

INSPECTION REPORT

St Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School

Sidcup

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101461

Headteacher: Miss M Gurhy

Reporting inspector: Paul Missin 19227

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th March 2001

Inspection number: 213813

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Baugh Road Rectory Lane Footscray Sidcup Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, St Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs V Startup
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

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9542	Brian Jones	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?
19897	Arthur Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, physical education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14596	Tony Fiddian-Green	Team inspector	Science, design and technology, history. Special educational needs. Equality of opportunity.	
16760	Dorothy Latham	Team inspector	English, music. English as an additional language. The Foundation Stage.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Peter Chanel Catholic primary school is a school for boys and girls aged from four to 11 years. There are currently 197 pupils on roll, 99 boys and 98 girls. This is broadly average for schools of this type. Twenty-five pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals (12.7 per cent). This is broadly the same as most schools. Nineteen pupils (9.6 per cent) are on the school's special educational needs register. This is well below average and the proportion with statements of special educational need (1 per cent) is below average. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register has been halved since 1999 as a result of the school's deliberate re-assessment of individual pupils' level of need with a view to reducing it. About nine per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is higher than in most schools. Four pupils use English as an additional language and two receive specialist language support. At the time of the inspection, 30 children were in the Foundation Stage and were all taught in the Reception class. During the previous year, 13 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of admission and 12 left other than at the usual time of transfer. When children enter the school, most are achieving standards above those expected for their age. Weaknesses in the school were identified by the first OFSTED inspection in 1995 and a follow up visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in 1997 found that insufficient improvement had been made. A further full inspection in June 1999 confirmed that the school still had serious weaknesses. A subsequent HMI visit in October 2000 found that the school was then making satisfactory improvement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Peter Chanel School is a good school with many strong features. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and the children in the Foundation Stage and pupils at Key Stage 2 achieve particularly well. The headteacher leads the school effectively. The strong ethos, the vision the headteacher has for the school and the commitment to move it forward, which she shares with the governing body, are strengths of the school. The school encourages all pupils equally and parents support its work well. A current weakness in the school is the lack of progress which pupils make at Key Stage 1. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The standard of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. This results in levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science that are above average by the time pupils leave the school.
- The leadership of the headteacher is good. She has a clear plan for further improvements and she is well supported by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic governing body.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They are enthusiastic, show interest in all their work and are keen to do well.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Teaching is good; work is planned well and meets the needs of all the children.
- The school is well supported by parents. Very good links are maintained with parents who are involved well in the school's work.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.

What could be improved

- The attainment and achievement of pupils at Key Stage 1 are too low.
- Curriculum policies and guidelines in the non-core subjects (subjects other than English, mathematics and science) are not matched to Curriculum 2000 requirements.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and the progress they make in the non-core subjects are insufficiently developed.
- Subject co-ordinators of the non-core subjects have insufficient opportunity to support, monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects.
- The school library is not sufficiently attractive or well resourced.
- Children in the Foundation Stage do not have appropriate access to a separate, outdoor play and activity area.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In the short time since the school's last full OFSTED inspection in June 1999, the school has made good overall improvement. The response to some aspects of the key issues identified has been very good. For example, teachers' knowledge and understanding of what they teach, the implementation of schemes of work in the core subjects and the improvement of provision for children aged under five have all been very good. Satisfactory improvement has been made in the development of procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and in the use of assessment data, although assessment procedures in the non-core subjects are still insufficiently developed. Strengths in the leadership and management by the headteacher and governing body have been maintained. Since the last inspection, overall standards achieved have been improved. This improvement has been most marked at Key Stage 2 where standards have risen in all subjects. Standards in information and communication technology have improved at both key stages. The focused in-service training and the improved curricular planning have resulted in a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. Since the last inspection, the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced from 24 per cent to two per cent, and the proportion of very good or better teaching has been increased from five per cent to 25 per cent. The vision and strength of the headteacher and the commitment of the governing body ensure that the school has a good capacity to maintain and increase this rate of improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	B	B	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	B	E	B	B	
science	D	E	D	D	

The results of the 2000 national tests show that standards in English were above average when compared with all schools and well above average compared with similar schools. In mathematics, standards were above those expected in all and similar schools. In science, standards were below average. The school exceeded the targets set for attainment in English and mathematics in the 2000 tests and is on course to achieve its targets for 2001. The findings of this inspection are that the current Year 6 are attaining standards in English, including literacy, and in mathematics, including numeracy, and in science, that are above average. The improvement in science is the result of better curricular planning and more focused teaching, especially to older pupils at this key stage. Standards in history and design and technology are also above average. In information and communication technology, geography, art and design and physical education, pupils attain average standards. There was insufficient evidence at both key stages for a judgement to be made about attainment in music. At Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is good.

At Key Stage 1, in the 2000 national tests, pupils attained above average standards in reading and writing when compared with all schools and similar schools, and average standards in mathematics. The current Year 2 group is attaining average standards in all areas of the curriculum. The difference between this judgement and the results of the 2000 tests is explained by the fact that this is a different year group. This group has also experienced considerable changes in staffing and was part of the Reception class where provision was judged to have been unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Overall, at this key stage, pupils make insufficient progress considering the level that most attain at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and attain standards in personal, social and emotional development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative

development that are above average for their age. Attainment in communication, language and literacy is well above average.

Pupils with special educational needs reach good standards related to their previous learning and make good progress towards their individual learning plans. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well and are enabled to have increasing access to the full curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are proud of their school; they concentrate well and are keen to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good. They behave well in lessons, at lunchtime and around the school. They are courteous to teachers, visitors and to each other.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils show a concern for those less fortunate than themselves and show a keen interest in improving the environment of the school. Pupils work co-operatively in class and relate well to their teachers and to other adults.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. The attendance rate is slightly above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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.

During the inspection, 25 per cent of the teaching observed was very good or better and 98 per cent was at least satisfactory. A very small proportion was excellent or unsatisfactory. The strongest teaching was found in Key Stage 2 and in the Foundation Stage. At Key Stage 2, three-quarters of the teaching was good or better and nearly one lesson in three was very good or better. In the Foundation Stage, all the teaching was good or better and a third was very good. Strengths in teaching are the detailed lesson plans which teachers use, the interesting and challenging activities which are provided and the clever way in which pupils' interest and motivation are maintained. These features have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Across the school, the quality of pupils' learning matches the quality of teaching found. Shortcomings in teaching are mainly related to the lack of consistent strategies for managing pupils. Occasionally, pupils are allowed to call out inappropriately and this limits the effectiveness of their learning and that of others in the class. The overall quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It is satisfactory in all subjects except physical education where it is good. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. It is good in all subjects, except in information and communication technology and art where it is satisfactory. There is insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made about teaching in music at both key stages.

The quality of teaching and pupils' learning in the Foundation Stage is good, and is very good in the area of communication, language and literacy. It is also good for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. This strong teaching supports the good progress that these pupils make. Overall, the school meets the needs of all its pupils satisfactorily.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are being implemented well. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well catered for. However, there are insufficient extracurricular opportunities available for pupils. Policy and guidelines statements for the non-core subjects are insufficiently detailed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. A strong feature of the provision is the way in which this work is fully integrated into regular classwork and into the full work of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Two pupils who have recently joined the school are being encouraged well and are being enabled to have a fuller access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils clearly appreciate the difference between right and wrong and they are all encouraged to become full members of the school community. Insufficient reference is made to the culture and lifestyle of our own ethnic groups.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Policies for child protection and health and safety do not include most recent regulations and recommendations. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science are good but are less well developed in other subjects. Procedures for improving attendance are very good.

The school develops very effective links with parents who contribute well to the progress that pupils make.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's leadership of the school is good. She has moved the school on well since the last inspection and is supported effectively in her role by the deputy headteacher. Subject co-ordinators have been involved well in monitoring planning and sampling pupils' work but less in monitoring teaching and learning in the classrooms.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. With the increased information provided by the headteacher, the governors now have a good view of the school's work. Committees are active and well led. A strength is the vision and commitment shared between the governors and the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Careful target setting and clear analysis of assessment data in English, mathematics and science have been major factors in securing the good improvement achieved by the school.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Funds for staff training and for pupils with special educational needs are used well and development priorities are appropriately costed. However, a shortcoming is the lack of strategic planning beyond the current year. The school makes sure it gets best value when resources are purchased or improvements made to the building and environment.

Overall, the school's accommodation is satisfactory. Outdoor facilities are spacious, attractive and imaginatively developed. A new information and communication technology suite has been developed and new computers recently delivered. However, there are shortcomings in the existing library and there is no separate outdoor play and activity area for children in the Foundation Stage. The four Key Stage 2 classes are taught in mobile buildings separate from the main school and some curricular opportunities are limited by lack of water in these classrooms. Teachers are supported well but there is insufficient guidance for teachers new to the profession.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children attain good standards. • This is a very caring school where good attitudes and values are promoted. • The school promotes environmental awareness well. • Children behave well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision for information and communication technology. • Opportunities in physical education. • Information about children's progress. • How the school works with parents. • The range of extracurricular activities.

The findings of the inspection confirm all the parents' positive views of the school. The report acknowledges that there are deficiencies in resources in information and communication technology, which the school is quickly redressing, and agrees with parents that extracurricular opportunities are unsatisfactory. It does not support parents' other concerns. Pupils achieve soundly in physical education, good information is provided on pupils' progress and the school works well with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter school achieving standards that are above average for their age. By the end of the Reception year, most are achieving standards in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development that are above average for their age. Standards in communication, language and literacy are well above average. Children feel safe and secure and their confidence soon develops. Most children speak confidently and at length and enjoy talking to each other and adults in the school. They all recognise most letters of the alphabet and most are reading simple books and stories. They add and subtract one or two when dealing with numbers up to ten and name simple geometric shapes. Children make porridge, add different flavours and then make choices about which they prefer. They move confidently around the hall and achieve well in their drawing and painting.

2. In the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000, standards in reading and writing were above average for all schools and for similar schools. Standards in mathematics were average for all and for similar schools. Overall, standards have risen since 1998 when attainment in reading and mathematics was below average. In the 2000 teacher assessment tests in science, the proportion of pupils achieving expected levels was above average.

3. The findings of this inspection are that in Year 2, pupils attain average standards in most subjects, including literacy and numeracy. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made about attainment in music. The differences between this judgement and the higher standards achieved in the 2000 tests are explained by the effect on the class of extended periods of supply teaching and the lack of a consistent approach experienced by the current Year 2 group. Additionally, this group was in the Reception class at the time of the previous inspection when their curriculum was judged to have been unsatisfactory. The judgement of the inspection on the present Year 2 group is similar to the school's own assessment of their likely attainment. Since the last inspection, standards in science, information and communication technology and physical education have been improved and average standards maintained in other subjects. There were no clear judgements made of attainment in design and technology, geography or history in the last inspection report. Pupils at Key Stage 1 reach satisfactory standards overall, but do not make sufficient progress considering their above average levels when they enter the school.

4. At Key Stage 1, pupils attain satisfactory standards but some shortcomings limit the progress made, especially by the more able. In English, pupils speak confidently, are keen to join in discussions and respond well to questions. Sometimes, their concentration wanes and instructions have to be repeated. Most read accurately and enjoy stories and finding out facts. They are keen to write their own stories and pieces of description. However, some of their story writing is not organised enough and key ideas are not properly developed. In mathematics, pupils understand addition and subtraction facts to ten, recognise halves and quarters and know the names of common two and three-dimensional shapes. In science, pupils know how some foods change as they are

heated and that a complete circuit is required to make a bulb light. In art and design, pupils paint effective patterns based on their observation of arches, brick patterns and stained glass windows in the local church. Pupils design, make and evaluate their wheeled vehicles, and in geography, they draw simple maps of their journey to school. In history, pupils have a sound understanding of the events surrounding the Great Fire of London, and in music, most sing satisfactorily in assembly. They write their names and captions for work displayed in class on the computer and print it out, but better progress is limited by lack of access to an appropriate number of computers and other hardware. It is planned to address this when the new computer suite is fully operational. In physical education, pupils move confidently in gymnastics, change direction and then hold a balance.

5. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, pupils attained standards in English and mathematics that were above average. When compared with similar schools, attainment in mathematics was above average and in English, it was well above average. Standards in science were below average compared with all schools and similar schools. Since 1997, standards in English and mathematics have been above the national average, except for a dip in mathematics in 1999. In science, standards have been consistently below the national average, and were well below in 1997 and 1999. The school had set challenging targets for pupils' achievement in the 2000 tests in English and mathematics and they were exceeded. Attainment in English was well above that predicted. The targets set for 2001 are realistic and the school is on course to meet them.

6. The findings of this inspection are that in Year 6 pupils reach above average standards in English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy. Standards in science have risen significantly since last year as a result of the good curricular coverage and the good quality of the teaching, especially to older pupils at Key Stage 2. Standards are above average in history and design and technology and average in information and communication technology, geography, art and physical education. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made about attainment in music. Since the last inspection, the school has secured good, all round improvement in standards. Average standards in English, mathematics and science are now good, well below average standards in information and communication technology are now satisfactory, and unsatisfactory standards in physical education are now average. Overall, pupils reach good standards at Key Stage 2.

7. At Key Stage 2, in English, pupils listen with good concentration and speak well when expressing their own ideas and opinions. Most read fluently and with good expression, but the research skills of several pupils are underdeveloped. Pupils plan their written work well, and their writing is fluent and well presented. In mathematics, pupils add and subtract four digit numbers confidently. They appreciate equivalence in fractions and know how to calculate the perimeter of irregular shapes. In science, they appreciate ways of reducing air resistance and know the functions of some parts of their bodies, such as the respiratory system. In art, pupils make careful observational drawings of Henry VIII and design and make realistic models of Anderson shelters. In geography, pupils locate places using four-figure grid references and know some of the symbols used on weather maps. Pupils know details of the period of history which they are studying, such as Alfred the Great and life in the 1940s. In information and communication technology, pupils make decisions in their role-play game and find out information about fashion changes in the twentieth century. However, better progress is limited by lack of access to an appropriate number of

computers and other hardware. In music, several pupils perform well in the school orchestra, and in physical education, pupils swim confidently and develop their skills in different strokes.

8. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily as they move through the school. Most children attain standards above average for their age when they enter the school and make sound progress and attain good standards by the end of the Reception year. Progress is slower in Key Stage 1, and by the age of seven, pupils attain average standards. In the current Year 2 group, some pupils are not achieving high enough standards. The progress that pupils make is accelerated in Key Stage 2, particularly in Year 6, and they attain good overall standards by the time they leave the school. Some more able pupils are not being fully challenged in science. Across the school, the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are being implemented well.

9. Overall, pupils who have special educational needs attain good standards for their ability and make good progress towards the targets set for them. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make sound progress whilst those at Key Stage 2 make good progress. This reflects the different quality of teaching and support given at these key stages. These targets are reviewed every term, and those for annual review help in focusing the school's provision for the pupils concerned. All pupils across the school have targets, and pupils who have special educational needs are simply integrated into the system. This provides a high level of inclusion for them, which is very good.

10. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, against their capabilities and their previous learning. Those at an early stage of the acquisition of English have made a good start in learning the language and are beginning to speak, understand, read and write English. For example, one younger pupil at Key Stage 1, after only a few weeks in school, is already reading at a level that is appropriate for the age of English speaking pupils. An older pupil at Key Stage 2, despite having no English a few months ago, is now able to read at a simple level, and to write a series of sentences in English. He is also able to contribute to class discussions.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The previous OFSTED inspection reported that pupils had satisfactory attitudes to learning. The school has made significant improvements since then and now they are very good. Pupils are proud of their school and they concentrate hard and work independently. Their attitudes were very good or excellent in 34 per cent of the lessons seen, and good in a further 34 per cent. They respond well to their teachers, concentrate fully and stay on task. These attitudes contribute positively to the good standards that pupils attain. One example of their good attitudes was the way in which most responded with great enthusiasm to the voluntary projects which the school set during the last summer holiday. Over 80 pupils completed their projects, many with depth and detail. In another example, Years 1 and 2 pupils covered a huge range of towns and countries in recording the travels of Barnaby Bear. Pupils with special educational needs work hard and make good gains in their learning.

12. The previous OFSTED report commented on the good behaviour of most pupils. These strengths have been continued. Pupils behave well in lessons, breaks and at lunchtime. They are courteous to teachers, visitors and to one another. They hold doors open at every opportunity and respect their school environment and keep it tidy. They dress neatly in the school's smart uniform

and move around the school in a very orderly way. A few pupils are inclined to fidget in the very few lessons where the teacher's behaviour management is less sound. Pupils of all ages win praise for their good behaviour when they make outside visits. For example, children in the Foundation Stage stayed calm on their visit to the local supermarket, despite their intense excitement. The school ensures freedom from oppressive behaviour, racism and sexism. Its success in including pupils from distant countries showed when pupils affectionately sang 'Happy Birthday' to a newly arrived pupil. Parents say that bullying is rare and the school takes great care to defuse a problem. The school has not excluded any pupil in the past or present year.

13. Relationships at school are good. Pupils work together very well in whole classes, groups and pairs. Year 6 pupils play with the children from the Reception class when they stay in their classrooms during wet lunchtimes. Some of the larger boys become gentle giants. Pupils relate very well to their teachers and other adults. They follow the adults' models of teamwork and friendship to develop caring relationships within the school.

14. Pupils show good initiative and responsibility. They actively collect for charities, including funds for pupils from the school and the parish to travel to Lourdes. Some make effective use of their own ideas. For example, a Year 3 pupil raised £47 for the British Heart Foundation with a sponsored swim, and a Reception child gave up sweets for a week, and raised £20 for the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development. Pupils take responsibility for tasks in their classroom and around the school. The school is increasing opportunities for responsibility, and pupils are taking them. During the inspection, a Year 6 pupil was carrying out a survey to find out how many girls in her class would like to be able to wear trousers.

15. Children in the Foundation Stage demonstrate good attitudes to school and are eager to learn. Their behaviour is also very good. They are interested in new information, enjoy stories and rhymes, and like to explore. The teacher and her assistant encourage independence appropriate to this young age very well, and opportunities are built into lessons and activities. Relationships between children and between adults and children are very good.

16. Attendance is satisfactory. At 94.9 per cent in the past year, it has gone up by over one per cent since the previous inspection. It is now higher than the national primary average. There are very few unauthorised absences. Punctuality is good. Pupils arrive promptly each morning, and make a brisk start to their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning are good, although there is some variation between different parts of the school. They are good in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Forty-one lessons or part lessons were observed. The quality of teaching was very good or better in 25 per cent, good in 46 per cent and satisfactory in 27 per cent. There was an equally small proportion of lessons where teaching was excellent or unsatisfactory. These figures represent a clear improvement compared with those at the last inspection. At that time, only five per cent of lessons were judged to have been very good or better and 24 per cent were unsatisfactory. The quality of pupils' learning closely matches the figures and the judgements for the quality of teaching. There is no significant difference between the judgements

of teaching and learning for boys and girls or different ethnic groups. The needs of all pupils are met well at Key Stage 2 and soundly at Key Stage 1.

18. At the time of the last inspection, teachers' lesson planning was inconsistent; many had insufficient knowledge of the subject they were teaching and pupils were not managed well. Since then, there has been significant improvement in all of these areas, and now they are important strengths. Teachers' planning is now detailed and thorough; their subject knowledge is now good, and they establish calm, purposeful working relationships with pupils in their class. Teachers are now clear about the learning intended in each lesson and work is better matched to the ability of pupils in the class. Teaching time is used effectively and pupils are managed well. Homework is used satisfactorily to support work done in the class and the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's monitoring of teaching has been effective. Overall, the school's response to this key issue at the last inspection has been very good. The good teaching in the school encourages good learning by the pupils. They try hard, show great interest and commitment and are keen to do their best.

19. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. There are several significant strengths in the teaching to this group. Relationships and the management of pupils are good. The teacher shows sensitivity to both the personal and academic needs of these young children. She demonstrates good subject knowledge and the teaching of basic skills is effective. Planning at every level is always thorough and detailed and well evaluated. Some very good strategies are employed in teaching. Notable are the use of first hand-experience in mathematics and in scientific investigations, the use of appropriate language and the introduction of specific vocabulary. Also, the teacher uses interesting play opportunities in a planned way, together with imaginative approaches for capturing the interest of the children. These help in maintaining very good levels of motivation and improve children's learning. All the recommended areas of learning are well taught, and the teaching of language and literacy is a particular strength. The learning support assistant makes a valuable contribution to the quality of the children's learning and their progress, by providing increased support for the class activities. All ability groups, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress.

20. At Key Stage 1, the overall quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning are satisfactory. During the inspection, 12 lesson observations were made at this key stage. In half the teaching was good, and in half it was satisfactory. At this key stage, the quality of teaching is good in physical education and satisfactory in other subjects. There was insufficient evidence in music for an overall judgement to be made.

21. At Key Stage 1, teachers plan their work well and pupils are managed soundly. A gymnastics lesson to older pupils illustrated several features of good teaching. The teacher's planning was detailed, with clear identification of the learning intended in the lesson. This was helpfully shared with the pupils before they entered the hall ensuring that they were clear about what was expected of them before the lesson started. The teacher had organised a good progression of activities through which pupils developed their movement skills and also the ability to link floor and apparatus work.

22. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well, especially in Year 6. During the inspection, 23 lessons were observed at this key stage. One was excellent, seven were very good, nine were good, five were satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. The strongest teaching was in Year 6 where seven out of ten lessons were very good or better. At this

key stage, teaching is good in English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, and in all other subjects except information and communication technology and art where it is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence in music for an overall judgement to be made.

23. At Key Stage 2, teachers use questioning effectively both to assess and extend pupils' understanding. Work is well planned and links with previous activities are clearly established in lesson introductions. Teachers ensure that activities are interesting and challenging and lessons are taught at an appropriately brisk pace. A history lesson to older pupils, who were making presentations that they had prepared on changes in society since the 1940s, illustrated several features of very good teaching. All the pupils had been very well motivated, challenged and prepared previously. The teacher cleverly developed pupils' appreciation further by asking probing questions of each presenter, and all pupils were encouraged to make their own notes on what was being presented. The effect was a very successful lesson where pupils made good progress in several aspects of their learning. Features of unsatisfactory teaching and shortcomings in teaching in other lessons include where pupils call out inappropriately and spoil the concentration of others and where teachers give insufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve the recording and presentation of their work.

24. Across the school, the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are being implemented well. Effective in-service training has improved teachers' knowledge and understanding of the respective requirements. Teachers follow the recommended format of the National Literacy Strategy well. Their planning is detailed and the texts used are well suited to the interests and abilities of the pupils. Teachers organise the different elements of the literacy hour well and ensure that work is well matched to the levels of ability in the class. Teachers are also confident with the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The learning intended in the oral starter is identified and pupils' mental work is being built up well through appropriate quick fire questions. Teachers create good working relationships in their classes and effectively reinforce what has been learnt in the summing up session at the end of the lesson.

25. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. All the teaching is undertaken within the class setting and the work is founded well on the normal work of the class. In most lessons, work provided is well matched to pupils' abilities, and often the teacher works with these pupils. The personal development of pupils with special educational needs is good, and they are supported by sound planning.

26. A specialist teacher for the teaching of English as an additional language visits the school for one afternoon a week. As well as giving specific individual tuition to the two pupils at an early stage of acquisition, and carrying out assessments, she provides advice for the class teachers of these pupils to help them support the pupils in their general classwork. The teaching of these pupils is good. The class teachers give very good support, are aware of their needs and respond to them with sensitivity and care

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

27. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, offering the pupils a sound range of learning opportunities. There is swimming for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 and there are opportunities for instrumental music tuition. Teaching time in all three key stages meets national recommendations. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English, although less time is spent on science than in most primary schools. The school is implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and this is having a positive impact on standards in English and mathematics by the time the pupils leave the school.

28. The teachers plan the curriculum very well. This is a good improvement from the previous inspection, which found planning unsatisfactory. A clear overall curricular plan shows where elements of each subject are to be taught to each class during the year. Half-termly forecasts show how each subject is to be taught progressively during the term. In their weekly plans, teachers identify the learning intended in each lesson, activities to be followed, and details of any support to be given by adults. There are also good opportunities for teachers to make comments on aspects of their teaching. The thoroughness of the planning ensures a smooth progression in pupils' learning as they move from one class to another. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of up-to-date policies for subjects other than English, mathematics and science, to offer teachers guidance on practice.

29. The quality and range of all the opportunities for learning for children in the Foundation Stage are good, and in communication, language and literacy, they are very good. All areas of learning and development are fully implemented, and the curriculum as a whole is good. This is a substantial improvement from the situation reported in the last inspection, when the Foundation Stage curriculum, in terms of both planning and implementation, was part of a key issue for improvement. Personal and social development is well provided for, and takes place in many ways. Children are encouraged to be confident, develop independence, and think for themselves. In language and literacy, the National Literacy Strategy is well reflected and established. Reading is carefully taught; the enjoyment of stories is an important element and the teaching of letters, and the sound they make, is a strength. Mathematics is well taught with good provision for the use of first-hand experience and careful progression. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented and adapted. In developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them, very good attention is paid to the provision of a variety of first-hand experiences and to appropriate vocabulary. Creative and expressive areas of learning are also well planned and taught, and encompass different aspects of music, art and drama. In physical development, the development of larger movements is well catered for in formal physical education lessons, but there is a lack of easy access to a separate outdoor play area. This limits children's ability to make choices in their learning and restricts the development of important physical and social skills. Manual dexterity is well supported by a variety of activities.

30. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is good and they are fully integrated into all aspects of the school. Learning support assistants, when required, work well with pupils who need the extra help. There is a commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion for all pupils who have special educational needs, and class teachers provide targets for their individual education plans. These are reviewed every term.

31. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire felt that the school provides a sound range of activities outside lessons, although a sizeable minority do not. Although the school enhances pupils' learning through a good range of visits and through using the knowledge and expertise of visitors, provision for regular extracurricular clubs is currently unsatisfactory. At the time of the inspection, the only such activity on offer was a weekly dance club, which pupils have to pay to attend. The school has, in the past, offered other extracurricular activities, some of which have ceased through lack of support. There are plans for paid coaching sessions in football, cricket and short tennis for the summer term.

32. The school makes good use of the community to enhance pupils' learning. The parish priest celebrates mass in school and the deacon leads some assemblies. The pupils have led a termly mass at the local church and have provided the music for it. They have also played and sang for residents of Baugh House and for members of the Forty plus Club. The teachers use the locality soundly to extend learning in subjects such as history and geography and they make use of visitors whenever possible. These have included nurses from Queen Mary's Hospital, fire and police officers, an author and theatre groups.

33. There are good links with the pre-school playgroup based at the church and this is helping with children's transfer into the Foundation Stage. There are good links, too, with the local secondary schools to which Year 6 pupils transfer. Secondary school staff visit St Peter Chanel to talk to the older pupils and there are opportunities for the pupils to visit the secondary schools before transfer. Academic records are passed on to the secondary schools.

34. The school provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education. This represents a good response to a minor issue identified at the last inspection. The school now sets a high priority on helping pupils to care for themselves and others. This is done as pupils learn about healthy lifestyles in science lessons and the way in which the school encourages a balanced diet, both in school meals and packed lunches. The effectiveness of this was commented on at the parents' pre-inspection meeting when a parent said, 'My son now asks for an apple, instead of a bag of crisps'. High quality outside speakers enhance pupils' understanding of health issues. The school nurse leads Years 5 and 6 in talking about bodily changes and the benefits and disadvantages of medicines. The community police liaison officer gives effective sessions on keeping safe and drug awareness.

35. The school's ethos plays a strong part in its good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The previous inspection reported sound provision with some weaknesses, but the school has made significant improvements since then.

36. The good provision for pupils' spiritual development goes beyond the daily assemblies. Classes pray thoughtfully and respectfully at the start and end of each day. The behaviour policy encourages pupils and teachers to look for the best in one another. High quality teaching enables pupils to feel special when, for example, they solve a tricky problem in mathematics. An enthralling moment came in a 'Deaf Awareness' assembly last term. A pupil introduced an older brother who has hearing impairment. Pupils were fascinated to see how he communicated in sign language.

37. The school has improved its good provision for moral development reported by the previous inspection. It is now very good. A positive system of rewards and sanctions underpins the rules of

behaviour. All staff are good role models and treat pupils consistently and fairly. Pupils understand clearly what is right and what is wrong. If they have done something wrong, they tell the truth.

38. The school manages pupils' social development very well. Parents agree that it helps their children to become mature and responsible. Pupils work and play together harmoniously. They welcome visitors to school and sing to residents in the nearby senior citizens' home. Pupils gain from events such as the school discos and the chance to run stalls at the summer and Martinmas fetes. The school encourages equal numbers of boys and girls to sit at each lunch table. It asks Year 6 pupils to help the Reception class during wet lunchtimes. The two age groups get on very well together. The week's residential visit for Year 6 pupils has a positive effect on their social skills. Pupils with special educational needs play their full part in the school community.

39. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school has made progress since the previous inspection. It promotes Western culture in lessons on literacy, history, art and music. Recent events include several musical performances and a visit by a writer of children's books. Some pupils dressed up and paraded as favourite characters in fiction; others saw a Shakespeare play. A drama workshop made pupils aware of the impact of the Second World War on the lives of their families. Pupils have visited a seaside town and the National Gallery. The previous report noted a lack of coverage of the world's cultural diversity. The school has brought in artefacts from India and Australasia, and pictures from Africa. Pupils take part in traditional Irish dancing and the school orchestra. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about the different cultures of the world, especially the music, art and lifestyles from the ethnic groups that make up our own multicultural society. This was also a minor issue identified at the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school provides satisfactory care for pupils' welfare, child protection, and health and safety. Policies for child protection and health and safety are clear, but do not include the most up-to-date regulations and recommendations. Members of the governing body and the headteacher carry out a full safety check of the premises each term. The school is clean and pupils' toilets are in good condition. After years of leakage, the school has obtained a new roof for the Years 3 and 4 mobile and this is now watertight. The school has good arrangements for first aid. The secretary has a current first aid certificate and other members of staff have trained in first aid for schools. The school sends a note to parents if a child has a head injury. The headteacher is the designated teacher for child protection. She has received full training and ensures that staff are aware of current issues and requirements. The school works closely with local agencies and follows local procedures.

41. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development. Teachers know their pupils well. A written record of pupils' strengths, weaknesses and achievements is maintained in the achievement and behaviour book. The headteacher keeps in close touch with the pupils, and knows their needs, strengths and ambitions. The school supports pupils' personal development well. It encourages them to care for one another and be kind. Its initiative in asking the older pupils to play with the younger ones is proving successful. The school responds positively when pupils make suggestions. For example, the recycling bins at the front of the school are the result of pupils wanting to protect the environment. In assemblies, the school asks even the youngest pupils' opinions and gets them to 'speak up'. As a result, pupils develop their confidence and self-awareness. The

school's annual week-long residential visit for Year 6 pupils has an important effect in preparing them for life outside the school. The school plans to introduce a school council. Parents answering the questionnaire say that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible.

42. The behaviour policy is good and clear and the school plans to refine it further. It is based on positive rewards and on valuing everyone in the school community as an individual. Pupils receive praise and stickers immediately and every week, two pupils from each class win awards at the weekly achievement assemblies. The school recognises special contributions at its annual 'Celebration of Achievement'. Within the behaviour policy, there are good procedures to deter bullying. Arrangements for the supervision of pupils at lunchtime and at their breaktimes are effective. Two teachers by rota are responsible for the playgrounds at morning break. Five supervisors provide support at lunchtime. The good policy and procedures maintain a positive atmosphere for learning throughout the day.

43. The school has developed good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. The teachers include opportunities for assessment in their half termly planning. The deputy headteacher co-ordinates assessment well and she has developed a clear policy. The pupils are assessed at the end of each half term in work covered in English, mathematics and science. The teachers keep simple, but effective, class record sheets which list those pupils who have exceeded the expected levels of attainment and those who have not reached them. Issues for future planning are noted, such as 'Focus on problem-solving strategies; what is the question asking?' (Year 6 mathematics) and 'More work needed on place value of decimals' (Year 5 mathematics). This is a good improvement from the previous inspection when a key issue was to make more effective use of assessment for teaching and planning. Information gained from other assessments, such as national end of key stage tests in Years 2 and 6 and optional national tests in other years, is now being analysed, in order to highlight areas of weakness in learning and to help plan subsequent work. The teachers set individual targets to help the pupils improve attainment in English and mathematics. In science, there is a useful whole school collection of samples of pupils' work at agreed National Curriculum levels, which helps the teachers in the accuracy and consistency of their assessments. However, there are no whole school procedures for assessing and recording attainment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science apart from teachers' marking of pupils' work.

44. The school has very good procedures to promote attendance. Registration takes place promptly each morning, and the doors close at the time of registration. This has improved punctuality. Record keeping is exemplary. Teachers enter weekly ongoing totals for individuals and their whole class. The importance of good attendance and punctuality is promoted well across the school through the half termly awards which are made for the highest achieving pupils. Scrutiny during the inspection showed that all teachers maintain the registers correctly. The school works hard to discourage parents from taking holidays in term time, and has had some success in this respect. If parents do not explain an absence, the secretary telephones them or sends a note. The educational welfare officer visits the school once each fortnight and provides good support when necessary.

45. Children in the Foundation Stage feel safe and secure, and the relationships between adults and children are good. Pastoral care of children is good, with support and care employed as necessary. The programme of teaching and learning is well planned to meet the varying needs of young children.

Assessment and monitoring of progress is good, and the recently introduced procedures, which are based on the nationally recommended sequence of skill development, are to be shared with the school's main feeder play-group. This is very good practice. Although major evaluations of children's progress are made half-termly, there is good day-to-day ongoing assessment practice. Induction procedures are appropriate and ease the children's settling in at the start of their school life.

46. The care and support of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are good. Targets, which are included in individual education plans, are appropriate and measurable. Where necessary, outside help is used appropriately for more advice. There are reviews of individual targets held every term. Pupils with special educational needs have equal opportunities for inclusion in all school activities, and are fully integrated into the life of the school. No extra assessment is used for pupils who have special educational needs unless there is a specific reason.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents have a good opinion of the school. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents said it is an open school, and they find it easy to talk to the class teacher or headteacher. However, whilst most responses to the questionnaire are positive, a few parents are less enthusiastic. This is partly because some parents do not recognise the substantial improvements the school has made recently. The school has not sufficiently celebrated its achievements with all parents. Two parents out of five do not agree that the school has a good range of extracurricular activities. The inspection team finds that this concern is justified. At the parents' meeting, a father said, 'It's something we once had, and now we've lost.'

48. The school works hard to extend its very good links with parents. This has maintained and developed a strength identified at the previous inspection. The school involved parents in seven different meetings last term. Parents value their termly meetings with class teachers because this gives them a chance to discuss their child's learning targets. Other meetings included information about how Curriculum 2000 would affect their children's learning and parent volunteers came to learn how to help pupils in class. Other parents took part in a session about children's reading, led by a lecturer from the University of Kent. Parents also keep in touch through informal meetings and home/school contact books. The school has a thriving parent teacher association, and parents support it strongly. Parents of children in the Reception class have already joined the committee. The programme includes discos, which build up pupils' social skills. Pupils take responsibility for stalls at the summer and Martinmas fairs.

49. The school provides very good information for parents. At the last inspection, it was judged to be satisfactory. It issues attractive and informative newsletters each week. The prospectus and the governors' Annual Report are clear and detailed. The annual reports to parents show sympathetic understanding of pupils' academic and personal development. They cover English, mathematics and science in detail and provide appropriate attendance and punctuality figures. However, many of last year's reports did not set targets. As the assessment system develops, an increasing amount of data will be available for targets to be included in future reports.

50. Parents contribute well to their children's learning. The impact of their involvement in the school is very good. Twenty volunteers help regularly in class and they are very effective. For example, some parents took a cycling proficiency course for Year 6 pupils last summer, and other parents have run soccer and gardening clubs. Parents join teachers on trips to local sites of interest. Almost 50 per cent of families took part in ambitious project work last summer holiday. Most parents keenly support the school's homework policy and a high proportion of pupils read with their parents regularly at home. Parents' commitment to the school environment is tireless and ingenious. They decorate classrooms and give extensive help with gardening. They recently added a woodchip surface to the playground, which has enabled pupils to play outside when the weather has been wet. In the week of the inspection, the newsletter asked parents to help with the planting of hedgerows and silver birch trees, and to create a giant chessboard.

51. Parents are involved well with the school when their children are first admitted. When children are ready to start school, parents receive invitations to visit with their children, and while the parents meet with the headteacher, children enjoy activities in their classroom with their teacher. Children may make further visits if their parents wish. The teacher also visits the feeder playgroups before children enter. Children with autumn birthdays begin in September; the others start in January. The assessments made soon after entry are discussed individually with parents, and the targets generated from them are also discussed. The teacher meets parents each term to discuss new targets for learning on an individual basis.

52. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are informed well about the support given at school, and their views are sought and recorded at annual reviews. Parents are well aware of the school's targets for pupils who have special educational needs, and they are involved in the discussions about them. They have the opportunity to attend parents' evenings and teachers record the contact they have with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher's leadership of the school is good. Her strength, vision and commitment to the school have been instrumental in moving the school forward since the last inspection. These strengths were recognised at the time of the last OFSTED inspection but at that time the headteacher had only been recently appointed and they had not had time to have an impact on the work of the school. The strengthening of the school's management, confirmed by the most recent HMI visit, has been successfully maintained. The headteacher has provided clear targets for improvement and she combines well a drive for high academic standards with a concern for the spiritual and social welfare of all the pupils. The school's aims and mission statement are clearly being met through its work. The headteacher has developed an effective partnership with the deputy headteacher and this relationship strengthens the school's management. A strength of the management procedures is the way in which all teachers have been involved with the monitoring of planning and the sampling of pupils' work. Regular staff meetings are organised to discuss these issues and this has ensured that the quality of curricular planning and the standards of pupils' work have been a strong focus throughout the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have undertaken regular monitoring of teaching and learning. Although subject co-ordinators have been involved well in the monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work, they have been insufficiently involved in supporting and monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects. This aspect of a key issue from the last inspection has not

been fully addressed. The school plans to broaden the representation on the senior management team to include the Foundation Stage teacher in order to strengthen its work.

54. The school development plan is exceptionally detailed and thorough. It contains aspects which encompass all areas of school development and represents a good development plan. It is appropriately linked to budget planning and wider resource issues. However, a weakness in the plan is that it does not extend beyond the current year and it may require simplification in order to ensure that teachers and governors are clear about the developmental priorities for each term. The school is using assessment data well to give a good view of the school's effectiveness and is beginning to provide data on what the school adds to individual pupils as they move through the school.

55. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well and makes a good contribution to the management of the school and its wider work. This is an improvement since the last HMI inspection when governors' involvement in the school was judged to have been sound and has addressed a minor issue identified at the last inspection well. A significant strength of the school is the commitment to improvement which is shared between the governing body and the headteacher. Governors are now well informed about the work of the school. The headteacher's reports to the governing body are very comprehensive and include full reference to all aspects of the school. Governors have been involved well in the school's strategic planning as they attended a shared development day with the staff at a local retreat centre at the beginning of the year. There is a useful governors' development plan for the current year which outlines aspects of the school's work to be considered each term. This is a good response to comments made in the most recent HMI report. A separate developmental plan has been produced for each committee and a useful list of policies and other resources to which each committee might refer. Committees are active and well led and make important suggestions for priorities in the school development plan. The 'Focus Group', consisting of governors, staff, link adviser and diocesan representatives, has met to consider issues of school improvement and has done good work.

56. The school's management of its finances is good. The headteacher carefully costs priorities and is supported well by the school secretary and the Local Education Authority's bursarial team. Through the work of the finance committee, governors maintain an appropriate overview of the school's spending patterns. The introduction of performance management requirements has been sound, although the timetable for setting teachers' objectives has not been met. The school uses the specific grants it receives well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported; funds for staff training have been used effectively to improve the overall quality of teaching across the school. Also the additional grants provided for the school when it was in serious weaknesses have been used to secure the good improvement made since the last OFSTED inspection. The principles of obtaining value for money are applied soundly as the school undertakes minor building improvements.

57. The work of the Foundation Stage is well managed. The Reception class teacher is also the co-ordinator of the Foundation Stage. She has a good knowledge and understanding of the appropriate curriculum for this stage, and of the needs of young children. Lessons are regularly evaluated, and assessment procedures are good, with very good new procedures. There is, however, still no Foundation Stage policy document to provide an overview of the school's approaches and the way the curriculum is balanced. This is a shortcoming noted at the last inspection. However, the co-ordinator is well aware of the framework for the Foundation Stage curriculum, and her structure for the forthcoming documentation is relevant and appropriate. Staffing levels are appropriate, with one

full time teacher and one full-time learning support assistant. Other help comes from parents who assist on a regular basis. Accommodation is generally satisfactory, but with a full complement of 30 children, it is difficult to utilise space to accommodate the sand and water play. Although there is an outdoor area, it is not a separate specifically dedicated area, and contains no suitable clambering apparatus. There are some wheeled toys, but again, due to the nature of the area, these cannot be used regularly as free choice activities. Resources are generally good, including provision for role play, creative and expressive work, painting, writing and reading, use of the computer, and small and large construction toys.

58. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is a good response to a minor issue identified at the previous inspection. The headteacher is the co-ordinator and she organises the care and support for these pupils well. A major initiative has been to re-assess all the pupils on the special educational needs register with a view to removing some if possible. The effect has been to reduce the number significantly since the last inspection. Now all pupils in the school have agreed targets, and this system includes pupils who have special educational needs. In this way, pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the school's life and curriculum. Teachers devise these targets and review them with parents and pupils.

59. There is an appropriate number of teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum fully. A detailed handbook is available for existing staff and those new to the school. The school has adopted the Local Education Authority's recommended procedure for inducting teachers new to the profession but these have not been sufficiently closely adapted to the school's use. This is particularly important considering that newly qualified teachers are set to join the school in the next academic year.

60. Overall, the school's accommodation is satisfactory. Years 3 to 6 are taught in mobiles detached from the main school site. Opportunities in practical subjects, such as art, science and design and technology, are limited by the lack of water in these classrooms. This deficiency was also a minor issue at the last OFSTED inspection. The school has a useful hall/dining room. Physical education and other equipment around the perimeter and the existence of part of the school library at one end restrict space. Library accommodation itself is unsatisfactory. It is currently located in a small activity area in Key Stage 1. This area is also an important thoroughfare to the hall, office and Key Stage 1 toilets and also houses some large fire safety equipment. It does not provide an attractive, welcoming place where pupils might want to sit and read or undertake their personal research. A small information and communication technology suite has already been provided and is ready for the recently arrived computers to be installed. The outdoor accommodation in the school is very good. A lot of effort and careful thought has been put into improving the outdoor facilities and opportunities for the pupils. As well as a large playing field, there is an interesting environmental area and pond, a shaded area with tables for summer picnics, a well-designed orienteering course and a separate play and activity area with a willow trail. Some very good environmental work has gone into the designing and building of a Tudor garden with miniature shrubs. This work has attracted considerable local interest and has gained the school several environmental awards. A shortcoming in the school's accommodation is the lack of a separate outdoor play and activity area for children in the Foundation Stage.

61. Teachers have appropriate resources for them to teach the National Curriculum effectively. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. In science, the level of resources is good and in most other subjects, it is satisfactory. Currently, resources in information and communication

technology are unsatisfactory but a good number of new computers arrived during the week of the inspection. There is an insufficient number and range of books in the school library. Most fiction books have been relocated in the class libraries and all religious books are kept separately in the hall. This reduces the impact and importance of the school library and does not sufficiently encourage pupils to develop a love of books and literature and improve their research skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to continue to improve the quality of education offered to the pupils the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- 1. Raise the standards attained at Key Stage 1 to ensure that pupils' achievement is improved.** See Paragraphs : 3, 4, 8, 17, 78-82, 86, 94, 96, 108, 118
- 2. Extend the good curricular practices in English, mathematics and science to other subject areas by:**
 - i) ensuring that detailed policy and guidelines statements are produced;
 - ii) introducing procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and recording the progress they make;
 - iii) providing further opportunities for subject co-ordinators to support, monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects.See Paragraphs : 28, 43, 53, 57, 102, 106, 112, 116, 120, 123, 130
- 3. Improve library accommodation and the range of available books in order to further enhance pupils' appreciation of books and literature and to develop their independent research skills.**
See Paragraphs : 60, 61, 85
- 4. Ensure that children in the Foundation Stage have access to a separate outdoor play area which is appropriately resourced.**
See Paragraphs : 29, 57, 60, 76

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensure that the school development plan extends in outline beyond the current year.
See Paragraph : 54
- Further develop procedures for introducing teachers new to the profession into the school. See Paragraph : 59
- Revise the child protection and health and safety policies.
See Paragraph : 40
- Ensure that pupils are made more aware of their own multicultural heritage.
See Paragraph : 39
- Explore the possibilities for extending the range of extracurricular activities.

See Paragraphs : 31, 47

- Improve the accommodation for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
See Paragraph : 60

63. PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	22	46	27	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	197
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for 2000	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	15	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	25	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (90)	96 (90)	96 (90)
	National	[83] (82)	[84] (83)	[90] (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	26	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (93)	96 (100)	96 (93)
	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for 2000	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	15	11	14
	Total	31	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (72)	87 (41)	97 (62)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	13	11
	Girls	13	13	10
	Total	22	26	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (72)	84 (66)	68 (69)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	6
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	149
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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)	10.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	362200
Total expenditure	356562
Expenditure per pupil	1838
Balance brought forward from previous year	14601
Balance carried forward to next year	20239

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	197
Number of questionnaires returned	73

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	38	7	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	42	7	3	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	53	5	4	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	59	8	4	0
The teaching is good.	52	41	1	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	44	23	7	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	23	11	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	32	4	4	1
The school works closely with parents.	30	44	15	10	1
The school is well led and managed.	53	26	8	8	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	45	4	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	32	37	7	5

Other issues raised by parents

- Children achieve good standards.
- This is a very caring school where good attitudes and values are promoted.
- The school promotes environmental awareness well.
- Children behave well.

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

64. Children enter the Reception year in two phases: those born in the autumn begin in September, and the spring and summer-born children start in January. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision, and there are strong links with the school's main feeder play-group. Assessment made of the children on their entry to school shows their attainment to be above average for their age. By the time they are five, most children are on course to achieve standards in their personal, social and emotional development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development that are above average for their age. This represents sound achievement. Standards in language and literacy are well above average. These standards are broadly similar to those reported in the last inspection, although at that time, there were some areas in which standards were only average. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection in maintaining the good standards in children's language and literacy work and improving standards in children's physical and creative development, their personal and social development and of the higher attainers in mathematics.

65. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good, and is very good in the area of communication, language and literacy. Good attention is also paid to children's personal and social development. There was insufficient evidence of teaching at the previous inspection for an overall judgement to be made about the quality of teaching. Children's learning is good, due to the impact of the teaching they receive. Many have already achieved the goals set for five year olds by the end of the year, while some have exceeded them in several areas of learning. The class teacher is appropriately qualified. She and her assistant are both well experienced with the age group and have a good working relationship together, forming a secure and caring environment for the children. They both attend in-service training on a frequent basis. The nationally recommended curriculum for this age group is fully in place. Planning is very clear and comprehensive, with specific learning and achievement objectives in all areas of learning. Close and regular observation of how the children are learning ensures that new learning is well matched to children's capabilities.

66. Children are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They are keen to engage in all lessons and activities, and enjoy working and playing together. They feel safe in the caring atmosphere of their classroom, and have the confidence to explore opportunities provided within the well thought out curriculum to the best of their abilities. This enables them to settle quickly to school routines and has a positive impact on their learning.

67. In the last inspection, the improvement of planning and the implementation of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage were parts of a major key issue for the school. This has been well attended to and both the planning of the curriculum and its implementation are now good. Assessment procedures were found to be poor, and these are now good. New assessment procedures, which are based on a sequence of stages in the nationally recommended programme, are starting to be implemented. These are usefully incorporating assessments made in the main feeder playgroup and

this is excellent assessment practice. Overall, the school has made good improvement in this area since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Although when they enter the school, most children already have above average levels of social skill for their age, this aspect of development is well promoted in the class. As a result most make satisfactory progress, and attain standards of social behaviour well above those expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children are learning to work and play together well. Few prefer to play alone. Most enjoy the company of other children and like to play alongside each other, sharing conversation. Many are already able to involve themselves in fully co-operative games and pretend play, showing mature social awareness for their age. The children dress and undress themselves well, know where things are in their classroom, and help to tidy up. Classroom procedures are well established and children are aware of them and respond confidently to the routines of the day. Behaviour and attitudes to work are very good, and concentration levels are mature. Children persevere with tasks for a long time, when their interests are engaged. Most adopt a positive attitude to each other, and like to help.

69. The teacher has created a safe and secure environment within the classroom, in which children are valued as individuals, and relationships are good. Her outgoing manner creates excitement and enthusiasm in her class. The children are interested in exploring new learning, concentrate well, and have confidence in themselves.

Communication, language and literacy

70. The level of children's speech and language on entry to school is above average for their age, but by the time they are five, most are on course to achieve standards that are well above average. This indicates good progress in this area of development. Children speak confidently and at length, with a good range of vocabulary, and use grammatical constructions which are mature for their age. They offer comments and ask questions in class discussions enthusiastically. They enjoy talking to each other and to staff who make every effort to promote and encourage the development of speaking and listening. Children enjoy stories, poems and rhymes, and like sharing the big books with the teacher, gradually becoming familiar with simple folk tales such as "Goldilocks and the Three Bears". They like toys and pictures relating to the story, and the theme is further developed through the use of a related computer program, and opportunities for children to make their own "books" of the tale. The role-play area has a linked theme, and all enjoy the collection of teddies. The idea that print carries meaning is well understood by all children. They all recognise most letters of the alphabet and are aware of the main simple sounds that these represent. Most recognise a good number of words by sight and read simple books and stories. A substantial minority spell two and three-letter words very easily, and are beginning to extend this to attempts with longer words with great enthusiasm. Others are just beginning to write two and three-letter words, and can identify the initial letters of longer words. Drawing and writing are mature for age, and most children settle easily to such tasks, for example, making captions for speech bubbles.

71. Teaching in this area of development is very good. The teacher and support assistant both use questioning skilfully to encourage children's thinking and oral responses. The learning support

assistant is well briefed and is used effectively in small groups when activities are involved. She also assists in maintaining ongoing assessment of the progress of individuals. Children's learning is well structured, and is appropriately linked to the National Literacy Framework, within the nationally recommended programme for the Foundation Stage. There is strong emphasis on the development of language and literacy within the Reception class curriculum, which is devised and implemented with skill, imagination and sensitivity.

Mathematics

72. Children's attainment in mathematical development is good and most make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage. At the time of the inspection, most children are already achieving the goals set for five year olds, although it is not yet the end of the year, and a substantial minority are exceeding them. Most count numbers up to ten and beyond confidently. They all know what numbers to ten represent and can recognise the relevant symbols. They add or subtract one or two when dealing with numbers to ten orally, and add on or take away in practical situations using numbers to ten. Some are able to record their simple addition or subtraction sums in the conventional way, and are working on numbers to 20 in their oral mathematics. Children have a secure knowledge of the names of simple shapes which they can recognise. They understand the concept of one-to-one correspondence, for example, as they set the table for the three bears, and use appropriate vocabulary for contrasting sizes. Children enjoy number games, rhymes and songs and interest and motivation are also increased through the clever use of toys in their mathematics. For example, while thinking about the topic of the "Three Bears", the children brought their teddies to school, and these formed the basis for mathematics and counting. Play with sand and water provides a useful experience for later work on volume and capacity. However, when the class is full, there is no space for these activities indoors, and they cannot be used regularly in winter. This limits the range of first-hand experiences available for the children.

73. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. The teacher uses imaginative themes to illustrate mathematical teaching, and employs every opportunity to reinforce basic skills through practical experience. All activities are carefully planned and matched to children's capabilities to build firmly on their understanding. Assessment is careful, thorough and ongoing, and is used to influence planning. The work is well planned, and tasks are appropriate and in line with the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. By the time they are five, most children's knowledge of the world around them is above average. Considering most children's ability when they enter the school, achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory. Children are introduced to the growing of bulbs and seeds and they watch and record as their plants develop. As they make porridge, adding different flavours and then tasting what they have made, they understand more about their different senses. Children are encouraged to express their opinions, look closely at similarities, differences and change, and ask questions about what they observe. For example, they found out about past and present events in their own lives and those of their families. They thought about what they were like as babies, how they had grown and the different things they could do now. The introduction of a mother and her newborn baby into the class illustrated this for them well. Children have taken walks around the school grounds to

notice the different seasons, and begin to be aware of features that belong to the places where they live. They are introduced well to aspects of information and communication technology, and learn to use a programmable toy as well as using the class computer.

75. Teaching is good. The teacher organises a good range of well-planned activities which appropriately start from the children's own experiences. A great deal of attention is paid to the provision of first hand experiences and the development of language skills alongside them to aid learning. Children are enabled to expand their experiences and their knowledge of the world around them well.

Physical development

76. Both attainment and progress in this aspect of learning and development are good. In physical education lessons, most children use space well, and avoid bumping into others. They travel around the hall in a variety of ways, using different parts of their bodies and different movements. In their large muscular movements such as jumping, running and balancing, they are developing control very well for their age. Manual dexterity is generally above average, and children's hand control for writing, cutting and painting is mature. The standard of drawing is good, with mature representations of figures and objects. There is plenty of opportunity provided to develop these skills, using pencils, crayons, paints, and materials such as play dough. Good attention is paid to the teaching of these skills, but it is a weakness that there is not a separate outdoor play area which can be used on a daily basis. Teaching in formal physical education is very good.

Creative development

77. Children in the Reception class attain above average standards in their creative and expressive work. Drawing and painting are mature, and carefully done. Many free-choice and directed activities are provided to encourage and develop the children's creative and expressive skills. Children are introduced to the use of paint, crayons, paper, collage, junk modelling and the use of materials such as play dough. Role-play is supported well by the imaginative theming of play in the "pretend corner", and by play with puppets. Here, children enjoyed trying out different voices for their characters. In music, they enjoy singing simple songs and listening and moving to music. They are learning to recognise and explore how different sounds can be changed, and how repetitions of sound can be used to make sound patterns. They are becoming familiar with a range of percussion instruments. Teaching in the creative and expressive areas of learning is good.

ENGLISH

78. Standards in English are average by Year 2, and above average by Year 6. At Key Stage 1, standards attained in the 2000 national tests were above average for all schools and for similar schools. At Key Stage 2, standards attained were above average for all schools and well above average for similar schools. Analysis of the trends over time show that standards at both key stages have been above and well above the national average each year since 1997, except for a dip in reading at Key Stage 1 in 1998. In Key Stage 1, however, the findings of this inspection, despite reflecting the same standards found in the last inspection, show some decline from the results reported in the 2000 national tests. The standards achieved by this group were above average. The

main reasons for the change are that the current Year 2 group, unlike the previous group, has experienced considerable turbulence in their teaching, due to staff changes. This was also the group that experienced the weaknesses in the Reception year curriculum identified in the previous report. The current judgement of pupils' attainment in Year 6 is similar to the results of the 2000 national tests and indicates an improvement since the last inspection. The school's attainment targets in English for Year 6 in 2000 and in 2001 are for 88 per cent of pupils to achieve at least expected levels. This was exceeded in 2000, with 100 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 or Level 5. Despite this, the lower target for 2001 remains realistic since indications based on the tracking of pupils' achievement show that results are not on course to be as high in 2001, although still above average. The findings of the current inspection are that in Year 2, pupils attain average standards in their reading and writing, whilst in Year 6, pupils achieve above average standards.

79. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2, but unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. Most pupils enter Year 1 attaining standards above those expected for their age but only go on to achieve satisfactory standards by the end of Year 2. Some pupils are not achieving as much as they should by the time they are seven. This has been the effect of staffing changes on the present Year 2 group. Although pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, considering their capabilities and previous learning in Key Stage 1, other ability groups make unsatisfactory progress over time within this key stage. In Key Stage 2, most pupils, including the more able, make good progress in their learning over time. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress considering their capabilities and their previous learning,

80. Standards in speaking and listening are average in Year 2. Pupils speak confidently, are keen to join in discussions and conversations, and respond well to questions. They generally listen satisfactorily, but their concentration sometimes wanes, making repetition necessary. Pupils' use of vocabulary is appropriate for their age, and their diction is usually clear. In Year 6, standards are good. Pupils listen with very good concentration, and speak well, expressing their own ideas and opinions clearly. They enjoy preparing and performing spoken presentations to the class and other audiences. Throughout the school, opportunities for question and answer sessions are used well to promote the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.

81. Standards in reading are average in Year 2. Most pupils read accurately and they enjoy stories and finding out facts for themselves. They also use the word recognition skills they have been taught. In Year 6, the range of reading skills is above average and pupils are reading fluently and with very good expression. They enjoy the books of their choice from young people's fiction, or from factual books. Whilst most pupils can give a resume of what they have read, and discuss the story or contents, not all are able to suggest predictions, or comment on genre or style of writing. Very few can appreciate or interpret inferences which go beyond the literal. Skimming and scanning are taught and learned well, and so is the use of indexes, but not all pupils have a sound understanding of basic library skills. Although most can quote authors of favourite books, all pupils can name titles of books which they have enjoyed. Pupils throughout the key stage are interested in reading, and they generally enjoy the text study sessions of their literacy hour. Here, teachers pay good attention to selecting interesting texts, and promote literature well. For example, a "beastly" version of *Beauty and the Beast* was much enjoyed by Year 5, and there was considerable appreciation of the ghostly happenings of the Walter De La Mare poem "The Listeners" in Year 6.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have also been introduced to such classics as Aesop's Fables, the saga of Beowulf, the stories of Hans Christian Andersen, Hiawatha, Cider with Rosie, Gulliver's Travels, and given tastes of Dickens and Shakespeare. Year 6 have looked at "Modern Macbeth" and have also attended a performance of Macbeth in a local theatre.

82. Standards in writing are average in Year 2. Although most pupils express their ideas in simple sentences and sequences, some use more complex sentence constructions. This does not fully reflect pupils' potential as indicated by their assessment on entry to school, which was above average. Pupils in a Year 2 lesson were able to write some sentences describing the features of an owl, following their text study on this topic. Most pupils compose a simple story of an average length, but development of the plot is often lacking. In Year 6, standards in writing are above average, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Work is neatly written and presented, and spelling and punctuation are good. Often dialogue is laid out correctly and work generally is well paragraphed. Writing is fluent, well expressed, and of good length. There is a sense of perspective in the planning of work, and of the choice of vocabulary. More able pupils show good adaptation in the style of their writing to the reader. This strength is also emerging in the writing of many other pupils. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were able to capture the atmosphere of "The Listeners" well, in rewriting a different version or preparing a sequel to some verses.

83. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1, is satisfactory overall, with some good features. At Key Stage 2, it is consistently good, showing improvement since the last inspection. In Key Stage 1, the teaching and learning of basic skills are satisfactory, and teachers' knowledge and understanding of the English curriculum are sound. Levels of expectation and challenge are also satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, teachers show good subject knowledge and basic skill development, and all groups are challenged well by teachers' expectations. A literacy lesson to older pupils at Key Stage 2, where the class was considering the poem 'The Listeners' illustrated several features of very good teaching. The lesson was planned and taught very effectively: pupils' understanding and appreciation of the use of soft and hard sounding words to create atmosphere was developed well, and the group activities were interesting and challenging for all. The National Literacy Strategy is well established throughout the school and is effective. Teachers have supportive relationships with their pupils, and plan well to engage their interest in the contents of the literacy hours. Teachers use paired and small group work well to enhance learning and to develop discussion. A good variety of reasons for writing are presented to pupils, including story, poetry, reports, recount writing, scripts, characterisation, scene setting, diaries, letters, descriptions and reviews. Opportunities for speaking and listening are well catered for, with regular inclusion of speaking and listening activities within the literacy hours. Teachers use skilled questioning techniques to promote language development and thinking and reasoning in their pupils. Planning is good across the school, in both half-termly and weekly planning, and shows both matching and evaluating of work. Marking is also good and helps pupils to extend their attainments further. Teachers generally deploy classroom assistants well, particularly in the activity sessions of literacy classes, and this work is well integrated with class lessons.

84. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and there is a comprehensive and detailed policy and guidelines statement which support teachers well in their preparation. They include good attention to speaking and listening, while the scheme of work supports reading and the National Literacy Strategy framework covers writing. Extra time has been provided for extended

writing, over and above the literacy hours. This has represented a good response to the weaknesses in writing identified at the last inspection. Management of the subject is strong. The co-ordinator has excellent subject knowledge which she is able to use in supporting and helping her colleagues to raise standards in the subject. She has monitored teaching and planning systematically across the school, and has also sampled pupils' work. She has a clear grasp of what is needed for the school to move forward even more, and has a comprehensive plan of action drawn up. Events such as book weeks, arts weeks, author visits, and theatre groups enrich the curriculum. Assessment in the subject is good. Elements include sampling of written work, and a good detailed ongoing reading record showing the development of pupils' skills. Individual targets are set for each pupil, and discussed with both pupils and parents, and these are changed at regular intervals. The use of optional national tests is carried out in Years 3, 4 and 5, as well as the usual end of key stage national assessments, and these contribute to the tracking of pupils' progress.

85. Resources for the literacy hours are good. Class fiction collections are adequate, and the provision of reading books is sound. The library, however, is unsatisfactory. It is too small to allow for class or large group teaching of library skills, and does not encourage pupils to sit and read or to develop further research skills. It is situated too far away from the Key Stage 2 classes to be easily accessible for their personal study. It is also too small to accommodate an adequate range of books for the size of the school. At present, it contains only non-fiction works and some sections of books are under-represented.

MATHEMATICS

86. In Year 2, standards in basic numeracy and in other areas of mathematics are average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. In the 2000 national tests for seven year olds, standards were average compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving expected levels was above average but fewer than average attained the higher level. There has been a steady rise in standards since 1998, with boys outperforming girls. As children enter the school with above average standards in mathematics, there is clearly some under-achievement in Key Stage 1, particularly by more able pupils. This can be explained by the turnover of staff in Year 2 and by an unsatisfactory Foundation Stage curriculum when the current Key stage 1 pupils were in Reception. The small number of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are making good progress. There is currently no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

87. In Year 6, standards in basic numeracy and in all other areas of mathematics are above average, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Teaching is clearly much better now, with much more emphasis on developing pupils' problem-solving skills. In the 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards were above average compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. The proportion achieving expected levels was well above average, slightly exceeding the target set by the school. A challenging target of 87 per cent of pupils to achieve Level 4 or above has been set for this year. Standards dropped alarmingly in 1999, but there has been a big improvement since then, with boys and girls attaining equally. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is good.

88. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. In the lessons where teaching is good, pupils learn well. For example, teaching was good in a well planned Year 2 lesson where pupils were investigating the different kinds of liquorice allsorts in packs and recording the results in a variety of block graphs. Rapid questioning at the start consolidated the pupils' learning of the two and ten times tables. The teacher emphasised correct vocabulary, such as tally, least and most, and this had a good impact on the pupils' learning. The teacher moved the lesson along briskly and set a challenging extension activity for the more able pupils. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher matched tasks well to differing ability levels and made the lesson practical, with the pupils using cubes to measure the length of classroom objects and themselves. Some became confused between cubes and centimetres. The teacher encouraged the pupils to predict measurements. The major weakness in teaching in this key stage is the management of pupils. Many pupils are inattentive and have a limited concentration span. They often tend to shout out and are slow to respond to instructions. This limits the quality of their learning and sometimes that of others in the class.

89. By the age of seven, most pupils use quick mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten. They add coins up to one pound and most calculate change from 50 pence. They explore number patterns and understand the concept of odd and even numbers. Pupils work out halves and quarters of simple numbers and they compare the mass of classroom objects. Most can tell the time to o'clock and half-past and some to quarter to and past the hour. They know the names of common two and three-dimensional shapes and can find lines of symmetry in the former.

90. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good and sometimes very good or better. In the best lessons, teachers provide real life problems for the pupils to solve. For example, in an excellent Year 6 lesson, pupils were using calculators to work out the value added tax on items. The teacher emphasised a logical, step-by-step approach to problem solving and this helped the pupils to calculate invoice totals involving percentage discounts and deposits. The teacher's subject knowledge was very good and she had high expectations of what could be achieved. She challenged more able pupils well. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on the oral starter to each lesson. For example, in a lesson to older pupils, the teacher asked the pupils to explain how they worked out their answers and this helped in their learning about currency conversions and quick halving and doubling. Across the key stage, teachers' good subject knowledge gives them confidence in their teaching. For example, in a Year 5 lesson secure subject knowledge on the part of the teacher helped the pupils in their learning of perimeter and its difference from area. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher's clear explanation of Venn diagrams helped the pupils to solve problems by interpreting numerical data. This has a good impact on pupils' learning.

91. In Year 6, pupils add and subtract four digit numbers confidently. Many solve long multiplication problems and division with remainders. They understand the concept of equivalent fractions and compare and order fractions. Pupils use formulae to calculate areas and know how to calculate the perimeters of irregular shapes. They use compasses to construct triangles and investigate probability. More able pupils are appropriately challenged. For example, in a lesson on the circumference of circles, opportunities were provided for pupils to achieve well above average standards.

92. Teachers throughout the school are confident with the National Numeracy Strategy. They are adapting their teaching well to the three-part daily mathematics lesson, with a clear focus on

developing the pupils' skills in quick mental recall of number facts and on real life problem solving. There are opportunities for the pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils have used charts and bar graphs to record findings in scientific work on sound and Year 6 pupils use four-figure co-ordinates to locate map features in geography. In a Year 1 physical education lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to add up the total points scored in a team game. There are sound links between mathematics and information and communication technology. Year 5 pupils have recorded the results of a local traffic survey in geography by means of computer-generated bar graphs and in a Year 4 lesson, some pupils enhanced their understanding of fractions by using a computer program.

93. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has taught after-school 'booster' classes to help some Year 6 pupils to improve. She has led staff training on numeracy and has monitored planning, work samples and teaching, with a view to evaluating the subject's performance. There is a good subject policy and planning is detailed and thorough. A clear action plan includes extending the use of information and communication technology in mathematics. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and assessment information is used well to plan subsequent work. There are adequate resources for learning. In offering opportunities for collaborative work during problem solving activities, the subject is making a sound contribution to developing the pupils' social skills. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

94. In Year 2, pupils attain average standards. However, there has been an insufficient amount of work covered over this year, which has resulted in some underachievement. Despite these shortcomings, improvement has been made since the last inspection when standards were found to be below average for all the key stage. The results of the 2000 national teacher assessment tests show that pupils were attaining standards which were above the national average for both expected and higher levels. The differences and weaknesses shown in the findings of this inspection are explained by the staffing changes in this key stage, and the fact that when the current Year 2 group were in the Foundation Stage of their education, at the time of the last report, the curriculum was found to be unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also attain satisfactory standards and make sound progress towards their own learning targets.

95. In Year 6, pupils achieve above average standards, and this represents a very good improvement since the last inspection where standards were found to be below the national average. The results of the national tests for 2000 show that whilst the proportion of pupils achieving expected levels was well above average, there were few who achieved higher levels. This shortcoming is confirmed by the findings of this inspection where there is still insufficient specific challenge provided for more able pupils either in the lessons observed or through their past work. Most other pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are achieving well. The performance of pupils over the last three years fell below the national average, but the indications are that this is improving, with the exception of those achieving higher levels. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

96. The quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning at Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. In only a single lesson were teaching and pupils' learning judged to have been unsatisfactory. Pupils enjoy science and capture the enthusiasm for practical work from their teachers. This increases their motivation and improves their learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on gravity, pushing and pulling, pupils were absorbed in an experiment rolling cars along, or downhill, and measuring the distances travelled, and this caused great excitement. The teacher showed sound knowledge of the subject and ensured that all pupils were fully involved in the lesson. In other lessons, teachers base work on pupils' own experiences. For example, pupils find where in their room ice will melt faster or more slowly and, as they consider healthy foods, they devise simple meals and menus. In Year 1, there are some good photographs of pupils with plates of various fruits that they have prepared. Pupils' evident enjoyment of their work improves their learning. For example, younger pupils were all really involved in an experiment about floating a ball in water, getting water everywhere, but finding out for themselves about heavy and light objects when immersed. Pupils make simple records of their findings, some in sentences and some by drawing the outcomes. They understand that materials, such as food, change when heated, and have conducted simple experiments about torches, batteries and a circuit. Unsatisfactory elements of teaching are where pupils call out inappropriately, and where insufficient reference is made to the importance of fair testing and the careful recording of pupils' work. There has been insufficient investigational work in Year 2 in the first half of this year due to staffing problems, but this is being fully remedied now. Assessment is good and provides information for teachers' planning.

97. The quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning at Key Stage 2 are good, with some very good features. The above average attainment in Key Stage 2 is due to this good teaching, which results in good learning and good progress for pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Several features of very good teaching were observed in a lesson to older pupils who were experimenting with sheets of paper and had to devise ways of reducing the air resistance as they were dropped. The teacher skilfully gained pupils' attention well from the beginning of the lesson; their understanding was continually challenged by perceptive questioning and they were encouraged to make informed predictions as to what they thought might happen. The result was that pupils' understanding of air resistance was developed very well through this lesson. They discovered that they could crumple one sheet into a ball, leaving the other flat, and still have the same amount of paper with both. Then they went on to discover that the screwed up ball fell quickly, while the plain sheet of paper took longer to reach the floor. All pupils use a clear method of recording experiments, which involves describing the problem, their predictions, the apparatus, and the findings. The use of investigation is very much better than at the time of the previous inspection. For example, in Year 4, pupils were given a different task for each of their five groups, and they were able to talk knowledgeably about circuits, batteries and bulbs. They predicted accurately, and found, for example, that using four bulbs reduced the overall brightness and two batteries increased the brightness. They have studied systems of the human body, such as the respiratory system, and looked in some depth at how teeth are made up. Pupils can identify and talk about liquids, solids and gases and, in Year 5, there was a good lesson linking science to geography when they discovered about the water cycle, and discussed water vapour in the rain forests and ice in polar regions. They understand the principles of fair testing and can explain how they are ensuring this in each experiment. Other features of strong teaching, which improve pupils' learning, are the accurate use of specialist scientific vocabulary, the very high expectations set by teachers and their encouragement of independent thought by pupils.

98. Science is supported by a satisfactory policy, and scheme of work ensuring that all required National Curriculum elements are addressed. The co-ordinator has monitored some teaching and planning, and the links with other subjects are very good. For example, healthy eating, and what the human body needs, is linked to preparation of menus and food in design and technology, or recording heartbeat and pulse with physical education. There is very good inclusion of a pupil who has English as an additional language in Year 5, as the pupil is drawn into discussions, questions and practical work as fully as all other pupils. There have been very good improvements since the last inspection. The key feature has been the considerable improvement in investigative science, but teaching and learning, monitoring, resources, and overall attainment have also all improved. The subject fully meets National Curriculum requirements.

ART AND DESIGN

99. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain average standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to have been below average. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language attain standards that are in line with their mainstream colleagues. Across the school, pupils make satisfactory progress.

100. At both key stages, the quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning are satisfactory. Teachers' planning is detailed and clear and follows the progression of concepts and skills provided by a useful scheme of work. This ensures that pupils are introduced to an appropriate variety of techniques as they move through the school. For example, at Key Stage 1, older pupils use a variety of 'hot' colours as they paint pictures to illustrate work on the Great Fire of London. Others make very effective patterns based on their observation of stained glass windows, brick patterns and arches in their visit to the church. Younger pupils draw self portraits and use paint and other collage material in large class displays of the 'Three Pigs' story. At Key Stage 2, older pupils use pencil crayons and felt-tip pens to draw and colour characters from books they are reading, such as Winnie-the-Pooh and Harry Potter, and make careful observational drawings of Henry VIII for their history project. Pupils also use a variety of materials in their work. For example, older pupils at Key Stage 1 use clay to make their commemorative plaques while older pupils at Key Stage 2 use a good range of collage materials as they make pictures of aspects of the story of Theseus. This approach ensures that pupils are learning the right things and are given opportunities to make progress.

101. As a result of the way in which the timetable was organised, no direct teaching was observed at Key Stage 1, but a lesson seen at Key Stage 2 demonstrated several features of good and very good teaching. The lesson to younger pupils was part of a series to design and then make sculptures to be placed in a newly established garden area in the school. The teacher had organised the series well, and the several helpers were well prepared. All the pupils were fully engaged in tasks that included moulding wire and covering it with a range of recycled materials, and cutting and weaving plastic and fabric to make their models. These included a butterfly, spider, owl and flower and they were all carefully planned. The result of the lesson was that pupils were well challenged, and made good progress in their understanding of the importance of art and design. Interactions between the groups added significantly to their own personal development.

102. Planning in the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a good view of the work across the school and leads the subject well. A shortcoming in the overall management of the subject is the lack of a policy and guidelines statement. Teachers are not sufficiently supported as they interpret the agreed scheme of work or in their understanding of the progression of skills, for example, as related to drawing and painting. Interest in the subject is enhanced well as the pupils are encouraged to enter the 'National Schools Environmental Art' competition and they enjoy seeing displays of their entries in the hall. Also the good work done by the school to enhance its environment has provided good opportunities for pupils to be involved with the design of several important projects, such as the plaques for the orienteering course. Interest in the subject is also developed by offsite visits. For example, Year 3 recently visited the National Gallery to see an exhibition by the author and illustrator Quentin Blake. Collections of pupils' work, including photographic evidence, is kept, but procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and recording the progress that they make in the subject are insufficiently developed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. In Year 2, pupils attain average standards, but in Year 6, standards are above average. There was no clear judgement about standards achieved at the last inspection. However, good improvement has been made in addressing the inadequacies in designing, making and evaluation at the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved because of the school's effective use of the nationally recommended scheme of work, and by addressing the evaluation part of the process particularly well. Across the school, pupils make at least satisfactory progress, but the work that Year 6 has done shows that their progress has been good.

104. The quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound understanding of the designing and making process. Older pupils make imaginative designs for their clay tiles, and younger pupils display the weaving they have done, where they begin by using strips of card, and progress to using wool. As they make their models, pupils in Year 2 are encouraged to evaluate what they have done. They make wheeled vehicles, using large cardboard boxes, with axles and wheels attached with tape. They list the materials they use, and evaluate the outcomes to see what they thought of their efforts. "What I did not like about mine," wrote one pupil, "was when the wheels fell off." In this way, they are learning to see any mistakes, and find out how to avoid them next time.

105. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 are good, and the principles of design, making and evaluation are well established. Teachers identify the learning intended in each lesson in their planning and pupils are encouraged to study pictures and objects to give them ideas about design and construction. They make good progress in their ability to think through their designs, sort out the materials they will use, and evaluate what they have done. Progress for all pupils is good, and is demonstrated in the rising quality of work as pupils progress through the school. Year 4 pupils design and make picture frames by investigating first how others are made, and then making their own out of thick card. Year 6 pupils made some very good Christmas slippers, putting their design ideas onto paper and then thinking through how to go about making them. The outcomes are colourful slippers with plenty of imaginative work carried out on the finish of them, with tinsel and glitter used well. Across the key stage, good links are made with other areas of the curriculum. For example, in their study of the Second World War, older pupils designed and made Anderson

shelters. Researching, designing and making these shelters have added to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the construction and use, and have also enabled some pupils to write very imaginatively about that part of British history.

106. Schemes of work are now soundly in place and help teachers' planning, but assessment of pupils' progress and attainment is unsatisfactory. Monitoring of teaching and learning are insufficient, but resources have improved and there are now better opportunities for pupils to use tools and make the artefacts they have designed. Interest in the subject is developed well as pupils are encouraged to enter a local challenge. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 had to design a vehicle to transport 'toxic waste' safely down a slope. In their evaluation, they suggested alternative ways of doing this, or of improving their designs. They chose and recorded the best tools and materials for the work, and tested their ideas before finally making the vehicles.

GEOGRAPHY

107. In both Years 2 and 6, standards are average. This is an improvement from the previous inspection, when standards in Year 6 were judged to have been well below average. This resulted largely from variable teaching and insufficient learning resources. Both these issues have been satisfactorily addressed. In both key stages, all pupils, including those with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. Pupils using English as an additional language make good progress. Boys and girls attain equally.

108. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher placed an appropriate emphasis on developing the pupils' early mapping skills. She displayed one pupil's map of local roads and asked, 'What would you change on this map?' This made the pupils think carefully about the need to make maps as accurate as possible. The teacher used the forthcoming visit of a friend as an effective stimulus to learning: 'I want her to be able to use your maps to find her way.' However, several pupils were inattentive and lacked concentration and the teacher had to work hard to keep them on task. This limited the quality of their learning.

109. By the age of seven, many pupils are beginning to understand the idea of maps and mapping. They draw simple pictorial maps of their route to school and use their literacy skills soundly to write about some of the features they pass on the way. From first hand experience in the local High Street, the pupils know about some of the attractive and unattractive features of the locality. They know about more distant places as, for example, through work based on the Katie Morag stories, they compare life in Footscray with that on a Scottish island.

110. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good. The teachers place an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' mapping skills, such as the use of four-figure grid references on maps in Year 4 and the use of symbols and interpretation of weather maps in Year 3. They also realise the importance of fieldwork in making learning more real for the pupils and the role that geography can play in the moral and social development of the pupils. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the teacher made learning relevant by addressing issues of recycling and environmental conservation. She made effective links with mathematics and science and made good use of information and communication technology to enhance the pupils' understanding of how many

materials can be recycled and of how findings can be recorded. She posed an appropriate challenge for more able pupils.

111. By the age of eleven, many pupils have a sound understanding of the water cycle and of the changing nature of a river valley from source to mouth. They know how rivers alter the landscape and understand the impact of recent flooding in many parts of Britain. They have used their literacy skills effectively to write imaginary diary accounts of being caught in one of these floods. Year 5 pupils have investigated traffic and other environmental problems in the local High Street and they have used their mathematical and information and communication technology skills soundly to record their findings in graphs.

112. Planning is soundly based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but there is no up-to-date policy to provide guidance on strategies for teaching and learning. This is a weakness. The headteacher monitors planning and work samples, but not teaching and learning in the classroom. A clear action plan refers to an increased use of information and communication technology in the subject and the introduction of whole school procedures for assessing attainment. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection. They are now adequate, although there are still insufficient reference books and globes. Worthwhile visits are made to Broadstairs and Groombridge to learn about contrasting localities and the teachers use the locality of the school well. The development of early mapping skills is enhanced by the presence of an orienteering course in the school grounds.

HISTORY

113. In Year 2, pupils attain average standards and in Year 6, standards are above average. The achievement of pupils at Key Stage 1, including those pupils who have special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory whilst all pupils achieve well at Key Stage 2. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls. These findings represent good improvement since the last inspection when standards were lower than expected.

114. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Teachers are enthusiastic about the topics they teach and give pupils the chance to 'live' the events of history that they study. For example, Year 2 has studied the Great Fire of London, and there are some very good accounts of what happened. They conducted an 'interview' with Samuel Pepys, and they wrote about how the fire was fought. Some of the work shows that pupils have really thought about what it must have been like, and have attempted 'eyewitness' accounts of the great event. This adds to pupils' interest and improves their learning.

115. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is good. Pupils have a good understanding and appreciation of the period they are studying. For example, Year 4 know details of the life of Alfred the Great and the Danes, and many write good accounts of Alfred's attempts to halt the Danes. Year 6 has written some very good diaries in the style of Anne Frank, and others about being an evacuee. Teachers plan interesting activities, and, in the best lessons, they make the past come alive for their pupils. This provides pupils with a good insight into historical events and they often write convincingly, as though they were present. For example, pupils in Year 4 have written about a Viking feast in graphic detail, listing the food and drink that they have discovered

Vikings used. The periods being studied are taught well and teachers ensure that pupils have the opportunity of developing their own line of enquiry. For example, Year 6 has been studying life from after the Second World War to the present day. They have written some very good diaries of the Blitz and worked on what family life was like during and after the war. Over some weeks, Year 6 have been preparing and researching facts about social history in the time from the 1940s to the present, ready for presentations to the rest of the class. They were given topics such as fashion, leisure, sport, and music. The presentations were of a very high standard and pupils have worked very hard to find facts, make displays and collect artefacts to show, such as old plastic records of songs and music, and books and clothes from past decades. Their enthusiasm and commitment are excellent. There are good links with design and technology and they have made Anderson shelters, which are on display around the school, tying in with their work on the Blitz and evacuees.

116. The subject co-ordinator has successfully introduced schemes of work based on the national guidelines and pupils are given appropriate topics to study. However, assessment is unsatisfactory, and the opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning are insufficient. Overall there has been good improvement since the last inspection, more especially in the development of the schemes of work. The amount of written work recorded in Key Stage 1 remains small, but has improved in Key Stage 2, where the standard is now above average. Interest in the subject is promoted well by appropriate off-site visits. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have visited the museum of transport, and other places of historical interest such as Groombridge Place, and Hever castle. The subject meets National Curriculum requirements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain average standards. Across the school, pupils' achievement is now sound. This is a significant improvement since the last OFSTED inspection when standards were judged to have been well below average across the school. This has been achieved as a result of an improvement in teachers' knowledge, skill and confidence in the subject, and better curricular planning and in spite of relatively low levels of hardware provision. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language attain standards that are in line with their mainstream colleagues.

118. At both key stages, the quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning are satisfactory. Across the school, teachers introduce new topics and concepts to the whole class. There were several examples of this being done well during the inspection. For example, at Key Stage 1, in a lesson to older pupils, pupils were taught well how to write text on the computer, use a computer mouse to highlight parts of what they had done and change the size of the font they were using. At Key Stage 2, older pupils were being challenged well to look for errors that may have occurred in the compilation of databases. This approach has improved the profile that the subject has in the school since the last inspection when no direct teaching of the subject was observed. However, these lessons also highlighted a current weakness which limits the effectiveness of teaching across the school. In the lessons observed, although the teaching was clear, and well focused, because of the lack of sufficient numbers of computers in each class, pupils did not have adequate opportunity to practise and reinforce newly learned skills. This shortcoming limits pupils' learning and the progress they make and is the main reason why pupils only attain satisfactory standards. The resource

deficiency will be addressed when the newly acquired computers are fully installed in the computer suite.

119. Evidence from teachers' planning, a scrutiny of pupils' work and conversations with pupils at both key stages indicates that all elements of the subject are appropriately covered. At Key Stage 1, pupils use the computer to write descriptions and display captions about their work on the Great Fire of London and they use appropriate art and design programs to draw and colour their pictures of snowmen. Pupils access an encyclopaedia program to find further information about their animal projects. At Key Stage 2, as younger pupils learn about the Crystal Forest game, they become aware of how they make decisions in this role-play simulation. Other pupils use word processing facilities as they produce a book on life during the Second World War and display data in different graphic forms showing how pupils in their class got to school. Older pupils use CD-ROM databases to research changes in twentieth century fashion and use the computer to control the sequence of lights in their model lighthouses.

120. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has worked hard to provide the staff with support, encouragement and targeted in-service training. She has also produced a very detailed subject development plan. This has been more concerned with the application for grant funding and the ordering of new hardware and software than in raising standards of achievement in the subject. However, a weakness in the overall management of the subject is the lack of a clear policy statement and guidelines to help teachers interpret and use the agreed scheme of work. Teachers are well supported by a clear overall curricular plan which shows where elements of the subject are to be taught over both key stages and by detailed half termly plans. Teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work are monitored by the co-ordinator and she is beginning to assemble a useful collection of pupils' work done in several aspects of the subject. The main shortcoming across the school is the insufficiency of computers and other hardware. The ratio of computers to pupils is currently well below average and pupils have insufficient access to more recent features such as e-mail and Internet facilities. However, the school's new computer suite has already been completed and the new computers were delivered during the week of the inspection. The school has appropriate plans to use the new suite as soon as it is available.

MUSIC

121. Due to the way the timetable was organised, it was not possible to see a sufficient range of lessons being taught and no work in music was available for scrutiny or for listening to. As a result, there was insufficient evidence for an overall judgement to be made about standards or the quality of teaching and learning in this subject.

122. In the two lessons seen, the quality of both teaching and learning was satisfactory, and standards were average. This is similar to the overall judgement made at the last inspection. In the single lessons observed at both key stages, pupils were recognising and composing their own rhythms, and learning to use simple notation. In both lessons, teachers demonstrated satisfactory subject knowledge, and managed their classes well.

123. The planning across the school is satisfactory, and includes all the required elements of the National Curriculum. It also shows the development of musical skills as pupils move through the

school. However, there is no current music policy to provide guidance about the school's planned approach to the subject, and there is no scheme of work prepared by the school. Two commercial schemes are used from which teachers can draw units of work. However, their use has not been co-ordinated in any specific way to reflect effectively the new Curriculum 2000. The nationally recommended curriculum is also now being used, and the school plans to incorporate this into a new programme of music throughout the school. However, there is not a complete and integrated approach to curricular planning to assist complete coverage of the subject and avoid some duplication in the sequencing of teaching. Assessment in the subject is also weak, since there is no systematic, whole school approach to evaluating pupils' progress in the subject through the year.

124. The leadership and management in the subject have been unsatisfactory, and the monitoring of lessons by the co-ordinator has not taken place in any systematic way. However, the newly appointed co-ordinator has only been in post for a few weeks and has not yet had the opportunity to put things right. In the short time at her disposal, she has already scrutinised all planning in the subject and has created a sensible action plan detailing initiatives needed to take the subject forward on a satisfactory basis. Resources are adequate in terms of instruments for class use, and there are plenty of tapes and CDs for listening to music. However, there are insufficient instrumental resources or music for musical appreciation which reflect the different cultural traditions of various ethnic groups.

125. The school provides good opportunity for the further enrichment of the subject. Learning to play orchestral instruments has a strong tradition in the school, and 31 pupils are learning to play instruments which include flute, clarinet, violin, trumpet, tenor horn and cornet. There is a school orchestra of 17 pupils, which is led by a teacher from the Local Education Authority's School of Music. The orchestra is a particular strength of the school, and adds a great sense of musicality to school occasions, including assemblies. Further opportunities are provided by some musical evenings, where those learning instruments play, or where performances are given by instrumental tutors. Pupils also visit a local old people's home to perform and they also play and sing when the school shares in the conducting of mass at church. There are no other extracurricular activities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. In both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain average standards. There has been improvement from the previous inspection, when standards were below average in both key stages, largely as a result of unsatisfactory teaching. This is now much improved and the teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Boys and girls attain equally. Pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are making good progress. Standards in swimming are good. Most pupils can swim at least 25 metres unaided by the end of Key Stage 2 and many can swim much further.

127. Teaching and learning in both key stages are good. Teachers dress appropriately for lessons, setting a good example for the pupils. They manage pupils well and have high expectations for behaviour while changing and in the hall. The pupils have positive attitudes to lessons and this improves their motivation and the quality of their learning.

128. At Key Stage 1, teachers introduce appropriate safety instructions in their gymnastics lessons. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher stressed the rules for lifting apparatus and this had a sound impact on developing appropriate routines in the hall. Lessons begin with an appropriate warm-up and good opportunity is provided for pupils to observe the performance of others. In one lesson, this had a sound impact on developing the pupils' skills in movements involving changing directions, jumping and holding a balance. Teachers ensure that appropriate skills are taught. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher focused on specific skills teaching by advising the pupils, 'Look at the bean-bag and aim for the chest'. This helped the pupils and they made good progress in their ability to throw and catch bean-bags with reasonable accuracy.

129. At Key Stage 2, teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to teach a progression of activities. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher clearly explained the skills of handling a hockey stick and using it to stop the ball and this led to much improvement in the pupils' ability to pass the ball to a partner both while stationary and while running. Good use is made of a specialist instructor for swimming. There was very good teaching of arm and leg movements and breathing techniques and this led to very good progress in technique in breaststroke, backstroke, front crawl and treading water. Floats and other equipment were used well to improve pupils' performance.

130. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily. Although planning is soundly based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, a clear action plan recognises the need to develop an up-to-date policy, in order to offer guidance on teaching strategies. There is currently no monitoring or evaluation of the subject's performance nor any whole school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment. There are good opportunities for Year 6 pupils to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities, such as canoeing, during a residential visit to The Loft, near St Albans. However, there are insufficient regular sporting activities outside lessons. No competitive sports matches are played against other schools. There are plans to offer football and cricket coaching after Easter. There is an adequate range of apparatus and equipment, although some apparatus is too heavy for Key Stage 1 pupils. The hall and the large school field offer good accommodation. In encouraging frequent paired and group work, the subject makes a sound contribution to the pupils' social development.