

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGSNORTH CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ashford, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118667

Headteacher: Mrs. C. Foinette

Reporting inspector: Mrs. S. Halley
8203

Dates of inspection: 21st-24th May 2001

Inspection number: 213028

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church Hill
Kingsnorth
Ashford
Kent

Postcode: TN23 3EF

Telephone number: 01233 622673

Fax number: 01233 663818

Appropriate authority: Kent

Name of chair of governors: Rev. Sheila McLachlan

Date of previous inspection: May 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Shelagh Halley 8203	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Art and Design Geography History Music	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
Husain Akhtar 9561	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Martyn Williams 31838	Team inspector	Mathematics Equal Opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
		Information and communication technology	
		Design and Technology Physical Education	
Alison Pangbourne 23818	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs	How well is the school led and managed?
		English	
Andrew Hodges 18850	Team inspector	Science Religious Education	

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA Ltd
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kingsnorth is a Church of England controlled primary school situated on the outskirts of Ashford in Kent. There are 272 pupils on roll, 153 boys and 119 girls, aged between four and eleven. There are very few pupils from an ethnic minority background and no pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. There are 42 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, a proportion which is below average. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs, and this is broadly average. The needs covered include: moderate and severe learning, emotional and behavioural, speech and communication and physical disability. At the time of the inspection, there were 42 children in the foundation stage (reception classes). Children enter the foundation stage in the year in which they become five, and they arrive with a broad range of abilities which are in line with the county average, although personal and social development is slightly above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Kingsnorth is a rapidly improving school and its strengths far outweigh its weaknesses. Pupils' standards of attainment have improved greatly since the previous inspection, especially in English. The quality of teaching is good overall, with many instances of very good and better teaching, which leads to good and very good learning. The leadership and management of the school is good and, although costs are a little above the average, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English are well above average by the age of eleven, and above average by the age of seven, chiefly because the school has worked hard to ensure that pupils use imaginative vocabulary in their reflective and imaginative writing.
- The way in which pupils use their skills in art and design, design and technology, scientific investigation, literacy across the curriculum and in speaking and listening is better than expected for the pupils' ages.
- Provision for social and moral development is very good, resulting in very good behaviour which contributes significantly to pupils' learning.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good and often very good learning.
- Teachers manage their pupils very well and create a very effective and attractive learning environment.
- Leadership and management have improved greatly since the previous inspection.

What could be improved

- In Year 2 and Year 6, work set for higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science is not sufficiently demanding because teachers' expectations are too low. The highest attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should, and teachers do not use the numeracy strategy as effectively as they do in English.
- Pupils do not use information and communication technology sufficiently to develop their skills across other areas of the curriculum.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and others' work in physical education.
- Some parents have a perception that the school's management and leadership are unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school no longer has the serious weaknesses identified in its last inspection in 1999. Other areas for development identified then were thoroughly addressed in the governors' post-inspection plan. Standards in most subjects have been raised, but especially in English by the age of eleven. The leadership and management of the school are now good, and the governing body fulfils all its statutory obligations. Planning for the curriculum has improved for both key stages. Teaching has improved considerably, and is now good overall, although there is still a little inconsistency in planning appropriate work for a small but significant minority of the highest attaining pupils in mathematics and science. The deficit budget has been eliminated because of careful financial planning. The quality of information for parents is much better and so is the way in which the school generally handles complaints. However, there is still a significant degree of parental dissatisfaction with the school. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	B	A	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D Well below average E
Mathematics	E	A	C	E	
Science	D	D	C	E	

In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, standards were well above average in English and average in mathematics and science in comparison with all schools by the end of Key Stage 2. In comparison with similar schools, standards in English were above average, but well below average in mathematics and science. The trend in improvement is above average in all three subjects, and there is little significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. The school's targets for the majority of pupils were sufficiently challenging and were considerably exceeded in English and met in mathematics. Pupils are on course to exceed the targets set for them again in 2001 in English and to meet them in mathematics. However, there was a smaller proportion of pupils attaining at the higher levels in mathematics and science because the work set was not demanding enough for them to attain higher standards.

Inspection evidence shows that standards are well above the national expectation in English, above in science and average in mathematics. The majority of pupils are achieving well. The difference between last year's test results and current achievement in science is because of the school's greater emphasis on the practical skills of scientific enquiry.

Particular strengths are pupils' speaking and listening, especially the extension of language, both spoken and written, and the way in which literacy skills are used across all subjects of the curriculum. In mathematics, there is a strength in the pupils' attainment in investigation and enquiry at both key stages. The majority of pupils achieve well in English and mathematics, although a small minority could do better in mathematics in Years 2 and 6. These highest attainers are sufficiently challenged and extended in English and the same process is beginning in science, and has been identified in mathematics. The school is aware that more can be done and has prioritised this in its current development plan.

Children in the foundation stage are on course to exceed the national early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and personal and social development by the end of the reception year. They are on course to meet the early learning goals in all other areas.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school, and tackle their work with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils conduct themselves very well in all areas of the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils show consideration and respect for each other, following the good example set by teachers and other adults in the school.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average.

Even the youngest pupils are happy to say goodbye to their parents and come into school where they are provided with interesting and purposeful learning activities. The good examples of respect and tolerance shown by teachers and other adults in the school make for very good relationships all round and this has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 6 years	aged 6-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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 and learning is good overall, with several instances of very good teaching across all subjects and year groups. In the lessons seen, teaching was excellent in 2 per cent, very good in 22 per cent, good in 43 per cent, and satisfactory in the remaining 33 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and this is a particularly good improvement since the previous inspection. The teaching of English and literacy is very good overall, with teachers taking every opportunity to extend and enrich the spoken and written language of pupils and to encourage a love of books and reading. In mathematics, teaching is satisfactory overall, with several instances of good or better teaching in all classes. Teachers use the numeracy strategy satisfactorily but this needs to be further adapted to the differing needs of individual pupils, particularly the more able. The teaching of numeracy in other subjects of the curriculum is less well-embedded than in literacy. Teachers are particularly good at managing pupils and establishing orderly classroom procedures so that they create very effective learning environments for their pupils. Most teachers set work which is sufficiently challenging for the majority of pupils but, for a small but significant minority of the highest attainers, the work is not hard enough. Pupils with special educational needs have their particular requirements well addressed and they achieve well according to the targets in their individual education plans. The teaching of children in the foundation stage is good overall and prepares them well for the National Curriculum programmes of study.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. It is enhanced by a variety of visits out of school and visitors into the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Their needs are identified early and good support provided. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational need is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good. The spiritual needs of pupils are well addressed through subjects of the curriculum and daily acts of worship. Pupils appreciate their own cultural heritage but there should be more opportunities to celebrate the diversity of cultures in Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides a safe and secure environment.

The school has a generally satisfactory relationship with parents whose perception of how effective the school is needs to be raised through more informal and clearer communications. The school has rightly placed emphasis on English over the last two years, and this has raised standards in English considerably. However, there is now scope to extend the use of curriculum time to gain the same improvement in mathematics and science. The school's procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour are very good, and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy and hard-working staff and governors, provides a clear educational direction for the school and leads the drive to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Even the most recently appointed governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well, and are aware of how to address the latter.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Following the previous inspection, rigorous action was taken to remedy the weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The governors make satisfactory use of all available resources. They have worked hard to eliminate the deficit budget since the previous inspection.

The school has an adequate number of qualified and experienced teachers, ably supported by a small but experienced and valued team of learning support assistants. Accommodation is good and well-used, except that outdoor provision for the foundation stage is in need of further development. There are plans in place for converting a room into a computer suite for the teaching of information and communication technology. This should be ready for use in the autumn term, along with more computers. The governors make prudent financial decisions and apply the principles of best value satisfactorily when making large purchases or hiring expensive services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school• Their children are making good progress• •The teaching is good	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The way the school works with parents• The leadership and management of the school• The range of activities outside school lessons

The inspection team agreed with parents' favourable views. They disagree with the parents' view of the leadership and management of the school, although they consider that the school needs to explain further the good things it is doing to improve parents' perception. The range of activities outside school lessons is satisfactory and is similar to that in other schools of this kind.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 in the 2000 National Curriculum tests were above the national average in reading and writing. Although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 3 was broadly average in comparison with schools nationally, it was below that of similar schools. Results in mathematics in Year 2 show a good improvement since the previous inspection, and they were above the national average in all aspects. However, in comparison with similar schools, results were well below average, because fewer pupils exceeded the expected level, reducing the average points scored. The trend in improvement in English and mathematics is above the national average. Teachers' assessment of pupils' performance in science was very high, although in comparison with similar schools, results were average.
2. At the end of Year 6 standards were well above the national average in English. The school has put a great emphasis on English and literacy over the last two years and staff and pupils have worked very hard to attain these good results. This is a significant improvement on standards in the previous inspection, particularly in writing. The way in which skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing are developed across the curriculum is a strength of the school and makes a significant contribution to the standards attained. In comparison with similar schools, standards in English are above average. Standards in mathematics and science were in line with the national average, with a lower proportion of pupils attaining at levels higher than expected. This is because, in some classes, the work set is not always at a sufficiently challenging level for higher attaining pupils to attain their best. In comparison with similar schools, in mathematics and science, they are well below average. This is because fewer pupils exceeded the expected level and this reduces the average points scored. However, the trend in improvement is above the national average in all three subjects, and there is little significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. The school's targets for the majority of pupils were sufficiently challenging and were considerably exceeded in English and met in mathematics.
3. In the work seen during the inspection, standards were above the national average in English by the end of Year 2, and well above by the end of Year 6. Particular strengths are pupils' speaking and listening, especially the extension of language, both spoken and written, and the way in which literacy skills are used across all subjects of the curriculum. In mathematics, standards were above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6. This is because teachers' expectations of what higher attainers can do are too low and they are often given the same tasks as the rest of the class. Standards were above average in science, showing a good improvement on last year's results because of the school's emphasis on practical and investigative science. The majority of pupils achieve well in English and mathematics, at both seven and eleven, although a small minority could do better in mathematics. These highest attainers are sufficiently challenged and extended in English and the same process is beginning in science, and has been identified in mathematics.
4. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with the national expectation at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils achieve to a satisfactory level. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. However, the use of information and communication technology skills in all subjects of the curriculum is underdeveloped. For example, pupils do not use computers for investigation in subjects such as science, history and geography.
5. In religious education, standards were above the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve well. This is again an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good working knowledge

of Christianity and Judaism, and at Key Stage 2, pupils understand how a belief in the equality of man is reflected in the lives of religious leaders.

6. In the foundation subjects, standards were above average in art, design and technology and history at the end of both key stages and pupils achieve well - more good improvement since the previous inspection. For example, pupils' discussion of topics like medical treatment in Tudor times was of a high standard. In geography, standards were above average at the end of Year 2, where pupils have completed some impressively good work on mapping, achieving better than expected for their ages. Standards are average at the end of Year 6 because the good work in map-reading and map-making in earlier years is not sustained and built upon. In music, standards were above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils achieve very well. There was too little evidence to make a judgement at the end of Year 6. Standards in physical education are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils achieve less than they could be expected to do. This reflects the difficulty the school has found in trying to provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to observe and evaluate their own performance, thus restricting their attainment.
7. Children in the foundation stage are on course to exceed the national early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and personal and social development by the end of the reception year and they achieve well in these areas. Their achievement is satisfactory in other areas and they are on course to meet the early learning goals in physical development, creative development and mathematical understanding.
8. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational need, achieve well, making good gains in their learning in relation to their prior attainment. They make good progress towards the targets set for them but there is sometimes a tendency for some pupils with lower levels of need to work more generally within lower ability groups rather than having work matched to their specific needs on their individual education plans. Although they achieve well, they could achieve even better with a more exact focus on their individual needs. For example, pupils in Year 4 were given the same spellings to learn as those of higher attainment. This meant that pupils with special educational needs found it difficult to get full marks in their spelling test. Where pupils are withdrawn from the classroom for extra help they make good progress because well-trained adults who work with them match work very precisely to their needs. For example, pupils in Year 2 made good gains in developing their reading and spelling skills when they worked on a commercial programme with a learning support assistant. Older pupils learned to improve their behaviour and social skills by participating in a 'circle time' that had been specially planned for them. Higher attaining pupils achieve well in the classes where teaching is good and work is well matched to their needs. However, their needs are not always sufficiently met in mathematics and science, particularly in Year 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are strengths of the school. Pupils enjoy school, and this supports the views of their parents expressed in the pre-inspection questionnaire. Pupils are interested in their work and are involved in the activities that the school provides. Their good attitudes to the school contribute positively to the quality of education.
10. Children in the foundation stage are confident enough to leave their parents, eager to explore new tasks, and treat resources sensibly. Their behaviour is generally very good, and they have a well-established sense of routine. They take turns and share equipment fairly. They make good progress in personal development.
11. Pupils are developing good work habits, and are enthusiastic about lessons. They listen to their teachers' instructions carefully and take part in discussions eagerly. Pupils concentrate well and work hard. Even younger pupils persevere well in lessons, making an effort to get all of their work done; a good example of this was seen in a Year 1 mathematics lesson where pupils were learning about 3D shapes. In a Year 3/4 English lesson pupils concentrated well and

made good progress in writing about the key characters in the book “Danny, Champion Of The World”. Another example of pupils’ positive attitudes is their participation in extra-curricular activities, which is good. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the support that they receive. Very good relationships and good teaching have positive impacts on pupils’ attitudes.

12. Pupils behave very well in most lessons, around the school and at play. They are aware of school rules and understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are considerate to each other and adults, holding the door open for those following behind and are polite and confident when speaking to visitors. All pupils, including the youngest show respect for the opinions of others and listen courteously to their contributions in assemblies and lessons. During group activities pupils cooperate well, and provide support for one another, as was the case in a Year 1 English lesson which focused on asking and writing questions, using an ‘Asta the Alien’ worksheet. Relationships are very good. No incidents of oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection. Bullying is not an issue. Exclusions are not a feature of the school. Pupils treat the school's property with care. Pupils respond well to opportunities for personal development, willingly undertaking duties such as classroom helpers, taking registers to the office and working as receptionists in the office. Year 6 pupils, who help younger pupils, do so very responsibly.
13. Pupils with special educational needs behave well and show positive attitudes to their learning because tasks are interesting and they know their contributions are valued. They persevere willingly and take pride in their work. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with more complex needs, are well integrated into the school and are well accepted by their peers.
14. Pupils’ attendance is good. Most pupils attend the school regularly and promptly. Absences are mainly due to illness; unauthorised absences are below the national average. Most are because parents have exceeded the agreed limit of family holidays during the term time and the school has not authorised such absences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is good overall, with several instances of very good teaching across all subjects and year groups and classes. Teaching was excellent in 2 per cent of lessons seen, very good in 22 per cent, good in 43 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining 33 per cent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and this is a particularly good improvement since the previous inspection.
16. The teaching of English and literacy is very good overall with teachers taking every opportunity to extend and enrich the spoken and written language of pupils and to encourage a love of books and reading. Teaching was never less than good in the junior classes and several very good lessons were seen. As a result, pupils learn very well. The school has worked hard to address the weakness identified in the previous inspection, most importantly in addressing the needs of higher attaining pupils, particularly at the end of Year 6, which is a key factor in the very good progress pupils make in their learning. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, very clear planning and the effective use of questions to pupils of differing abilities ensured that pupils learned that there is a lack of dialogue in non-fiction books. Teachers regularly share the lesson objectives with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and refer to them throughout so that at each stage pupils know what they should be learning.
17. In mathematics, teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with several instances of good or better teaching in all classes. Teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy and make appropriate use of all the elements. The pace of lessons is usually sufficiently brisk to support pupils’ development in rapid mental mathematics. Expectations are generally good for pupils of average and below average ability so that they make suitable progress. For higher attainers, they are usually too low, which limits attainment, especially in Years 2 and 6.

18. Teaching and learning in science is good overall in both key stages, with all pupils enjoying the subject and responding to the enthusiasm of their teachers. Teachers make very good use of literacy techniques, which greatly enhance pupils' learning. They have adequate subject knowledge but some lack confidence. The great improvement in pupils' learning is because teachers now place more emphasis on practical investigations and experimenting in science, challenging pupils to think more clearly and making real progress in extending their knowledge, understanding and skills. However, day to day assessments do not yet fully affect day to day planning and this explains why the highest attaining pupils in some lessons are not sufficiently challenged.
19. The quality of teaching and learning in information and communication technology is satisfactory overall, and teachers acknowledge their need to develop their subject knowledge so that their skills and expectations will be more appropriate for their pupils. At present, teachers do not consistently provide enough opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their work in other areas and computers, although often switched on, are not used in many lessons.
20. In religious education, teaching and learning are consistently good at both key stages, with a strong bond of trust and support between pupils and teachers that promotes effective learning as pupils explore their ideas; for example, skilful and perceptive questioning in a Year 6 lesson on Sikhism gave pupils the confidence to discuss the importance of equality and community, having a positive influence on their progress.
21. Teaching and learning are good in art and design, design and technology and history at both key stages. It is good in music in Key Stage 1. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on teaching and learning in geography, or teaching and learning in music in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching and learning in physical education is satisfactory, although teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to evaluate their own and others' work.
22. Teachers are particularly good at managing pupils and establishing orderly classroom procedures so that they create very effective learning environments for their pupils. For example, in an excellent Key Stage 1 music lesson, pupils were so well disciplined that they left the instruments on the floor untouched until it was their turn to play. Teachers also make very good cross-curricular links; for example, a recent visit to a performance of 'Starlight Express' provided very good motivation for pupils in literacy work and in designing costumes and scenery in art and design and design and technology.
23. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. All pupils have good individual education plans with clear, achievable targets. These are used to plan suitable levels of work, although this is not always recorded on teachers' written plans. As a result, planning for some pupils on the lower stages of the register is sometimes too generalised, rather than tailored to their exact needs. Teachers and learning support assistants liaise well together, particularly when pupils in the infant classes are withdrawn for short sessions to improve their literacy skills. Pupils with statements of special educational need receive very good support from teachers and from well-prepared support staff. During the inspection, these pupils were seen to make good gains in their learning when working on individual programmes that were closely matched to their needs.
24. The teaching of children in the foundation stage is good overall and prepares them well for the National Curriculum programmes of study. Teachers give equal opportunities by directing their questions to both genders and to all abilities, so that all children are actively involved in lessons. All adults encourage children to talk, explaining what they are doing, giving opinions or recounting experiences. Teachers of reception children plan together so that children in different classes get a similar learning experience.

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

25. The school provides a suitable range of relevant and worthwhile learning opportunities for pupils in the foundation stage. The curriculum provided for the rest of the school is broad, balanced and relevant. The learning opportunities promote the aims of the school and include all the subjects of the National Curriculum. Religious education teaching follows the locally agreed syllabus of Kent and arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements.
26. The effectiveness of the strategy for teaching literacy is very good. The school places a strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy. The National Literacy Strategy is firmly embedded across the curriculum and teachers are using it confidently in all their teaching. This emphasis has started to raise standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening and this is making a positive contribution to standards in other subjects.
27. The effectiveness of the strategy for teaching numeracy is satisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented but it is less firmly embedded across the curriculum and it is yet to have the expected effect on the standards of mathematics and other subjects in the curriculum.
28. There are good policies and schemes of work for all subjects, which support teachers in planning appropriate activities. The previous inspection report noted unsatisfactory planning in the junior classes and that plans for improvement were in hand. The quality of planning has improved since the last inspection so that it is now judged to be good in both infant and junior classes. This improvement is making a positive contribution to the progress being made by pupils through its emphasis on matching work to the needs of less able pupils.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and all statutory requirements are met. The school is committed to inclusion for all and these pupils have full access to the curriculum and extra curricular activities. Procedures and systems concerned with special educational needs are good. Pupils know their targets although the co-ordinator has identified the sharing of targets as an area for future development to improve understanding of their progress. The clearly written policy reflects the school's commitment to inclusion. The curriculum is particularly well modified for pupils with statements of special educational need to enable them to make good progress and take part in all the school has to offer.
30. The school is committed to providing all pupils with equal curriculum opportunities. Teachers' planning ensures that this is the case. The school has considered how pupils in mixed age classes will be taught the curriculum and arrangements are in place to track the work of pupils so that needless repetition or gaps in provision do not occur.
31. The school provides a satisfactory range of after-school clubs and activities. These include various sports, gardening, chess, choir and crafts. Clubs are regularly changed so that there is always a fund of fresh ideas to stimulate and interest the pupils. Further enrichment of the curriculum takes place through cultural events such as book week, religious services, sports tournaments and class visits.
32. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. A good emphasis is given to the teaching of health issues and drug awareness, and good use is made of 'circle time' to share personal and social issues. The current provision for sex education has been well thought out and is currently being reviewed by the governing body as part of its role in monitoring curriculum developments.
33. The school makes satisfactory links with the local community and these make a positive contribution to pupils' experience and learning. There are strong links with the village church that is visited and used for some assemblies. The school took part in a special history of the millennium event that visited different places in the village, including the school, and culminated in a Nativity play at the church. Local visitors are welcomed into school and plans are in hand to place a bench at the front of the school as a resting place for people walking

through the village. The school has satisfactory links with other schools, which eases the transfer of pupils to secondary school and allays parents' anxiety. There are also good links with pre-school organisations and foundation stage teachers already have some knowledge of their new pupils before they arrive.

34. The monitoring of the curriculum is understood and welcomed by all staff and this is a great improvement since the previous inspection. This provision is of a good standard as it enables subject co-ordinators to gain a clear picture of teaching and learning in their subject through a system of observations and reviewing of medium and short term plans and the standards of work produced. The system is monitored by the senior management team and has direct links into subject and school development planning and also gives staff access to continuing professional development.
35. Pupils' very good behaviour and their positive attitudes to their work are founded on the school's good provision overall for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and make a significant contribution to the good quality of their learning.
36. The provision for spiritual development is good, and well supported by the content of assemblies and work in religious education. A number of other subjects also support this area, notably literacy, science and history, where pupils were amazed that spiders' webs were used medically in Tudor times.
37. The provision for moral education is very good. There are clear expectations of high standards of behaviour through the school rules and acceptable conduct is very well promoted through the well-implemented policies. The school environment is calm and good behaviour and attitudes are acknowledged positively and are given a high profile. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. A constructive reward system and sanctions underpin the rules for behaviour. All staff are good role models for pupils and the caring and consistent way in which issues are dealt with promotes the pupils appreciation of tolerance and fair play effectively. Moral aspects are taught well and pupils show a keen awareness of their responsibility towards property and the environment.
38. There is very good provision for social development. The school has a warm and welcoming ethos and relationships within the school are very good. This friendly atmosphere is encouraging the effective development of social skills. Pupils are taught strategies for dealing with difficult situations and the school's personal, social and health education lessons are of positive benefit to the pupils. The pupils are also given responsibilities for tasks suitable for their age both within the classroom and around the school. Older pupils readily volunteer to help younger ones with many tasks, including paired reading. Pupils also develop a keen awareness of those less fortunate than themselves through charity work.
39. Cultural provision for pupils was judged to be satisfactory at the time of the last inspection and remains so. Western culture is promoted effectively through subjects like literacy, history, art and music. Pupils are made aware of the contribution of great civilisations like Greece; they listen to the works of composers such as Bizet. Pupils study the style of western artists and are encouraged to speak a little French when answering the register. Pupils have many good opportunities to study the major world faiths. Some books in the library celebrate racial diversity. However, opportunities are missed to celebrate the full range of cultural diversity found in Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Care for pupils was good at the time of the last inspection, and remains so. The pupils know they are valued as individuals, and this makes a good contribution to the quality of their learning. Staff know the pupils well and make good use of procedures to assess and respond to their individual needs. The school is a safe and secure environment, free from harassment or bullying, where pupils are well supervised at work and play. All this supports the quality of education received by the pupils.

41. The school takes a responsible attitude to matters of child protection and health and safety. The deputy headteacher is the designated member of staff for child protection. He is knowledgeable and keeps the staff well informed about child protection issues. Well-established links with other agencies ensure that pupils receive any necessary support. Regular health and safety checks are carried out to identify and deal with any potential hazards and systems are in place to ensure that any day-to-day issues can be dealt with immediately. Teachers also ensure that pupils are learning about safe working practices in class, and issues about personal health and safety, including sex education and drugs awareness, are dealt with on a whole-school basis, for example through the curriculum and by receiving talks from visiting specialists. There is a good focus on healthy eating.
42. Arrangements for dealing with accidents and emergencies are good. The administrative staff and other first-aiders know pupils and families well and warmly attend to pupils who become ill or who need support. They efficiently keep the required records about accidents and liaise with parents as necessary. Children in the reception classes are very well supervised, and play in areas designated for their use only. Admission arrangements are well established and help children to make a confident transition from home to school.
43. **The arrangements for the assessment and identification of pupils with special educational needs are good. The school cares for these pupils well. This is particularly marked for pupils with statements of special educational need. Well-constructed individual education plans closely link with the need shown on their statements and provision is regularly monitored and reviewed in line with the Code of Practice. Annual reviews show good progress and identify the way forward for pupils. Teachers and support staff work closely together to monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs. A good example was seen during the inspection where a learning support assistant observed the attitudes of pupils with special educational needs during a whole class discussion using a check sheet produced by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. This provided useful information for the class teacher to help her assess progress towards their targets.**
44. The school is very successful in eliminating oppressive behaviour and promoting self-discipline and esteem. All adults within the school work well together to promote good behaviour, and earn the respect of the children. Pupils' behaviour is well managed in lessons and any disruptions are well contained. There is a good focus on rewards. Bullying or other forms of oppressive behaviour are not an issue. Any concerning behaviour is effectively dealt with and well monitored by the headteacher through her 'incident record' system.
45. Attendance is good. Registration procedures are efficient and records of attendance are properly maintained. Absences are promptly followed, in some cases contacting home the same day, and regular contact with the education welfare officer is maintained. Good attendance is well acknowledged. The school emphasises the need for pupils to attend regularly but a small number of parents do not fully cooperate in avoiding unnecessary absences and take family holidays during the term time.
46. Pupils' personal development is well supported through high expectations of good behaviour, PSHE (personal, social and health education), visits and visitors, and extra-curriculum activities. It is well monitored by setting individual and group targets and through the comprehensive record of incidents that the headteacher keeps. Personal development targets for pupils with special educational needs are carefully monitored and effectively supported.
47. Procedures for assessing pupils' performance are good and the information is well used to plan, to guide pupils and to help them to improve. The baseline assessment is promptly carried out when children enter the school and it is well used to identify children's specific needs and in setting their attainment targets. Throughout the school, there are assessments to identify under-achievers and those who could do better. Also, general and specific targets set for pupils, like the writing targets, help in tracking and supporting their progress. Progress of pupils with specific educational needs is carefully monitored and they are well supported. National tests are carried out, and recording and reporting requirements are met. The test results are

purposefully analysed and on the basis of the analysis carried out last year, plans for improving standards in writing, numeracy and science have been put in place. All subjects have assessment procedures and teachers record assessment information well, and this usually enables them to plan opportunities that match effectively to the learning needs of all pupils. Work set for high attainers in Year 2 and Year 6 is not sufficiently challenging in all subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Links with parents have improved since the last inspection in that the partnership with parents and the quality of information provided for them, unsatisfactory then, are now satisfactory. However, there is still a significant number of parents who have expressed dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the school. Whilst the inspection questionnaire reveals parents' satisfaction with teaching and their children's progress, there are concerns about the way the school works with parents and is led, and the range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors found that the school is well led and the school, particularly the headteacher and governors, does well to reach out to parents, welcoming and encouraging them to become involved in their children's learning, but rather formally. The home-school agreement clearly indicates its expectations of parental involvement and of pupils. Extra-curricular activities are satisfactory for a primary school. The school could helpfully explain its work to parents and effectively work towards improving parents' unfavourable perceptions.
49. Parents help with reading and school visits. School events are well supported. Parents enjoy sharing termly class assemblies. There is an active Parent and Friends Association, which raises substantial funds for the school's resources, like computers. There are good links with the parents of pupils who have special educational needs. They are kept fully informed about their child's progress and the targets that have been set for pupils to achieve. Overall, parents make a good contribution to the life of the school and the school can rely on their cooperation in addressing any concerns regarding pupils' well-being and performance.
50. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus and governors' reports are informative and now comply with the statutory requirements but appear formal. Parents are encouraged to use the 'home contact book', regularly sent home in Key stage 1, for messages. There are frequent consultation and curriculum information meetings for parents and these are well attended. Some parents felt that they are not well informed about their children's progress. Inspectors found that pupils' annual written reports are satisfactory. Whilst the reports inform well what pupils can do, they do not always give information about what pupils should be doing next or what exactly their parents can do to improve academic standards.
51. **Parents whose children have a statement of special educational need are appropriately involved in reviewing the targets set for their children in accordance with the Code of Practice. The co-ordinator for special educational needs reviews progress with class teachers and learning support staff and parents are then invited to discuss this annual review. Learning support staff who work with these pupils communicate regularly with parents through the home/ school contact book to ensure that parents are kept informed of their progress.**

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. **The overall leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. The headteacher provides clear leadership and her commitment to raising standards is clearly demonstrated in the good improvement made since the previous inspection. She is well supported in this approach by the able deputy headteacher, co-ordinator for special educational needs and the subject co-ordinators, who all have a good understanding of their roles. There has been significant improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the previous inspection, where it was judged to be**

unsatisfactory. For example, there is now a positive commitment and a systematic approach to raising standards. This is well illustrated in the significant improvement in standards in the core subjects, but particularly in English. As well as raising standards, there have been significant improvements in other aspects of school life, such as pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching. All these factors contribute positively to the success of the school. The way in which the aims of the school are reflected in its work is good.

53. All staff, including support staff, work well together as a team for the benefit of all pupils. All share a commitment to raising standards and they have a good understanding of areas for development in their subjects. For example, the co-ordinator for mathematics has already identified that there is room for improvement in meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils. The way in which the co-ordinators show an enthusiasm for new initiatives and work together as a team contributes positively to the improvement in standards.
54. The leadership and management of special educational needs provision is good. The co-ordinator works hard to ensure that the requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met. She uses her allocated time out of the classroom each week effectively to advise and support teachers and support staff, liaise with parents and to assess pupils who are identified as causing concern.
55. There are several reasons why the school is now effective. The consistently good quality of the teaching is fundamental to its success. Several teachers, including the deputy headteacher, have been appointed since the previous inspection and this has helped to raise standards, particularly at Key Stage 2. The headteacher and senior management team monitor teaching effectively, enabling teachers to give of their best. This is also a significant improvement since the previous inspection, where monitoring systems were judged to be insufficient. Another reason for improvement has been the close evaluation of the school's performance and the evaluation of the results of statutory tests. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is now good. This has resulted in the introduction of target setting that is closely evaluated by the headteacher. Individual target setting and the twice-yearly assessments of writing samples contribute positively to the high standards in writing.
56. The way in which the governing body fulfils its responsibilities is good. They are supportive and although many are recent appointments, they have a good understanding of their roles. This too has improved considerably since the previous inspection. At that time, governors were insufficiently systematic in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and in their accountability to improve standards. Weaknesses in the school development plan, which lacked clear targets for development meant that they received insufficient information to enable them to measure its success. All these weaknesses have now become strengths. The governors are now well informed about strengths and weaknesses of the school because each governor has a link with an area of the curriculum. Their areas of responsibility are matched to their own expertise and the good quality school development plan now includes clear and appropriate targets and success criteria. They have ensured that all the key issues for improvement have been addressed successfully. For example, the leadership and management of the school are now good, standards have improved considerably and the school has worked hard to reduce much of the dissatisfaction felt by a significant number of parents. It has introduced questionnaires to gauge the opinion of parents on a range of issues, introduced governor 'surgeries' to allow parents to express concerns and offered information on the curriculum. However, the school now needs to share its strengths further to improve the perception of a number of parents. All statutory requirements are now met.
57. The school makes good use of the funds made available to it. Rapid expansion of the school had resulted in a financial deficit that was slowly being brought under control at the time of the previous inspection. The school has now cleared its deficit budget through prudent financial management and close monitoring of its spending. This will now enable plans to improve class sizes by establishing an extra class next year to take place without putting undue strain on the budget. The school development plan is a good working document that is well constructed to raise standards. It has been difficult to plan year on year spending due to the deficit budget,

but there is now scope for the school development plan to include more detail in its long-term overview. Spending decisions focus appropriately on raising standards and improving provision for higher attaining pupils. Good information about the budget is regularly provided to keep governors informed. The administrative officer manages day-to-day accounts and office procedures to a high standard. The principles of best value are applied appropriately in the school's use of its resources. For example, the school has begun to compare its results with those of similar schools, particularly since the nature of the school has changed considerably since its expansion. The governors examine various options before making spending decisions. A particular strength is the way in which parents are consulted through questionnaires.

58. The school is adequately staffed by appropriately qualified teachers with a wide range of experience. The teachers are motivated and work together well as a team. The enthusiastic support staff work well with the teaching staff and know the needs of the pupils well. This makes a significant contribution to the learning of pupils.
59. Good administrative support is provided by the school secretaries and the midday supervisors and kitchen staff all contribute positively to school life. The caretaker and cleaners keep the school clean and in very good order and do much to make the school a pleasant place to be.
60. The school has put in place a satisfactory performance management system with strong links to training and staff and school development. All training is evaluated and new ideas and practices are readily shared. A recent course led teachers to provide a number of themed 'home play areas' which are used extensively by pupils in the reception year. The analysis of the effectiveness of courses on standards is at a very early stage of development.
61. The school has a good written policy for the induction of newly qualified teachers and methods of supporting teachers new to the school. Recent newly qualified teachers and new staff have had the support of experienced staff with regular meetings, observations and support.
62. **The accommodation has a good impact on teaching and learning. For example, the music room facility contributes well towards pupils' learning. Classrooms are adequately large to allow teachers to use a range of teaching methods. The public areas and classrooms are well organised and attractively decorated with purposeful displays of pupils' work to support the curriculum, for example, the writing. The site's presentation is well supported by the cleanliness and care provided by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Whilst the play and green areas are pleasant and useful, outdoor provision for the foundation stage needs further development. Resources are generally satisfactory enough to support most areas of learning. Number and use of computers is barely satisfactory and there needs to be some improvement to the book resources in English. The resources available to the school and their effective deployment have a positive impact upon pupils' learning and the standards achieved.**
63. A judgement on value for money is based on what the school achieves in relation to its expenditure. The school's income is a little above average. The attainments of children on entry to the school are broadly average. By the time the pupils leave the school at the age of eleven, their attainment is above average and they achieve well. The quality of education, including the quality of teaching, is good. The school promotes good attitudes and achieves very good standards of behaviour. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Taking all these factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

(1) raise standards in mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 by:
increasing the effectiveness of the numeracy strategy
increasing the challenge for higher attaining pupils to match standards already achieved in literacy

(Paras. 2, 3, 17, 18, 27, 47, 53, 81, 83-84, 86-87, 96)

(2) Raise standards for higher attaining pupils in Year 2 by ensuring that tasks in mathematics and science are sufficiently challenging to meet their needs**

(Paras 8, 17, 47, 53, 81-82, 86-88, 96)

(3) Raise standards further in information and communication technology at both key stages by increasing planned opportunities for the use of computers in all subjects**

(Paras. 4, 19, 85, 116, 119)

(4) Increase efforts to reduce the dissatisfaction perceived by parents by continuing to engage parents in a dialogue about all aspects of school life through a more informal approach

(Paras. 48, 50, 56)

(5) Improve provision for physical education by providing pupils with further opportunities to evaluate their own and others' work.

(Paras. 6, 21, 125-127)

** These issues have already been identified by the school as an area for development and are prioritised in the current development plan.

In addition, the headteacher, senior staff and governors should consider the following minor areas for inclusion in their action plan:

(1) Increase provision for planned outdoor activities in the foundation stage by providing wheeled vehicles, climbing and balancing equipment, along with the necessary storage facilities. *(Para. 72)*

(2) Ensure pupils are more fully prepared for life in multicultural Britain by a greater celebration of the diversity of cultures. *(Para. 39)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	22	43	33	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	272
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	42

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	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.2

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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	22	14	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	22
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	35	35	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (96)	97 (96)	100 (96)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	22
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	34	35	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (96)	97 (96)	100 (96)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	21	18	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	16	19
	Girls	14	11	14
	Total	33	27	33
Percentage of pupils	School	85 (79)	69 (85)	85 (82)

at NC level 4 or above	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)
------------------------	----------	---------	---------	---------

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	15	19
	Girls	14	13	16
	Total	30	28	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (79)	72 (85)	90 (85)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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	2
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese/Japanese	2
White	263
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	29.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	154

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
----------------	------

	£
Total income	485254
Total expenditure	479930
Expenditure per pupil	1790
Balance brought forward from previous year	3547
Balance carried forward to next year	8871

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

268

Number of questionnaires returned

107

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	43	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	53	6	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	63	6	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	60	12	3	2
The teaching is good.	42	52	5	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	53	10	7	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	32	12	7	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	35	51	7	3	4
The school works closely with parents.	17	51	21	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	21	47	10	13	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	58	6	1	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	30	25	6	27

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

65. Provision for children in the foundation stage is good overall, despite the lack of sufficient resources for outdoor play. Standards have been maintained in all areas of learning and have improved in communication, language and literacy and in knowledge and understanding of the world. The curriculum is broad and balanced, based on national guidance and with a smooth transition to National Curriculum programmes of study by the last half-term of the reception year. It is enriched by visits to local supermarkets, places of historical or natural interest, and in walks around the immediate locality. Work is ongoing on the scheme of work for this stage to bring it into line with new curriculum requirements. Children enter the reception classes in the year in which they become five, attending part-time initially. They are accommodated in two classes, one of which also includes pupils in Year 1. Before they start school, they make visits to join in story-time and in infant playtimes so that they and their parents meet their teachers before their school career begins. Prospective parents also meet the headteacher and are invited to tour the school during the summer term Open Evening. This results in a smooth start to their education. Children arrive at the school with a range of abilities which are broadly average, although the current year group is strong in personal and social development. Children are taught well and make good progress during their time in the reception classes.
66. Children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of the foundation stage, and they achieve well. They listen well and are encouraged to expand their answers from one word or one phrase and make their speech more interesting. Most speak clearly and confidently with little prompting. They know that print conveys meaning, and that English books are read from the front to the back and from the left to the right. The highest attainers remember that Quentin Blake was their 'author of the week' last week. Some begin to use their knowledge and understanding of sounds to read the words they have put together. Their attempts at independent writing are developing well, considering their age and the teacher ensures that writing materials are always available for practice in the writing corner. Children enjoy listening to stories and join in enthusiastically. They confidently and competently use computers to support their language learning development. They correctly sequence a boat-building manual (for 'The Owl and the Pussycat') and label the pictures accurately. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher plans resources very well and ensures that they are very well used, with the children responding very well to the tasks and working with good concentration. Children of all abilities make steady progress and make longer words at the end of the session than at the start. The teacher's good use of praise in the end of lesson review encourages children to try even harder next time.
67. In mathematical development, most children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. They achieve to a satisfactory level. Teachers make good links to the key vocabulary used in mathematics and plan lessons with work suitably adapted to the differing needs of individuals. The teacher and the classroom assistant use a good variety of teaching strategies, which are well thought out, and the use of time is generally good. Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory, children cope easily with the tasks set and there is a lack of challenge, especially for the higher attainers who are capable of achieving more. By the end of a lesson on money, children had made satisfactory gains in learning more about coins, recognising and using them through solving simple problems. The teacher had planned the lesson well but did not clearly explain the objectives and so the pace was only satisfactory. The counting rhymes displayed in the classroom are illustrated with simple challenges from the teacher and this takes children's learning forward.
68. Children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the foundation stage, and they achieve well. Children describe their new baby siblings and make a comparison with what they themselves are like now. They give some reasons for the changes they see; for example, a caterpillar grows

because it eats more. Teaching is good overall. The teacher's explanations are very clear and easy for children to understand what is happening and so they can sequence the stages in the caterpillar's growth. Pupils' literacy skills are very good and some children explain what 'camouflage' means. Children's behaviour is very good and they are all keen to ensure they take part in the lesson, working with much enjoyment, learning well. The teacher's very good questioning techniques ensure that secure assessment information is noted for use in future planning. Children are encouraged to use binoculars to watch birds in the hedge in the playground. They improvise short playlets to show their understanding of how night-time activities differ from those during the day or even stay the same; for example, some doctors and nurses sometimes both work day and night. They competently use magnifiers to examine the shells they have collected for their seashore topic. Children are well accustomed to using computers and cassette-players to support their learning and competently and confidently use the computer mouse and operate a tape-recorder.

69. In physical development, children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. Pupils make satisfactory gains as they go through the year. They walk, run and stop on command with good awareness of the people around them, changing direction easily and avoiding collisions with others. The majority listen carefully and obey instructions promptly. Almost all are successful at balancing a ball on a bat whilst stationary or using two hands. However, they find using one hand much more difficult. Although they find bouncing a ball on a bat difficult, they try very hard, concentrating fiercely. Most children change their clothes for physical education lessons with minimal help but they are still a little slow. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the reception and classes, the teachers gave a good model of gripping a bat but there was little attempt to involve children in the evaluation of their own and others' work, and no reference was made to the effect of exercise on the body. Children manipulate large and small construction toys with increasing dexterity, and use the correct pencil grip when writing. Some hand and eye co-ordination is still developing at the appropriate rate. Some use scissors to cut very well, although others simply chop the edges of the paper until help arrives.
70. Children are on course to meet the early learning goals in creative development by the end of the foundation stage. They improvise working and getting up to go to work in planned outdoor activities supervised by learning support assistants. Most of them work competently together, acting out their own experiences; for example, 'Mummy and I are picking berries' or boys are 'watching TV and eating popcorn.' The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with teachers and support assistants in reception classes giving good encouragement to talk about home life and working patterns, and the children loved playing 'Mums and Dads', especially caring for 'the baby' when it fell over. Children sing familiar songs with enthusiasm, and respond to music by smiling, nodding and swaying. The art work on display is good and is better than expected for their age, with pupils combining colour mixing with their knowledge and understanding of owls, badgers and foxes, and their close observational painting of spring flowers. Children enjoy their role-play in the 'boat' the teacher has made just outside the classroom.
71. In personal and social education, children are also likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. This is because of the well-established classroom procedures and routines, and almost all children remember to put up their hands to ask and answer questions, with only a few still calling out. Higher attainers already work independently although with a lot of chatter, mostly about the pictures on their worksheets. The quality of teaching is good and teachers' expectations are high, so that pupils achieve well. There is very little squabbling over resources and the quality of relationships is generally good. Pupils collect their own pencils for writing practice and are beginning to understand the need to listen to each other and show respect. This is fostered through class discussion, when children listen quite well and understand the convention of not speaking until they are holding 'Pooh Bear.' This was a very well-prepared session, with the children amused at being labelled 'eyes' and ears' for listening. Classroom assistants had a sensitive and sympathetic approach in circle time, carefully applying positive behaviour strategies to provide an effective learning environment.
72. The quality of teaching is good overall, and occasionally very good. Teachers give equal opportunities by directing their questions to both genders and to all abilities, so that all pupils are actively involved in lessons. Work is adapted for differing abilities and children are well

supported in their activities. Classroom support assistants and volunteer helpers, including governors, are well briefed to give praise and encouragement to help build confidence and self-esteem. All adults encourage children to talk, explaining what they are doing, giving opinions or recounting experiences. No opportunity is lost for reinforcing learning; for example, children sing alphabet songs whilst waiting for the rest of the class before going to the dining hall for lunch. The school has no official co-ordinator for the early years and one of the reception teachers is also the co-ordinator for special educational needs. The headteacher drew up the policy in consultation with the staff, and the scheme of work is being revised to bring it into line with new national guidance. Baseline assessment is carried out in the first half-term of children's attendance, and is repeated in the second half of the summer term. Ongoing observations and assessments are carried out with significant strengths and weaknesses in children's learning noted in the teacher's day book. Teachers plan literacy and numeracy together so that children in different classes get a similar learning experience. Resources are adequate but problems with storage means there are no wheeled vehicles, climbing and balancing equipment or large construction kits for outdoor use. Although the teachers plan outdoor activities several times a week, outdoor provision is only just satisfactory.

ENGLISH

73. Results from the 2000 national tests, based on average points, show that standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were above the national average and were broadly average in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 3 in reading and writing was also broadly average in comparison with all schools but below that of similar schools. Results at the end of Year 6, based on average points, were well above the national average and above those for similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 5 was well above average in comparison with all schools and above average in comparison with similar schools. Standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection two years ago, particularly at the end of Year 6, being above the national trend. Results in English were well below average then and the school has worked hard to raise standards. When results are compared with the prior attainment of pupils in other schools that attained similar results in 1996 at the end of Year 2, results are well above average. This shows that pupils are doing well. Differences in the performances of boys and girls are not significantly different to the national picture.
74. Inspection evidence confirms these high standards. Standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and pupils are achieving as they should. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above national expectations and pupils are achieving well. There are several factors that contribute to these high standards. Support from the local education authority and staff training have raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the quality of teaching overall is very good. Analysis of statutory tests has identified areas of weakness. For example, the school identified that pupils were not skilled in using specific types of writing and devised a set of targets for use by the pupils. As a result of these and the emphasis that teachers place on writing in different styles, examples of persuasive, reflective and imaginative writing are of a high standard throughout the school. This contributes positively to the high standards in English. Other factors that lead to improvement include the consistent implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, regular class target setting, year group writing targets and individual writing targets. These individual targets are linked to achievement certificates presented by the headteacher, which provides an added incentive. The way in which skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing are developed across the curriculum is a strength of the school and makes a significant contribution to the standards attained. All classrooms provide a rich environment to support the development of literacy skills.
75. Standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations by the end of Year 2. By the end of the reception year, pupils have exceeded the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and they maintain these standards through the key stage. By the age of seven, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and respond with detailed answers. They are confident in sharing their views with others and this has been maintained since the previous inspection. For example, during the inspection, in a history lesson, pupils in Years 1 and 2

confidently discussed the reasons why the Great Fire of London spread so fast and lasted so long, listening carefully to each other's opinions. Younger pupils in Year R and Year 1 develop their vocabulary and learn the meaning of words such as 'hurricane' when learning how to represent weather words with their voices in music. By the end of Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are well above average. This is because the school places great emphasis on the development of vocabulary and provides many opportunities for pupils to develop these skills. Pupils make thoughtful contributions to discussions and build on each other's views. For example, following a visit to 'Starlight Express', pupils in Year 6 clearly shared their views about how the show had differed from their preconceptions of it. They listened carefully to each other, politely correcting or adding detail to information about the materials used in the costumes. Assemblies are used effectively to develop these skills. During the inspection, pupils in Year 4 confidently explained how they had made African masks, showing a wide vocabulary. Teachers place value on what pupils have to say and this gives them confidence to use increasingly complex vocabulary. The use of collaborative group work across many areas of the curriculum makes a positive contribution to the high standards attained. For example, pupils in Year 4 confidently discussed the moral and social elements in the story of Cinderella in comparison with a multicultural story, engendering many ideas of what to do in moral situations. Opportunities such as these also contribute positively to pupils' moral and social development.

76. Standards in reading are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Pupils are achieving as they should. By the end of Year 6, standards are well above those expected nationally and pupils are achieving well. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented and this is contributing to the high standards. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction during guided reading sessions. The school encourages parents to support their children at home and the response to this is good and contributes to the standards attained. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 use their knowledge of phonics to tackle unfamiliar words, with higher attaining pupils building words such as 'automatically'. Emphasis is placed on expressive reading and even the youngest pupils in Year 1 know that bold type gives a clue as to how to read the text. Most pupils discuss their texts with understanding and express their preferences for authors such as Roald Dahl and Dick King-Smith. Pupils' progress accelerates through the junior classes. Pupils show enjoyment and a good understanding of what they have read. They fluently discuss the plots and characters and make comparisons between books that they have enjoyed. They are familiar with using the library for research. Good emphasis is placed on developing reading skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils in junior classes attempted to read in Nigerian, Indonesian and Nicaraguan dialects during an assembly to introduce 'The Tower of Babel' before reading the translation. Younger pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 read sentences such as 'A week later the eggs hatch and the young ladybirds eat the greenfly' with confidence to support their work in science. However, the use of information and communication technology to promote the development of research skills is underdeveloped.
77. The school has worked hard to raise standards in writing and to increase the number of pupils exceeding the expected level at both Year 2 and Year 6. As a result, standards in writing are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and well above by the end of Year 6. Pupils at the end of Year 6 are achieving well from the above average standards at the end of Year 2. Examples of writing seen during the inspection were of high quality, particularly at the end of Year 6. A significant factor in the rising standards is the emphasis placed on writing in different styles and for different purposes. For example, pupils in Year 2 know that to make their writing interesting they should use a mixture of short and long sentences and start sentences in unusual ways. They know this because these writing targets are clearly displayed and teachers refer to them in lessons. This results in sentences such as 'So off he went back to bed and tried to think of some dreams.' Pupils know the importance of story settings to create interest and use interesting vocabulary and correct punctuation. Writing skills are well developed across the curriculum. For example, pupils write accounts in religious education showing how Peter healed the blind man and list items used to make vehicles in design and technology. They answer questions about the Great Fire of London in history, showing accurate spelling and secure use of punctuation.

78. Pupils' use of expressive vocabulary develops as pupils move through the junior classes. Pupils in Year 3 begin stories with sentences such as 'Long, long ago when dogs giggled and girls barked', showing they are aware of the need to grasp the attention of the reader. By Year 4, pupils write newspaper articles as Hebrews living in the time of Moses, beginning with sentences such as 'Today word broke out...'. Pupils in Year 5 write poems of high quality showing their understanding of prepositions. For example, 'there are mischievous trees that drop fruits on passers by.' By the end of Year 6, pupils are skilled in writing persuasively, using imaginative and reflective vocabulary. They use vocabulary such as 'culprit' and 'retaliate' when writing persuasively about how to stop bullying. Their factual writing engages the reader, using sentences such as 'None of these have changed for decades, thus are extremely interesting', when writing about features of the locality. Expressive language such as 'He could see very little apart from the swirling mist, which partially obliterated the moonlight' show the emphasis placed on writing in different styles. Samples of work seen during the inspection show that most pupils write in varied and interesting styles for a wide range of purposes and audiences. Spelling is generally correct and punctuation such as inverted commas and question marks are used accurately. Writing skills continue to be developed across the curriculum in the junior classes. For example, pupils write accounts of the difference between Athens and Sparta and stories about Theseus and the Minotaur, showing their extensive vocabulary. They record the resources used for their Greek temple designs in design and technology and show their ability to summarise when they write about Lent in religious education.
79. Taking all factors into account, the quality of teaching is very good overall. It was never less than good in the junior classes and several very good lessons were seen. As a result, pupils learn very well. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection, where it was satisfactory. The school has worked hard to address the weaknesses identified then, most importantly in addressing the needs of higher attaining pupils, particularly in the junior classes. This is a key factor in the very good progress which pupils make in their learning. Very good teaching is characterised by an enthusiastic and motivational style that encourages pupils to think and the very good use of questions to extend learning. This was well illustrated during the inspection, when pupils in Year 3 learned how to create suspense in their opening paragraph because the teacher continually challenged them with questions such as 'What is the mood? Can suspense be created if the mood is happy?' Very good demonstration ensured that pupils learned that it is important not to put the climax too soon if you want to create suspense and retain the attention of the reader. Pupils went on to brainstorm their ideas in groups, working very well together to compile interesting ideas to use in their stories. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, very clear planning and the effective use of questions to pupils of differing abilities ensured that pupils learned that there is a lack of dialogue in non-fiction books. Very good attention to basic skills, such as 'You should be able to read the words on your card' encouraged pupils to consult their peers if in doubt. In Year 4, pupils worked enthusiastically to write a letter to an Indian chief answering a plea for conservation in the role of The Commissioner for Indian Affairs. The pupils responded very well to the teacher's high expectations to plan their work before starting their letter. As a result, pupils completed a good quantity of work in the time allowed. In a well-taught lesson for pupils in Year 6, they learned that a mystery plot has to be linked in logical steps and that characters have to be realistic. The teacher clearly explained, relating examples to those that were familiar to the pupils such as 'Inspector Morse' and 'Poirot'. As a result, the pupils were motivated to join in the discussion because it was well matched to their interests. Teachers regularly share the lesson objectives with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and refer to them throughout, so that at each stage pupils know what they should be learning. High expectations and very well managed pupils are features of all English lessons and this contributes to very positive attitudes.
80. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has worked hard to raise standards since the previous inspection. She has a clear view for the continuing development of the subject, including a greater focus on annual writing targets. There is a good range of assessment procedures that are used well to track pupils' progress across the school, in setting school targets and to identify pupils in need of support, as well as to identify areas for development. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support the subject, including good quality books. However there is a need to increase the number of books, particularly in the library.

MATHEMATICS

81. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards above those expected for their ages and they are achieving well. The 2000 National Curriculum tests show that standards are average and comparable with similar schools. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were in line with national expectations and below those in similar schools. Boys did better than girls in the last tests, but in lessons observed there was no significant difference in their performance. In Year 6 standards are in line with national expectations and most pupils are achieving at a satisfactory level. These pupils also attained the national average in the 2000 National Curriculum tests. These results show a considerable improvement since the last inspection when standards were well below. In comparison with similar schools, standards are well below average, because fewer pupils exceeded the expected levels, reducing the average points scored. The trend in improvement is above the national average. The school successfully met its targets in 2000. Although pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, standards by age 11 are not as high as they could be because work set for higher attaining pupils from Year 2 and throughout the junior classes is not sufficiently demanding. This is because teachers do not use the assessment data obtained to set work which matches pupils' abilities and their expectations are sometimes too low. However, the school has begun to identify areas for improvement. In both tests and lessons, boys and girls performed equally well. Pupils with special needs are well supported and make good progress.
82. By the age of seven, pupils have a good knowledge of place value to 100 and sequence numbers into the 1000's, well aware of odds and evens. They use simple fractions, readily identifying those having a similar value. They use this knowledge well to solve problems involving money. Pupils of average and below average ability make appropriate use of plastic coins. The higher attaining pupils find them a distraction, preferring to work things out in their heads. Tasks set do not take account of this. Teachers challenge lower attainers well so that they reach standards approaching those of the majority of the class. They expect, however, little more from above average pupils than from average. Books reveal, for example, that most pupils can classify 2D and some 3D shapes well, having a grasp of angles and symmetry. They collect data, sort information, and represent it appropriately in graph form, using the results to estimate further conclusions. The quantity of work produced by the ablest is high, but its quality and complexity is not vastly greater than that of the rest of the class, so they do not work to the limit of their capacity.
83. Inspection evidence shows that by the age of eleven, standards meet national expectations. Pupils' number skills, including their mental agility, are, on the whole, slightly better developed than the other attainment targets. They have however, done no appreciable work on co-ordinates and their achievement in this area is restricted. In problem solving exercises, teachers focus well on realistic tasks so pupils are better motivated. Year 6 pupils for example were keen to find the best deals from a variety of mobile telephone advertisements so used a good range of strategies to work them out. Work on the measurement of angles develops well in Year 3, pupils being challenged beyond the expectations for their age. It does not continue at the same rate into Year 6, where expectations are met, but not exceeded. Pupils group data and produce, for example, trend graphs. They are only beginning to explain conclusions and explore probabilities.
84. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy and make appropriate use of all the elements. The pace of lessons is usually sufficiently brisk to support pupils' development in rapid mental maths. Learning objectives are clearly stated. Questioning techniques make pupils think about the methods they need to use. This approach encourages pupils well so that they are usually eager to contribute to lessons. Moreover, pupils become absorbed in their work, co-operating well for example in pair and group work, which the teachers monitor effectively. Very good relationships mean that behaviour is regularly good. The plenary sessions usually draw everything together well so pupils see what they have achieved and where they need to go next. Expectations are generally good for pupils of average and below average ability so that

they make suitable progress. For high attainers, they are usually too low, which limits attainment. One boy in Year 5, for example, successfully handling work on ratio and proportion, remarked: "This is easy!", ready for greater mental stimulation.

85. Pupils' good use of the correct mathematical vocabulary they hear supports their development in literacy. Numeracy skills are also developing across the curriculum, although not so prominently. Pupils consolidate, for example, measurement in design and technology, and graph work in science. They use time lines in history, where they have also considered the legacy of the Greeks, including Pythagoras' theorem, which Year 5 have illustrated in accurate geometry. The use of information and communication technology to support mathematics is not widespread. In one lesson, for example, despite a computer being available and switched on, no use was either planned or made of it. Pupils in Year 6 have, however made use of computers to chart their progress in athletics, recording times and distances.
86. A thorough assessment system is in place that enables teachers to track pupils' progress. It has been used successfully to address the achievement of lower attainers. The same focus now needs to be given to the work of the higher attaining pupils so that they may reach standards that reflect their capabilities.
87. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and standards are rising. The school now needs to address the challenge and expectations of pupils' mathematical skills, particularly for the highest attainers, so that they match those already attained in literacy. The subject is managed satisfactorily and the co-ordinators are aware that more needs to be done for higher attainers.

SCIENCE

88. By the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment overall is above average. At the age of seven, teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in the year 2000 was above that found nationally and at the age of eleven, attainment in the national tests was close to the national average. The results show a rising trend over the last few years and this indicates a modest improvement since the last inspection. However, although the majority of pupils achieve to a satisfactory level, building on the good work done in the foundation stage, a small minority of higher attainers do not achieve as well as they should.
89. By the end of Year 6, the results of 2000 national tests show that standards are average. However, compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds pupils' performance is below average. Inspection evidence shows that standards are now above average. The reason for the difference is the recent emphasis made in all lessons on the gaining of scientific enquiry skills.
90. At the time of the last inspection pupils' progress was hindered by having insufficient experience of carrying out simple experiments and making conclusions. This hindered the pupils from attaining above average standards. During this inspection pupils were observed carrying out many simple experiments in fair ways and demonstrating a good understanding of what makes a test fair, making predictions based on previous knowledge and drawing logical conclusions. This represents a great improvement on the last inspection.
91. In the infant classes, pupils study the conditions needed for seeds to germinate and can explain the differences between these and the conditions that an established plant needs to grow. They investigate how ice changes to water and how the process can be speeded up or slowed down. Pupils in Year 1 are able to sequence many life cycles confidently. For example, the pupils were challenged to sequence the six stages of life for a ladybird. Pupils did this well and even had the confidence to correct the teacher when she made deliberate (planned) mistakes.
92. In the junior classes, pupils study the factors that increase or decrease air resistance in a moving object and make comparisons of materials and the way they reflect sound. In this lesson pupils were able to explain well what sound interference was and were able to use their

experience of other types of waves in their explanation. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 thoroughly investigated air resistance using parachutes and other materials. By the end of the investigation they were able to draw clear conclusions.

93. Pupils achieve well overall at both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. This is due to the quality of the support given to these pupils. Progress in individual lessons is good where the teaching is lively, well planned and has a sharp, clear focus. In the infant classes, pupils make satisfactory progress. They experience a good introduction to scientific ideas. For example, they are able to sort materials accurately and are able to make suggestions about their use from their properties.
94. Pupils make good progress in the junior classes and those with special educational needs also make good progress. Pupils know an appropriate range of scientific facts and ideas and use technical vocabulary with increasing precision. They carry out many investigations and experiments. They record results with great care and attention. For example, in Year 5, pupils were investigating how to control the brightness of bulbs in a circuit and were able to suggest and carry out several methods. This included a parallel arrangement. They were able to make accurate predictions about brightness where they could explain their results using the idea of energy flow.
95. The attitude of pupils to their learning is good throughout the school because teachers' behavioural expectations are high. Pupils are very keen to take part in lessons and answer questions. Pupils are encouraged to make suggestions and make comparisons. They readily take these opportunities to demonstrate and practise their well developed speaking and listening skills. Behaviour in lessons was very good with high levels of concentration even at the end of a long hot afternoon. Co-operation levels between pupils are good which reflects the caring ethos of the whole school.
96. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good throughout the school and promotes good progress overall. All pupils enjoy science and capture the enthusiasm of their teachers. Teachers have adequate subject knowledge but some lack confidence. The best teaching seen clearly demonstrated the application and ability to develop lessons in an interesting way. This was underpinned by an imaginative use of resources that were very well prepared. Clear explanations and questions asked were well thought out and designed to give as much information about the pupils' understanding of the topic as possible. In less successful lessons there was a lack of clear direction and some muddled approaches led to less satisfactory achievement. In some lessons expectations of the highest attainers are not sufficiently high and opportunities to challenge these pupils were not consistently taken up. This was most noticeable in the areas of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical science. Teachers manage their classes well and make very good use of literacy skills - for instance, effective questioning and the development of scientific vocabulary - which greatly enhances the learning undertaken by the pupils.
97. The subject has been closely monitored and its performance analysed by the subject co-ordinator who is at present on maternity leave. The management of the subject has contributed strongly to the improvements seen in science since the last inspection. Science is well supported by a school policy and scheme of work, which provides good coverage of all aspects of this subject. The foundation stage prepares pupils well for the National Curriculum. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum overall. Day to day assessments do not yet fully affect lesson planning and this explains why higher attaining pupils in some lessons are not sufficiently challenged. Resources are adequate but insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to enhance science teaching and learning. Good attention is paid to the health and safety aspects of this subject.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Judgements are based on scrutiny of work, work on display and on the one lesson seen during the inspection.

99. Standards are good throughout the school and this is good improvement since the previous inspection, with pupils achieving well for their ages. In the infant classes, art is well-used to support pupils' learning in subjects of the curriculum; for example, food technology, literacy and history – particularly the three-dimensional houses on London Bridge against a painted background of the Great Fire of London. Year 2 pupils look closely at what they see, and make good efforts to reproduce their observations of fruit and flowers, using pastels and water colours. They study the works of famous artists like Cézanne, Van Gogh and Georgia O'Keeffe and successfully produce their own painting in the same style. In the junior classes, pupils produce work in a wide range of media and genres, including observational drawings of London buildings such as the Globe Theatre, the Houses of Parliament and St. Paul's Cathedral. They work in the style of Van Gogh, Monet, Seurat, Renoir, Picasso and the fruit and vegetable pictures of Arcimboldo, producing work that is above average. Their art work supports other subjects and they illustrate poems they have studied in literacy hour, produce pastels and crayons of recognisable musical instruments, and they paint still-life pictures in water colours. Their designs for masks, based on images from Africa, are also above average. They print with lino and sponges, and make three-dimensional skeletons from art straws. In the lesson observed, the quality of teaching was good, and pupils were drawing on their visit to 'Starlight Express' for inspiration in designing new costumes or posters for the production. The teacher's clear exposition led to good learning about the effects used in posters and costumes to attract attention. Pupils understood that costume needs to be appropriate; for example, no flowers on the smoking carriage, and that colour has to match the personality of the character. They settled quietly to their tasks, responding to the teacher's high expectations both academic and behavioural. This well-planned lesson ensured that all took part and that the objectives were met.
100. Pupils' sketchbooks are used effectively for experimenting with colour and a variety of tools including pen and ink, chalk and charcoal. Their landscapes show a clear understanding of the use of perspective in art. However, pupils do not study the lives and motives of established artists, both past and present.
101. It is evident from the work seen that the quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall. Teachers plan carefully-structured topics which link to many other subjects, especially design and technology, when pupils achieve well in their illustrations for book covers and their designs for printing tee-shirts. The use of ICT is currently underdeveloped, as the school acknowledges, but this is planned for in the newly-revised scheme of work which is prioritised in the current development plan. Pupils' artistic and creative development is supported by visits to art galleries and exhibitions.
102. The co-coordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of school provision and is looking forward to exercising her role more effectively when the subject is further developed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Standards are above average throughout the school, and pupils achieve well. This has improved since the last inspection when progress was judged to be satisfactory. At that time teachers, especially in the junior classes, displayed little confidence in pupils' design skills. Design work in lessons was often over-directed by the teachers, giving pupils little opportunity to generate their own designs. Things have changed significantly. Teachers now tend towards the role of facilitators. They give pupils sufficient guidance so they have focus and direction, but they do not stifle investigation and creativity. In consequence, pupils are developing their skills well, and growing in their appreciation of the essential elements of good design.
104. Pupils' work in the infant classes shows that they are achieving well. They are developing well the important idea of fitness for purpose. Year 1 pupils, for example, have prepared varieties of pizza. They have explored texture, appearance, and even smell, to select vegetables and toppings to suit customer preferences. By Year 2, they show in their work on axles and wheels that they can evaluate and improve their designs. The photographs of their model vehicles and the notes they have made show that they have used tools and equipment to assemble rods

and cotton reels, paying particular attention to the quality of finish. They can identify and explain features that worked well and others that did not and had to be changed.

105. In the junior classes, their good achievement continues. Pupils' ideas reveal a clear understanding of the conditions in which their designs will function, and an awareness of the limitations of resources. This is because teachers challenge them well, setting precise conditions to the tasks and following this up with probing questions. For example, a Year 3 / 4 class was asked to create a pop-up book suitable for an infant. Showing examples of previously created work, the teacher asked the class to look for differences, to consider implications of use: "what would happen if...?". This made pupils think hard, so the criteria of simplicity but strength soon emerged, with higher attaining pupils also expressing well the importance that "the vocabulary mustn't be too complicated", and "they're younger than us so the pictures mustn't be too scary". Discussion rather than direction moved the lesson forward, questions tailored to ability drawing everyone in. Boys and girls worked equally well. Pupils with special educational needs received unobtrusive support where necessary, their contributions to the lesson as valued as those of all classmates. The highest attainers in the class were also able to create precisely-measured plans. The good teaching pupils receive promotes good attitudes and behaviour. Year 5 pupils handled materials responsibly, with great concern for the cleanliness and safety of everyone as they designed and printed T-shirts with permanent inks. Sharing both paints and ideas, they worked well in mixed-ability groups, discussing each other's views and adapting their approaches as necessary. They tested the print blocks they had made first on paper, to check clarity and precision. They were especially constructive in their evaluations of classmates' efforts.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school. Teachers are keen to exploit opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of design in ways that powerfully engage their attention. In consequence, immediately following a visit to London to see "Starlight Express", Year 6 embarked on tasks to create costume designs inspired by the use of materials such as latex, and the use of colour for particular effects.
107. The recently appointed co-ordinator recognises that some aspects of the construction element of the curriculum are currently underdeveloped. There is also no systematic whole-school assessment process in place. These are priorities for development in order to raise standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

108. No lessons were observed during the inspection, due to the school's topic timetable, and there is therefore insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. Other judgements are based on the scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' past work and work on display, and discussions with staff.
109. Standards of attainment are above average by the end of Year 2, which is a good improvement on the previous inspection, and broadly average by the end of Year 6. This is because the good work on mapping done in the infant classes is not sufficiently built upon in the junior classes and pupils achieve less well than they do in the earlier years. In the foundation stage, pupils have produced 'antique' maps of the land where the Bong tree grows in connection with their work in literacy. In the infant classes, pupils have completed some impressively good work on mapping, including colour keys, in their plans of their bedrooms and the school playground. They have made a good study of the Isle of Struay, linked with their literacy texts, placing the Scottish islands and mainland in the context of the United Kingdom, and looking at similarities and differences between Struay and Ashford. They are beginning to write about what they like or dislike about different places. Teachers plan together so that pupils in parallel classes receive the same experience, and there is clear adaptation of tasks to abilities, and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Handwriting and presentation vary according to ability but improve over the year to satisfactory or better levels. In the junior classes, pupils' work on rivers is supported by their accounts of their visit to the Thames Barrier, including maps of the course of the Thames. They have produced a class book, with brief pieces of writing about what they saw and explaining how the barrier works. Pupils' research into topics

about mountains and the water-cycle includes some good independent, reflective writing on how pollution threatens rivers and sometimes human life. Their clearly presented writing and illustrations show a good knowledge and understanding of the course of a river, including erosion, tributaries and meanders. Pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily although their mapping skills could be extended and improved, using their previously good skills. Work in geography is well supported by fieldwork in Year 5; for example, visiting Hastings for work on a seaside topic.

110. The co-ordinator has very good knowledge and understanding of her role, which she combines with responsibility for history. This is a positive influence on provision for the subject, which is being re-established in the school following the recent emphasis on numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology. Assessment procedures are currently being developed in line with the new National Curriculum. Resources are generally adequate, but the collection of artefacts is very small and needs to be supplemented by loans from the local authority.

HISTORY

111. Standards are above average throughout the school, and this represents good improvement since the previous inspection with pupils achieving better than expected for their ages.
112. Year 2 pupils produce good reflective writing, making comparisons on children's clothes through history, from prehistory to the present day. The descriptive labels for their pictures of Florence Nightingale's life and work show good knowledge and understanding, and higher attaining pupils accurately sequence the main events in pictures and captions. Pupils' sense of chronology is developing well with time-lines from Jesus through to the Tudors, Stuarts, Pepys, Florence Nightingale to current family generations. Pupils studying the Great Fire of London are full of enthusiasm and clearly understand what they are expected to do, demonstrating this in the good quality of their discussion in pairs. They behave very well, and all abilities achieve well in their historical knowledge, understanding and skills. Lessons are very well adapted to differing needs through the use of specific recording sheets that match levels of ability. Some pupils explain the difference between primary and secondary sources, pointing out that Pepys is a primary source because he wrote about what he saw.
113. In the junior classes, pupils in Year 3 understand how the Tudor poor did not have access to physicians but had to make do with charlatans or 'wise women' for help with their ailments. Most of them understand that social and hygienic conditions in Tudor times were very different from now. Many pupils already know of herbal remedies and the use of leeches, and they discuss this readily in pairs and small groups, responding very well to their teachers' high behavioural expectations even when they disagreed over how to treat the various illnesses. Pupils of all abilities understand that modern medical knowledge is much better than for Tudor doctors, although similarities are still evident in herbal medicine. The majority have a good knowledge and understanding of the 'plague doctor', accurately describing his clothes, his stick and his physical appearance. The majority of the groups worked out the correct treatments and their empathic writing as spouses of plague victims gave a good flavour of the period. Scrutiny of pupils' past work shows how teachers occasionally combine geography and history and they do this well; for example, in the study of Ancient Greece. There is some good independent writing from personal research on the legends of Ancient Greece, and good use of literacy skills in summarising and in pupils' empathic and reflective writing on the recount of the Battle of Marathon. Pupils' written work on their display following their visit to London shows clear knowledge of Shakespeare's Globe and the history of the Tower of London. There is also evidence to illustrate the beginning of a sense of periodisation, in the use of blocked time-lines from the Ancient Egyptians to World War Two. However, some pupils were unsure of why the period is called 'Tudor' or of how the reliability of the sources they use can be confirmed, although they do recognise fictional and non-fictional accounts from what they have read. Pupils enjoy both the reading and discussion activities, working well in groups and behaving very well.

114. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and occasionally very good. Teachers' very good relationships with their pupils ensure that there are no problems with discipline and behaviour and their displays of pupils' work, books, posters and artefacts provide a stimulating and effective learning environment. Their good questioning techniques are met with good responses, especially of the contrast between the Tudor rich and poor. Teachers plan together to make sure that pupils in parallel classes receive a similar learning experience. Although not entirely developed to take learning forward, very attractive and often informative displays enhance the environment in classrooms and public places. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use their skills in information and communication technology.
115. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge and understanding of the role and is a positive influence on the teaching and provision of the subject through her effective monitoring and evaluation. Assessment procedures are being developed in line with new curriculum requirements. Resources are adequate, with many being supplied by parents who, along with other family members, act as oral witnesses; for example, telling of their experiences as World War Two evacuees. The school makes good use of visits to places of historical interest such as the British Museum, Dover Castle and the White Cliffs Experience to enhance pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

116. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are broadly in line with those expected for the pupils' ages at the end of both key stages, and pupils are achieving as they should. The picture was similar at the time of the previous inspection, when the use of control technology was limited. This has now improved. A shortage of resources and malfunctions in available hardware currently restrict the development of skills. Pupils also make limited use of ICT in their studies across the curriculum.
117. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are broadly average. Pupils can enter information, save, and print effectively. They use the keyboard and the mouse competently. Their word-processing skills are good: they use different fonts, styles, and sizes. They locate information on animals from a CD-Rom, navigate around the screen and download text. Some Year 2 pupils explore colours and patterns; for example, in artwork inspired by Piet Mondrian. Apart from these, pupils do not greatly use ICT for investigation. In conversations, they are happy to talk about their personal use of computers at home, for example to draw, write, and play games. They were unable to give examples of everyday devices that require computer control.
118. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average. Year 6 pupils have collected information, for example on their own performances in athletics. They organise it appropriately and subsequently interpret their findings. Their word-processing skills are developing well, with particular attention to drafting and redrafting, and to the style most appropriate for the reader. From Year 3 pupils prepare messages to send via e-mail, and can describe accurately the necessary processes. Teachers make sure that pupils are aware of the dangers that e-mail and Internet communications may present. In consequence, pupils talk knowledgeably of the risks both to hardware from computer viruses and to themselves by using unauthorised chatrooms. Pupils Year 4 were delighted to explain how they had created their "Weathergen" display. They control the lights, movement, and sounds of this equipment to demonstrate various features of the weather. Year 5 pupils have used the Logo program to control the production of sets of initials effectively to specific sizes. Further displays are under construction by junior pupils but involve neither the sensing of physical data nor the exploration of patterns and relationships.
119. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers acknowledge their need to develop their subject knowledge so that their skills and expectations will better serve their pupils. To that end, all staff will begin government-funded ICT training from the Spring of 2002. At present teachers do not consistently maximise opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their work in other areas. For example, graphs and pictograms to help pupils interpret gathered data enhanced Year 1 science studies. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson and a Year 3 history lesson, classroom computers were switched on but no use of them was made nor planned for. A lesson using a drawing program gave pairs of pupils in turn a chance to explore their art skills,

but did little to support their development in the science they were studying in the rest of the lesson. The level of resources is unsatisfactory. The number of computers available for pupils is well below average so pupils have limited opportunities for “hands-on” experiences. Some equipment is outdated. Despite this, pupils enjoy their work, behave well, and are happy to talk about what they do. They are especially pleased to explain what they can do using their own equipment at home.

120. The recently-appointed subject co-ordinator is ensuring that a coherent programme of work in line with the latest National Curriculum requirements, including a detailed checklist of skills as part of the assessment system, is being implemented. The school has been successful in obtaining grant funding to address the issue of resources and to establish a computer suite, much of which may be in place in the autumn term. The school will then be well positioned to raise standards.

MUSIC

121. Very few lessons were seen during the inspection and accordingly no judgement is made on the standards of attainment, teaching and learning in the junior classes. By the end of Year 2, standards of pupils’ work are above average, and they achieve well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
122. In the infant classes, pupils successfully choose words about weather and use them to devise compositions using onomatopoeia. The lessons had a brisk pace and led to good and thoughtful discussion of how to use body parts for making music. The best lesson was extremely well-planned with a clear lesson objective, supported by purposeful activities and opportunities for the teacher to check pupils’ understanding and progress. The teacher monitored work in all groups, effectively questioning to check and extend learning, and to clarify and extend pupils’ vocabulary. In the groups, the ‘natural’ leaders of both genders took over direction to give shape to the composition. The teachers made very good use of praise and encouragement to stimulate pupils and build their confidence and self-esteem. The class was very well disciplined with pupils leaving instruments on the floor untouched until their turn to play. The teacher made very good use of time and resources and pupils of all abilities learned well. There was very good learning in terms of performing as an ensemble and critical listening, and the depth of pupils’ existing knowledge and understanding was evidence of regular and good teaching over time.
123. In the one lesson seen in the junior classes, Year 5 pupils all knew they could use their hands to clap, fingers to click as percussion music. They played their own compositions from a graphic score and discussed their work thoughtfully. They successfully matched instruments to the symbols representing them. The majority talk very knowledgeably about beats, bars, rhythm and dynamics. Some groups have difficulty keeping time in a common 4/4 beat. There was good collaborative working in this practical session, discussing and experimenting with the music they made. Work on display in the music room shows the development of composition, and pupils’ knowledge of the instruments of the orchestra. There is photographic evidence of an advanced recorder group and the choir, both of which take part in local music festivals, and give concerts at local venues. Pupils also had the opportunity to make music with the drummer from a well-established ‘pop’ group. This display is good and informative, celebrating pupils’ achievements, and parents would appreciate the opportunity to see it in the public areas of the school as a further enhancement of the environment.
124. The policy and scheme of work was recently revised, based on national guidance, and after consultation with staff. The scheme makes good links with art in the study of musicians, for example, Delius and Fleetwood Mac from Year 3 onwards. Planning is also in hand for a Music Week next year. The co-ordinator has a very good knowledge and understanding of the role, which is exercised effectively in terms of monitoring and evaluating classroom practice when the subject is a priority in the school development plan.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. **Standards in physical education are broadly average by the end of both Years 2 and 6, and pupils are achieving as expected. At the time of the previous inspection, progress was good in the infant classes and satisfactory in the junior classes. The major shortcoming identified was that teachers gave pupils little chance to observe and evaluate their own performance. This, with some exceptions, is still the case. In consequence, pupils in both key stages do not reach their full potential.**
126. Pupils in the infant classes work with enjoyment in dance, for example exploring and varying basic skills of movement and rhythm in imaginative responses to music. Taking the theme of animals and insects, they show satisfactory control and co-ordination. They need, however, constant reminders to use the available space and to be aware of each other, or they tend to crowd together. In all activities, they are aware of the need to warm up first and cool down afterwards. Boys and girls work equally well. Pupils with special educational needs keep pace with their peers. Pupils' games skills reveal some understanding of basic tactics in activities involving throwing, striking and aiming at a target. They are beginning to link these skills together and apply them in the context of team games. They behave well and co-operate with each other. They do not tend to discuss their performances because teachers point out differences rather than draw these out by probing questions. As a result, pupils' skills in evaluation are underdeveloped.
127. In the junior classes, pupils continue to work with enjoyment in all lessons, and are attentive to matters of health and safety. Their motivation increases when they compare and comment on performances to sharpen their skills. As in the infant classes, teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have sound subject knowledge. They show pupils how the work in each lesson builds on previous studies so that in principle performances may improve. Whilst they may point out good features, they do not regularly highlight pupils' shortcomings nor question them to think about why some features did not work well. Where this does occur, Year 3 pupils for example could explain why a classmate failed to strike a ball effectively in cricket: "His elbows are wrong and his feet shouldn't be like that". Both boys and girls readily explained how grip and stance should be adjusted. The evaluation of a Year 5 dance, in contrast, gave little emphasis to pupils' imperfect timing so they were unable to perform with as much precision as they could.
128. Pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 learn to swim at the local leisure centre. Standards are above average. Teachers and instructors focus on developing pupils' confidence rather than distance. Even so, by the time they leave school, all pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres and many do much more. Many pupils belong to the local swimming and diving clubs and enjoy swimming regularly outside school time.
129. Year 6 pupils also enhance their numeracy skills by charting their performances in athletics.
130. In the short time since his appointment, the co-ordinator has produced a provisional written scheme of work which links the existing scheme to Curriculum 2000. The current scheme contains detailed plans, guidance, and assessment procedures. When implemented, should provide an appropriate focus for raising standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

131. At the ages of seven and 11 years, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education often exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils are achieving well. This is an improvement on the finding of the previous inspection. Judgements in this inspection are based on classroom observations, analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' planning and displays and discussions with teachers and pupils. The caring ethos of the school supports the teaching of religious education and the subject makes a distinctive contribution to pupils' personal development. All pupils make good progress in the subject as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs are involved in all class activities and also make good progress.

132. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. In the previous inspection teaching throughout the school was reported as, 'good in each key stage although several satisfactory lessons were seen'. A strong bond of trust and support exists between pupils and teachers that promotes effective learning as pupils explore their ideas.
133. Infant pupils study many stories from the Old Testament including the finding of Moses in the bulrushes and the crossing of the Red Sea. In Year 2 pupils can identify Jewish religious artefacts used at Shabbat and are able to explain how they are used. Higher attaining pupils know that the Torah is the first five books of the Christian Bible. This level of progress has been brought about by the diligent preparation of lessons, which use a variety of strategies that match the needs and abilities of the pupils.
134. Junior pupils study a number of the world's major faiths. In a Year 6 lesson on Sikhism very good links were made, by pupils, between the belief in equality of Guru Nanak and other more modern world figures such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. This level of comparison was achieved by the thoughtful way in which the subject was approached by the teacher. The strategies used reflect the caring ethos of the school and the way in which the subject supports the schools aims. Later in the same lesson pupils were able to discuss the meaning of community within the Sikh context and were able to give reasons for the use of Singh and Kaur as names. Skilful and perceptive questioning led to pupils having the confidence to discuss these themes and have a positive influence on their progress.
135. A strength of teaching and learning throughout the school is the sensitivity and respect that teachers and pupils show towards the feelings, beliefs and opinions of others. Pupils are attentive listeners and teachers effectively build on their ideas and experiences to promote learning. Good planning and class management mean that pupils behave very well and show remarkable levels of concentration and motivation.
136. The subject is well led and is adequately resourced. The local agreed syllabus is the basis of the scheme of work and this is under constant review by the co-ordinator. Appropriate targets for development have been identified and these include increasing resources and building up the confidence of staff. The co-ordinator monitors planning and displays and gives informal advice to staff. She also undertakes classroom observations and has a clear idea of the progress that is being made by pupils. Marking is satisfactory. It is not evaluative enough and does not help the pupils understand how they can improve their work. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.