able to give a clear account of an individual pupil's progress in acquiring skills, technique and ability to create. Teachers keep clear records of work that has been covered and achievements gained. The quality of learning is consistently good. Pupils enjoy their art and design lessons and are eager to learn. They have good motivation and work hard to give of their best, taking a pride in their achievements. They work well together and help each other.
- 107 Pupils benefit from the clear guidance and help given to staff by the art co-ordinator who leads the subject well. Resources are good and are tidily stored. They are readily accessible to pupils and staff. Policies and schemes of work are up-to-date, helpful and supportive to the teachers. Documentation gives evidence of the visitors and artists from outside, and the educational visits for pupils to galleries and museums. The planning documents continue to be comprehensive and of good quality. They have helped new teachers to the school to work confidently and harmoniously with the pupils and thereby raise attainment further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 108 Satisfactory standards in design and technology seen in the last inspection have risen and are now good in most classes. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain beyond the national expectations. Progress, although good, is, at times, uneven for some of the younger pupils in the junior section. Pupils are taught well, they have a regard for

safety and take a pride in their work. Design and technology is well incorporated into the whole-school curriculum. In Years 1 and 2, there are examples of 'moving pictures' in story land linked to the term's literacy project. For older pupils, the analysis of biscuits assisted pupils in their scientific understanding of food chains.

- 109 In Years 1 and 2, pupils work with a range of materials and components, and they are capable of describing what they have done and the processes they have used to get there. In Year 2, pupils were designing a glove puppet. They had to design the puppet and then list the tools and materials that would be needed. Further up the school, pupils design more complex models, such as a lighthouse and then ensure that the beacon functions. In lessons observed, both teachers and pupils use appropriate vocabulary for describing the equipment and materials that they used. Results of pupils' work are well displayed. The photographs of past work contribute substantially to an individual pupil's portfolio of achievement.
- 110 The quality of teaching seen was always good or better. Teachers are well prepared, manage time and resources well, involve learning support assistants to good purpose and employ a range of teaching strategies, which give pace and interest to the lessons. This quality of teaching has a strong impact on the learning of the pupils. Not only do they learn about design and technology but they also learn the correct procedures for experiment, investigation and the recalling of a result. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make sound progress. The pupils enjoy lessons about design and technology. They are eager to learn and work well together. They use their growing skills in art and design, geography and science and they can sustain concentration.
- 111 The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. She gives help readily to her colleagues when necessary. She monitors policy, planning and outcome regularly and makes sure that the work in design and technology is well integrated with other subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

- 112 The previous inspection indicated that standards of attainment were in line with expectations and teaching was good. Satisfactory improvements have been made since then. Standards overall have been maintained. In addition, the scheme of work has been updated in line with 'Curriculum 2000', more use has been made of ICT and resources have been improved.
- 113 The standard of work seen is in line with national expectations by Year 6 and that seen in Year 2 is above expectations. Pupils acquire basic skills in the subject when they draw maps of the school area and locate features accurately. They correctly identify landscape features when linking their literacy lessons with aspects of the story, for example woodlands in Goldilocks and the Three Bears, and bridges and rivers in The Three Billy Goats Gruff. In Year 2, pupils accurately give two figure grid references for features on a map and draw their own maps giving correct grid references for selected locations. They compare aspects of their local river, the Stour, with rivers in Ghana and learn to locate directions of places in relation to given landmarks.
- 114 Older pupils develop their knowledge of map work when, in Year 5, they use ordnance survey maps to investigate the Stour Valley, analysing place names which indicate the evolution of settlement from Celtic through to Norman times. They learn that the absence of certain place name endings suggests that the Viking invaders probably did not settle in that area. They learn about contrasting environments in their study of Kenya and discuss moral, spiritual and cultural issues appertaining to nature and wild life conservation. They make good use of ICT in Years 3 and 6 when they use

sensors to monitor sunlight and temperature changes over a period of time. By the time they leave school, they have acquired a fund of knowledge and understanding of geography, which is of relevance to their lives. In their study of water supply and use, they begin to appreciate the need for conservation of resources and understand the problems of availability in some parts of the world. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress.

- 115 The pupils have a very positive attitude to the subject. They show enthusiasm for their work especially when they study maps, as for example in Year 2 when they learnt to give grid references and draw their own maps and decide where features should be located. In their analysis of place names of the Stour Valley, Year 5 pupils buzzed with excitement when they located Celtic place names on the map. The pupils are well behaved, sometimes exceptionally so. This contributes to a very good learning environment in which pupils and adults enjoy their work.
- 116 The quality of teaching is good overall, with examples well beyond this. The teachers have a good knowledge of the subject that enables them to extend the pupils' understanding of, for example, the use of filter beds in the treatment of water. The work is very well planned so that the activities always proceed in an organised manner and no time is wasted in deciding what to do next. As a result of the good relationships between staff and pupils, the pupils are very well behaved and work in a co-operative manner throughout. The management strategies reflect the very good ethos of the school and pupils are very secure and contribute confidently to their lessons.
- 117 The subject is well managed by a newly appointed co-ordinator who has good ideas for the development of the subject. There is a clear vision to move things forward, to raise the status of the subject and to increase the emphasis on quality of presentation of work. Plans are in place for the monitoring of teaching and learning across the school. A wide range of educational visits and visitors enhances the teaching of the subject and the use of ICT is developing. The time available is limited, and this restricts the amount of written work produced.

HISTORY

- 118 At the time of the previous inspection, attainment was in line with, or above, the standard expected. Teaching ranged from sound to very good. Significant improvements have been made since then. These include updating of the scheme of work in line with the requirements of Curriculum 2000, increase of resources, greater use of ICT as a result of developing teacher expertise, the incorporation of elements of citizenship in the scheme of work and monitoring of teaching and learning.
- 119 Standards are in line with national expectations by Years 2 and 6, with examples of good quality work. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop their understanding of time when they study toys, old and new. They compare and contrast their own toys with those used by their parents and grandparents. By using photographs of themselves as babies, they discuss the difference between what they do now and what they did then and note how they had changed. In Year 2, they develop basic skills of investigation by giving reasons why they think something is old rather than new, and use different sources of information to understand happenings in the past. They appreciate the importance of the diary of Samuel Pepys as a record of aspects of the Fire of London and understand why building materials changed as a result of the fire. They empathise with the feelings of soldiers in World War I by writing a letter home to parents explaining conditions in the trenches.

- 120 Older pupils acquire a range of experience of different periods in the past. In Year 3, they know that many inventions were made which affect our lives today, for example photography, electric light bulbs, telephones and flush toilets. They construct a time line showing significant developments over the period. As they progress through the school, they learn about Tudor times, especially details of the life and reign of Henry VIII and the impact of his rule on the country. By Year 6, they know much about Ancient Egypt and the River Nile, and the importance of monuments that help us to reconstruct aspects of life in far off times. They understand that the Ancient Greek civilisation has left many influences on present day life, such as the Olympic Games and on architecture. Their knowledge and understanding of the past are enhanced by the range of visitors and visits to places such as Gillingham Museum and Corfe Castle. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. The written work of higher attaining pupils often shows particularly good use of their literacy skills.
- 121 The pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They enjoy their lessons, show enthusiasm for making contributions from their prior knowledge, especially when they have gained experience from visits to places of historical interest. They show keenness when being history detectives and show respect for opinions that are different from their own. The pupils are well behaved and respond promptly to adult requests. They show respect for one another and offer help whenever the occasion arises. The pupils themselves contribute to the relaxed atmosphere in which learning takes place and they present a good picture of a self disciplined community.
- 122 The quality of teaching is good. The work is well planned with resources well prepared beforehand. Consequently there is no time wasted. Management strategies are very good in all classes and work proceeds without disruption. Teachers are confident in what they teach so that they answer pertinent questions and direct the pupils' learning at a good pace. They use a variety of approaches and methods, such as asking visitors to relate their experiences of the past and to answer questions posed by the pupils. They challenge pupils to draw valid conclusions from evidence revealed in artefacts and to compare what people did in the past with the present, giving logical reasons for the differences. The time available is limited, and this restricts the amount of written work produced.
- 123 The management of the subject is good. Although the co-ordinator has been in place for a relatively short period of time much has been achieved. There is a good range of educational visits to enhance the teaching of the subject. Resources are generally good, with plans to increase the quantity and quality of artefacts. Monitoring of teaching is well established with written records of feedback to colleagues and involvement in planning ensures progression. The order of topics in the scheme of work has been altered based on the co-ordinator's rationale of relevance to different age groups. The co-ordinator has a positive vision for the development of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 124 The previous inspection indicated that attainment was broadly average, except in the area of modelling which was below the standard expected. Teaching was satisfactory. Improvements since then have been good. New computers have been acquired and set up in a central area. These have been networked. CD-ROM facility has been added to the Acorn computers mainly used in classrooms. Some sensing equipment has been added and additional programmable toys such as 'roamers' and 'pixies' acquired. Monitoring has taken place regularly through planning, the sampling of pupils' work and informal observation of lessons in an open plan situation. The status of ICT has been raised and all teachers show confidence in the teaching of skills as well as using computers to support subjects across the curriculum.

- 125 Standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with the national expectation. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use the mouse confidently to select, highlight and move items across the screen. They use graphics as part of a language activity in Year 1 when they draw pictures of The Sly Fox and The Little Red Hen, adding suitable text to communicate their own ideas. The youngest pupils work independently without supervision to draw their pictures of the characters in the Three Billy Goats Gruff and add appropriate captions. They use Textease to exchange and share ideas about their Christmas holidays. In Year 2, they successfully use Dazzle to create text, edit by insert and delete processes, save and print their finished work on seeds, lilies and strawberries. With help, they begin to use e-mail to send and receive messages. They collect information and enter data to produce simple bar graphs. In their study of geography, Year 2 pupils created a village map locating specific features and printed the finished product.
- 126 Older pupils develop and refine their word processing skills well to produce extended reports in their literacy lessons. They use the Internet confidently to select relevant information on World War II and exchange information by e-mail with schools in Australia and France. In Years 3 and 6, pupils successfully use sensors to record temperature changes and duration of sunshine over a given period of time. They use CD-ROMs to access information on Queen Victoria as part of their history project and create posters for healthy living. In handling information, Year 6 pupils input data and draw graphs of friction measured on different surfaces and create Islamic patterns in their art and design lessons. By the time they leave school, they confidently use computers to communicate information, to handle data, to monitor and control events and to simulate investigations by changing variables. The well-organised support helps to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress.
- 127 Attitudes to the subject are positive. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and make maximum effort to achieve good standards. Their behaviour is very good. They show respect for property, respond promptly to adult instructions, co-operate, help one another and do all the things one expects from pupils who are highly motivated and are keen to learn.
- 128 The standard of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers are confident and sometimes demonstrate good subject knowledge to extend the skill of the pupils. They encourage the pupils to develop independent learning as seen in a group of Year 1 pupils working independently to produce pictures of characters in the story of The Three Billy Goats Gruff. Good use is made of learning support assistants who give very good support to groups of pupils. However, small group teaching is inefficient in time and resources and limits the opportunities that all pupils get to use the computers. Assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is well used to ensure that progress is maintained. The lessons are well planned with clear objectives so that pupils know exactly what is expected and how it can be achieved. The policy of pairing pupils according to their level of expertise enables the pupils to share ideas and learn from each other.
- 129 The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the development of the subject and works unstintingly to move it forward. She is fully committed to improvement and to the raising of standards. Very good use is made of the resources available. All classes have a timetabled slot to use the central computers. However, there are not enough computers for the whole class to work at the same time. Good support is given to colleagues and a good system of assessment is in place and operating effectively. The facilities available are well used.

The school has identified the need to provide further staff training, including for learning support assistants, in order to extend the existing significant staff expertise.

MUSIC

- 130 At the end Years 2 and 6, attainment is above average. It has risen to beyond national expectations for these ages and pupils make steady progress as they move through the school from Year 1 to Year 6. Those pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils receive sufficient help and support so that they reach their potential.
- 131 In Years 1 and 2, pupils sing tunefully and have a good repertoire of songs. They show a growing understanding of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. In a Year 1 class, pupils chose percussion instruments, named them and handled them correctly. Older pupils continue to sing well and to sustain part-singing. They describe the pleasures and difficulties of singing in parts and take a pride in success. This was demonstrated to good effect in a Year 5 class when pupils sang and played an accompaniment to the story of Hiawatha.
- 132 The school has worked very hard to sustain levels of attainment and in many classes to lift them to good. Pupils are now receiving a good quality of teaching and enjoy music. They move confidently on to the next stage. The impact of teaching has resulted in good musical attainment. This has come about because of the teamwork of the staff, headteacher and music co-ordinator. They know and understand the restrictions of the timetable and, therefore, make sure that music enters into the general curriculum whenever possible. Wherever possible, staff develop appropriate cross-curricular links.
- 133 Teachers often use music to introduce a lesson and the pupils listen well and can comment sensibly at the end. Some pupils choose to play the recorder and staff give their time willingly to this. Other pupils receive music tuition for the flute and clarinet. They play well and have formed a school orchestra, which often accompanies the singing in assembly. There is a small choir that was observed practising after school. The pupils involved sang well and thoroughly enjoyed singing together.
- 134 In the music lessons seen the teachers had planned and prepared well. They managed time and resources skilfully and the lessons moved with pace and rigour. The pupils were attentive and remained on task for the full session. They were co-operative and followed instructions carefully. Music contributes to the multicultural experience of pupils, because of opportunities to listen to music from a range of cultures, as well as to their spiritual growth. Music gives a special dimension to the assemblies. Pieces are carefully chosen to enhance the religious themes and the pupils enjoy talking about their preferences. All pupils spoken to appraised the assembly music heard that day.
- 135 The music resources are good. Since the last inspection the school has made a concerted effort to improve standards. Guidelines and policies are helpful but are now due for revision. The school is well aware of this and music has a firm place on the school development plan. The management of the subject is good, and the monitoring of the teaching of the subject satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 136 The previous inspection indicated that pupils' attainment was about average and that they made satisfactory progress. Teaching varied from unsatisfactory to excellent. There were not enough opportunities for sharing work. The school has made good progress and attainment at the end of Year 6 has improved. Teaching in lessons seen

was never less than satisfactory, and more opportunities are provided for pupils to demonstrate their performance to other pupils.

- 137 Year 1 pupils display a good range of gymnastic movement when travelling along and over a range of apparatus. They move with good control, and confidently experiment with more challenging activities. In Year 2, pupils perform satisfactory sequences of rolls and rocking movements. Starting and finishing positions are carefully presented, but some of the rolls lack polish, such as log rolls in which the legs are far apart. Good teaching helped Year 3 pupils develop above average skills in control of a ball using a hockey stick. Clear explanations helped to ensure all pupils held the stick correctly. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, pupils developed high quality sequences of movements that they demonstrated to another pair of pupils very well. A particular strength of this lesson was the sensitive, full inclusion of a pupil with a physical disability. In another excellent lesson in Year 6, pupils made rapid progress in developing dance movements on the theme of water. Pupils were encouraged to interpret, but not to be too literal. This they did exceptionally well producing a polished performance by the end of the lesson. Pupils with particular gifts, such as in gymnastics, are given extra opportunities to develop their skills.
- 138 Pupils enjoy physical education, displaying good attitudes. Their behaviour is almost always very good. Occasional excess noise is well controlled by the teacher, although this can occur because pupils are inactive for too long, waiting their turn on the apparatus. In the best lessons, pupils are always keen, listen carefully to the teacher and observe their colleagues with consideration. The quality of teaching is very good overall, but ranged from satisfactory to excellent. In a satisfactory lesson, greater attention could have been given to providing more guidance about how a series of gymnastic movements could be improved. A feature of the very best teaching is that time is taken to observe, to guide, to suggest ways to improve, and the effective use of demonstration. In all the lessons where these features were evident, pupils' learning and performance were enhanced. On occasions, especially for younger pupils, although teachers plan opportunities for the demonstration of the skills they have learnt, insufficient evaluation of each other's performance occurs. Learning is generally good or better, but could be improved further if greater thought was given to ways of keeping pupils active more and providing greater opportunities for practising skills, such as dribbling a hockey ball, before using them in relay game. The well-organised provision helps to ensure all pupils, including those with disabilities, are fully involved.
- 139 All areas of the National Curriculum, including outdoor and adventurous pursuits, are taught, thus ensuring pupils have the opportunity to develop skills across all relevant areas of physical education within the normal school day. These opportunities are extended by residential trips. A good range of extra-curricular opportunities is available. This provision includes competitive sport. Assessment of the swimming and athletics elements of physical education is in place, and the recently appointed co-ordinator has plans to extend assessment to other areas of the subject. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, such as working as part of a team, co-operating in a range of activities and dancing to a range of music. From early in the school, not enough attention is given to encouraging boys and girls to partner each other in the different elements of physical education. The new co-ordinator is keen to improve further the provision for physical education in the school, such as extending pupils' opportunities to experience the types of activities disabled pupils and athletes undertake.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 140 Pupils make good progress and, by the time they leave the school, the majority reach standards that exceed the expectations set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Most

pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well for their abilities. This improves the standards seen during the previous inspection.

- 141 It was not possible to observe any lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2. However, in the work seen, the standards they reach are at least in line with those set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils in Year 2 know how Jewish people celebrate Shabbat and also the Passover, particularly in the sharing of the Seder meal. They have a secure knowledge of some festivals in different religions, for example in the significance of Divali to Hindus, Hanukkah to Jewish people and a Christingle service to Christians. Pupils have a good knowledge about the layout and symbols seen in their local church as the result of a visit and talk by the local vicar.
- 142 A strength of the provision, and therefore in the standards, is the importance the school places on pupils using the knowledge and understanding they gain about different faiths to help their personal development. In this aspect, assemblies make a good contribution. A governor, who is a member of one of the local churches, led an assembly in which pupils heard about the miracle Jesus performed when healing a crippled woman. This helped pupils to gain an empathy with others who have a disability and learn well from Christian teaching about helping others.
- 143 These good features of the curriculum and teaching are built on well as pupils move into Years 3 to 6. By the time they leave the school, pupils have gained a good understanding of the codes of behaviour seen in different religions. They then use this knowledge especially well to make decisions about their own code of behaviour. Pupils in Year 6 engaged in very good debate as to the order of importance of The Ten Commandments. They also wrote their own Path to Enlightenment after learning about that set out for Buddhists. Their knowledge and understanding of both Christianity and the major world faiths are both broad and deep and these help pupils to understand and appreciate different life styles and beliefs seen in modern British society.
- 144 Pupils have positive attitudes to learning both about and from religion. This was apparent in the assemblies and lessons observed. Pupils are thoughtful and sensitive and ask very good questions in discussion times. The progress they make in their personal development at these times is especially good.
- 145 No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, it is not possible, therefore, to make a detailed judgement about teaching. However, from the work pupils have done it is apparent that teachers have at least secure expertise. For Years 3 to 6, teaching is good overall and some very good teaching was seen. Lessons are thoughtfully planned and a strength is the use teachers make of resources, such as pictures and artefacts, to help pupils develop a greater understanding. In a particularly good lesson, pupils were helped to gain a good understanding of The Bible and its significance for both Jews and Christians. The use of artefacts and picture or video resources is important as few pupils in the school come from different cultures and there are no places of worship, other than for Christianity, within easy distance. Another significant factor is the exceptionally good relationships seen in the school that leads to valuable discussion sessions taking place. Learning is equally good and is effective because of the very good attitudes of pupils.
- 146 The curriculum, closely based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and adapted well to the topic-based approach seen in the school, is good. It has been effectively planned to ensure that Christianity and other world religions are covered well and that pupils build on, and extend, their knowledge and understanding. A programme of visits and visitors, mainly from local churches, makes a good contribution to learning about Christianity. Over the past few years, the subject has been managed very effectively, with suitable monitoring procedures, by competent co-ordinators and this continues

under the leadership of the headteacher. There is a suitable range of resources including pictorial resources and artefacts that is currently being extended.