

INSPECTION REPORT

BARCOMBE CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barcombe Cross, Lewes

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114488

Headteacher: Mrs Barbara Dyer

Reporting inspector: Mr Chris Warner, 20935

Dates of inspection: 13-17 November 2000

Inspection number: 225311

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the school inspections act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Path Barcombe Cross Lewes East Sussex
Postcode:	BN5 8DN
Telephone number:	01273 400287
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Chair of governors:	Ms Rosalyn Hurst
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Chris Warner 20935	<i>Registered Inspector</i>	Mathematics; Geography; History; Information and communication technology; Religious education; Provision for children under five.	How high are standards? The school's results and achievements; How well the school is led and managed; What the school should do to improve further.
Jon Palethorpe 20671	<i>Team Inspector</i>	English; Science; Art; Design and technology; Music; Physical education.	How well pupils are taught? Curricular and other opportunities; Special educational needs; Equal opportunities
Gill Hoggard 14066	<i>Lay Inspector</i>		How high are standards? 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?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Barcombe Church of England Primary School serves the village of Barcombe and its surrounding communities. The 97 pupils on roll, from four to 11 years of age, is less than the average number for primary schools nationally. About nine per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is well below the national average. Just under 20 per cent of pupils are on the register for special educational needs, which is close to the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. The attainment of children on entry to the school is about the same as that typically found nationally, although a significant number of children have well-developed early reading and writing skills. No pupils are from homes where English is an additional language. In the last inspection the school was found to have serious weaknesses.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

There has been a steady improvement since the last inspection and the school now gives a satisfactory standard of education. The headteacher and key staff provide satisfactory leadership and management. The curriculum is sound. Teaching, a particular weakness in the last inspection is now satisfactory with several strong features. Attitudes to learning are good. Overall standards achieved by pupils are satisfactory. In English, mathematics and history, standards achieved by 11 year olds are above average, although below average in information and communication technology (ICT). The governing body is not fully effective in its contribution to the management and improvement of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- All the staff work together well as an effective team.
- Standards achieved by 11 year olds in English, mathematics and history are above average.
- Teaching is overall sound with 40 per cent of lessons observed good or better.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and show good attitudes to learning.
- Attendance is better than the national average.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in information and communication technology.
- The effectiveness of the governing body in contributing to the improvement of the school.
- The way information is communicated to parents.
- The provision of an outdoor area for children in the reception class.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a satisfactory response to the key issues for improvement noted in the last inspection in 1998:

There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen from 25 per cent to less than 10 per cent. Forty per cent of lessons are now judged good or better. Both homework, and the marking of pupils' work, have improved and now make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. At the same time, most aspects of the curriculum have been improved to allow pupils to experience better continuity in their learning. Assessment procedures have been improved to a satisfactory level. In information and communication technology, not enough attention is given to control, monitoring and modelling aspects of the subject. A secure curriculum for the Foundation Stage has been put into place, although there is no planned, outdoor area to extend children's learning in a more active way. Religious education has been improved to ensure that enough attention is now given to Christianity and to another world faith. Although the school no longer has a deputy head, the contribution of key staff with management responsibilities is now satisfactory. Improvements have been made to the school's accommodation with more hygienic toilet facilities and a room for the staff. Although planned, improvements to the office accommodation have yet to be made. The school's aims have been reviewed, but are not sufficiently used as the basis for governors to evaluate how well the school is doing.

In addition to the above points, the school has improved:
standards in mathematics, religious education and history throughout the school;
standards in English at Key Stage 1;
pupils' attendance, attitudes and behaviour;

- opportunities for pupils' to develop their awareness of different cultures.

Overall, the school is in a sound position to achieve further improvement.

STANDARDS:

The table below shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	E	E*
Mathematics	A	A	E	E*
Science	A	A	E	E

<i>Key</i>	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
<i>very low</i>	<i>E*</i>

The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds showed a marked fall on earlier years. When compared with all schools nationally, the results were well below average in all three subjects. When compared with similar schools, standards in 2000 were well below average in science and very low (the lowest 5 per cent) in English and mathematics.

The main reason for the poor results was a very big difference in year group ability. The previous weaknesses in the quality of teaching, (particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5) noted in the last report have held back the achievements of many pupils in the school, but especially those in the 2000 cohort of 11 year olds. Progress may also have been affected by the high turnover of staff following the last inspection. Improvements in the teaching are now having an impact on standards.

The small size of the cohorts does mean that results can be significantly affected by the absence or attendance of a few pupils. This leads the results open to fluctuations from year to year. The low results in 2000 are not reflected in the standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 6.

Work seen during the inspection shows standards in English and mathematics to be good and those in science satisfactory.

The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2000 for seven year olds, when compared with all schools nationally, show that standards in writing were well above average, and above average in reading and science. Although improved, standards in mathematics were below average. When compared with similar schools, standards in 2000 were well above average in writing, above average in reading and science, but well below average in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the current Year 2 are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and average in science.

Standards in ICT are below average because pupils do not get enough experience in control, modelling and monitoring aspects of the subject, especially in Key Stage 2. Pupils meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education.

Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, music and physical education are average. By the time pupils are 11, standards in history are above average.

Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, except in ICT where progress is unsatisfactory, and in mathematics where progress throughout the school is good. However, there is some room for greater challenge for higher-attaining pupils in writing in Key Stage 2 and in Science at both key stages. Children in the Foundation Stage make sound progress. Targets set for English and mathematics for 2001 are appropriately challenging and include a big increase in the proportion of pupils expected to attain Level 5.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They respond well to praise and most of them want to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is satisfactory, although a small minority of pupils are not always respectful of others. There was no evidence of oppressive behaviour during the week of the inspection, and no exclusions have been made in the past year.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have satisfactory relationships with staff, adults and with one another. They take the modest opportunities to carry out responsibilities seriously.
Attendance	Attendance is better than the national average and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are punctual, and lessons start on time.

The improved attitudes shown by pupils makes a substantial contribution to their enjoyment of school, their progress and the standards they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
35 lessons seen	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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.

Teaching overall is satisfactory with several strong features. During the inspection, 91 per cent of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better. Only three lessons seen were less than satisfactory, of which two were in physical education and the other in music. Forty per cent of lessons were good or better. Two very good lessons were seen in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The improved quality teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning, including in literacy and numeracy. A key issue identified in the previous inspection report was to set clear learning objectives for each lesson, increase expectations, better match work to the needs of pupils, make better use of time, and improve marking and homework. On all counts, evidence from the current inspection shows a marked improvement.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	With the exception of the reception class, where children do not have access to a planned outdoor area, the curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced. It meets the requirements in all subjects of the National Curriculum except for ICT.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is sound. Most pupils are well supported both in and out of the classroom. Teachers and effective classroom assistants work hard to meet the needs of these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There are good arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides satisfactory all-round care for its pupils through secure monitoring procedures. A policy for child protection has been put in place, although not all staff are fully familiar with its procedures. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Information from tests and assessments is collected and analysed, and is increasingly being used to assess progress and to inform target setting.

In ICT insufficient attention is given to controlling, monitoring and modelling aspects of the subject.

All staff are good role models and help the pupils to develop a sense of right and wrong. There are satisfactory links with parents, through the open access of staff. Although most information is relevant and helpful, there is room for greater consistency and clarity in some communications. Parents respond well to opportunities to contribute to their children's learning at home, although their role in helping in school has recently been affected by a poorly communicated change of policy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership provided by the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. There is a clear agenda for school development that has led to steady improvement in important aspects of the school since the last inspection. Staff work together as an effective team. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	In the absence of a clear and shared understanding of its roles and responsibilities, the governing body has not been able to contribute fully to the effectiveness of the school. Some difficulties in relationships have distracted the governing body's attention away from its main tasks of shaping the direction of the school, supporting its work as a critical friend, and holding the school to account for its standards and quality of education. Measures are now in place to ensure a greater understanding of what needs to be done and how best to go about it. This leaves the governing body in a sound position to once again fulfil statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Although the school has put into place a range of clear measures to evaluate its performance, at present these are not being sufficiently monitored and evaluated. A start has been made to judging the school's effectiveness in relation to measurable targets, particularly around pupils' achievements which needs to be continued.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its resources, although it does not consistently follow 'good practice' in seeking best value in some aspects of expenditure.

The satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is enhanced by a sound provision for their professional development. However, only recently has there been an appropriate level of professional development for the headteacher. The well-maintained accommodation provides a suitable environment to meet pupils' needs. However, there is no designated outdoor area for children's learning in the reception class. The staff, the accommodation and resources are used effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school. • Behaviour in the school has improved. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good. • Most parents at the meeting are pleased with the arrangements for work at home, although this view was not shared by some parents in the questionnaire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eighteen per cent of the parents who returned the questionnaire feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. • Thirty three per cent of the parents who returned the questionnaire do not feel that the school is well led and managed. At the meeting, many parents felt that the school did not communicate well with them. They were particularly unhappy about the recent decision to change the established way that many parents supported children's learning in the school. Many parents felt that the matter had been badly handled.

The inspection team supports the positive views that parents have of the school. In response to the concerns of some parents, the inspection found that the current provision for activities outside of lessons is satisfactory, and the provision for homework, good.

The inspection team found that the leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. They have helped steer the school on a path of steady improvement since the last inspection. Much of the school's information to parents is conveyed in a clear and relevant way. However, there are times when this is not the case. For example, the reasons for changing the parents' role in supporting learning in the school, were communicated in a way likely to give rise to misunderstanding and concern.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

Foundation Stage

1. There has been an improvement in the quality of education for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. A secure curriculum has been put in place that means that children's learning is planned in a structured way. Overall, what children know, understand and can do on entering the school is broadly in line with the expected levels for this age group, although their early reading and writing skills are often above average. Children make sound progress, although the absence of a planned outdoor area restricts the extent of their learning through activity. Most of the children are likely to reach all the 'early learning goals' by the end of the reception year.

Overall

2. Standards in English and mathematics are above average at the end of both key stages while standards in science are in line with those expected for seven and eleven year olds. In information and communication technology, standards throughout the school are below those expected. In religious education, standards reflect the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In foundation subjects, standards are about the same as those seen nationally, although they are above average in history by the end of Key Stage 2. The school analyses results in English and mathematics at the end of each year, and uses the information to produce realistic and sufficiently challenging targets for the end of Key Stage 2. There is no significant difference in the standards achieved by girls and boys.

3. The school's results for English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests and assessments for seven year olds in 2000 are reflected in the findings of the inspection. But the poor results in the national tests at Key Stage 2 were out of line with those of earlier years, and the inspection found current standards for 11 year olds in English and mathematics to be above average. The unusually poor results in the 2000 tests for 11 year olds can be attributed to:

- The small size of the cohort, leaving results easily affected by the performance of even one pupil;
- The big difference in the ability of the year group compared with other years;
- Four pupils (expected to reach Level 4) either leaving the school before the tests or absent;
- Unsatisfactory teaching in earlier years of Key Stage 2 (as noted in the last report);
- More than the usual amount of upheaval from staff absences and changes that adversely affected the year group.

English

4. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentages of seven year olds reaching the expected levels was above average in reading and well above average in writing compared with both all schools nationally and with schools in similar social circumstances. This was a significant improvement on the results in 1999, and the best of fluctuating results in English in the past four years. The inspection evidence reflects the results in the latest results and shows that standards among seven year olds are above average. This is an improvement on the standards noted in the last inspection.

5. In 2000, the percentage of 11 year olds reaching the expected level in English was well below the national average and the average for similar schools. This was in sharp contrast to the very good results of earlier years. The inspection found that standards among 11 year olds are above average.

Most children enter school with good early reading and writing skills for their age. With the support of their parents and the school's clear approach to the teaching of phonic skills, pupils develop good attitudes to reading and have a strong strategy for 'attacking' unfamiliar words. This good start continues throughout the school with a consistent and structured approach to reading for pupils of all abilities. Standards in writing are developed well throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are familiar with many of the conventions of writing. At the same time, and particularly in Key Stage 2, their awareness of writing for different purposes and audiences is developed well. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 write imaginatively, with expression and considerable flair. However, throughout the school, there are times when more could be expected of these pupils. Although most pupils' written work in English is consistently legible, this is not the case in other situations.

Throughout the school, pupils' skills in speaking are better developed than in listening. Although this feature is apparent from the time the children enter school, more needs to be done to get pupils to 'take account' and evaluate what others are saying before making their own response.

Mathematics

6. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2000, the results were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. However, the results in 2000 were better than in 1999 and continued a trend of improvement in recent years. Findings from the current inspection shows that this improvement has continued so that seven year olds now achieve standards above those expected for their age.

7. In the Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, standards in mathematics were very low compared with the national average and with the average for similar schools. The big drop in the results is not reflected in the inspection findings, and pupils in the current Year 6 are, as in years before 2000, achieve standards above the national average. The good standards among 11 year olds noted in the last report have been maintained.

8. The inspection evidence shows that standards of mathematics throughout the school are improving as a result of a greater consistency in the quality of teaching and a more secure curriculum. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a particularly strong impact on standards. This can be seen in the good standards of pupils'

mental calculations and in their ability to apply known number facts to problem solving. Pupils of all abilities are sufficiently challenged in most lessons, as are pupils where there is more than one year-group in each of the Key Stage 2 classes. Pupils' answers in national tests have been analysed and show that they often find it difficult to tackle the language in problem-solving questions. This has led the school to give greater attention to this area. In both key stages, homework has been improved so that it makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in mathematics.

Science

9. Standards in science achieved by seven and eleven year olds are in line with those expected for their ages. The school's results in the 2000 National Curriculum assessments for seven year olds were above both the national average and the average for similar schools. A good percentage of pupils gained the higher Level 3, whereas the lack of evidence of higher achievement among pupils in the current inspection reflects the scope for greater challenge for more-able pupils. The school's results in the national assessments for 11 year olds in 2000 were very low compared with all schools and with similar schools, and for the same reasons as for English and mathematics noted above. The inspection found standards to be as expected for pupils of this age and that greater consistency in teaching in the key stage and an improved curriculum are rapidly improving standards. The good attention given to practical work and to investigations are reflected in pupils' ability to carry out a 'fair test' and in their level of interest in the subject. However, older pupils need more opportunities to try out their lines of enquiry and ways of recording, in order to achieve the higher standards.

Other subjects

10. Standards in ICT are below average throughout the school. Although pupils have better access to computers since the last inspection, there are still too few opportunities for them to apply their knowledge and skills across the curriculum. The ICT curriculum has been re-appraised and resources extended, but further work is needed to make sure these measures are fully implemented. Throughout the school, but particularly in Key Stage 2, standards in controlling, monitoring and modelling are weak because not enough attention is given to them. Standards in ICT have not improved enough since the last inspection.

11. The inspection shows that standards in religious education are higher than at the time of the last inspection, and now meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. This is mainly because pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major faiths has been successfully extended and enriched. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good awareness of the main features of different faiths, such as major festivals, important characters and places of worship.

12. Standards achieved in the foundation subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography and physical education are satisfactory at the end of both key stages, and in line with what is expected for seven and eleven year olds. Standards in history are average at the end of Key Stage 1, but above average by the end of Key Stage 2. This reflects the improved curriculum with its good emphasis on pupils developing their skills of enquiry, often through first-hand experience. Although standards in music are in line with national expectations for the end of both key stages, overall, pupils are insufficiently challenged.

Progress

13. Progress in learning is overall satisfactory in the reception class and Key Stages 1 and 2. Progress in each class and in both key stages is far more even than noted in the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress throughout the school, except in ICT where progress remains unsatisfactory. In reading and writing, mathematics and history their progress is often good. Higher-attaining pupils are usually given sufficient challenge to ensure that they make at least similar progress to other pupils. However, although they make at least satisfactory progress in their writing, science and design and technology, there is scope for improvement in some lessons and in some aspects of these subjects.

Improvement since the last inspection

14. In the last inspection report, pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science was uneven. Overall sound progress in Key Stage 1 was followed by much unsatisfactory progress in Years 3, 4 and 5. Progress was good in Year 6. The school has done well in raising standards of teaching and making the quality of learning more even. Standards in reading and writing and in mathematics at Key Stage 1 have improved. In religious education, standards have significantly improved. The rate of improvement in ICT has been unsatisfactory. Developments and opportunities for ICT in the school have not kept pace with improvements nationally. Standards in history in Key Stage 2 have improved and those in other subjects, where there was sufficient evidence to make a judgement, are about the same as at the time of the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Most pupils are eager to come to school and are enthusiastic about learning. For example, children in the reception class were keen to show the adults and each other, their efforts to write their names. In a Year 2 music lesson, pupils responded well to the invitation to 'compose' a piece to accompany a story. In a hymn practice for the whole school, pupils listened and followed instructions well. Pupils in a physical education lesson in Year 1 were very well behaved and waited patiently for their turn on the equipment. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils were courteous and respectful as they listened to each other's ideas on the subject of light. Often, they make constructive relationships with each other. Reception children listening to a story were attentive to the teacher and to each other, and the Year 1 class demonstrated a good ability to work together in a lesson on personal and social education. At break times, older pupils play with the younger ones, and boys play with girls.

16. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall, and most parents agree that this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is usually good. However, some aspects of behaviour are not so positive: in a reception mathematics lesson some children made unkind remarks to each other, and in a Year 5 and 6 design and technology lesson a few pupils showed a distinct lack of respect for others. There are times when this low-order, but nonetheless unwanted behaviour can in part be attributed to a lack of pace or challenge in particular lessons. However, this is not always the case and, although a

minor problem, this kind of behaviour is still unacceptable. This reflects the views of pupils who, whilst clearly positive about coming to school, still note occasional instances of minor harassment, such as having a ball deliberately thrown at someone. Given that behaviour overall has improved, and the staff's awareness of the problem, this is something the school is anxious to address in a constructive way.

17. There are many instances when pupils take a clear pride in their work, as when pupils were looking at colour mixing in a Year 2 art lesson. Older and younger pupils treat each other with respect and the small number of girls in Year 6 report no undue pressures from their situation. Pupils show due respect for both personal and school property. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately catered for.

18. However, a few pupils do not tend to think about the effect of their actions on others, and this is an issue that needs attention. When the possibility arises, pupils are keen to do small jobs such as taking registers, collecting dinner money and operating equipment in assembly, but overall, they have insufficient opportunities for responsibility.

19. Attendance is good at 95.1 per cent, with 4.5 per cent being authorised and 0.4 per cent unauthorised absence. This is an improvement compared with the last inspection. On both counts, these figures are better than the national averages. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons. There were no exclusions in the last school year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. In the last inspection, teaching in one in four lessons was unsatisfactory, and a key issue was to improve the quality of teaching. Significant progress has been made in tackling this serious issue, partly through a change in staffing, so that now, 91 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better, with 40 per cent being good or very good.

21. The overall quality of teaching of children in the foundation stage is satisfactory with several good features. The reception class teacher and classroom assistant have a clear understanding of how young children learn. Although they have only recently started to work together, they do so effectively, particularly in supporting the children's learning and in noting telling observations of how the children are getting on. Lessons are well planned so that staff are clear of the purpose of the activities and of their role the children's learning. A minor shortcoming of otherwise satisfactory teaching could be overcome with a greater injection of pace and liveliness in some lessons.

22. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the teaching of English and mathematics is sound, and there are some good features. Lessons are planned well, using the guidance from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Teachers set clear learning objectives and make them known to pupils. In the better lessons, the pace is good and activities are chosen to interest and excite pupils. This helps them to remain attentive and to make sound and sometimes, good progress during the lesson. Questioning is used well to assess understanding and push thinking forward. In English, lessons usually finish with an appropriate discussion of what has taken place, with pupils giving examples of their work. This encourages them to think about what

they have done, thus consolidating their learning. Some lessons would be improved if there was greater pace and the teaching was livelier. Sometimes teachers spend too much time talking to the whole class and not giving enough chance for pupils to be actively involved. In mathematics, some opportunities are missed to get pupils to explain or demonstrate their work during and at the end of the lesson.

23. Overall, teachers' knowledge and understanding is satisfactory. However, in history and religious education in Years 5 and 6, a very good knowledge of the subjects motivates pupils particularly well, and they respond with interest and effort in their work. Effective questioning draws the whole class into lively discussions. In music and physical education, teachers' knowledge and understanding is sometimes less than satisfactory. In music, a lack of confidence in the subject can mean that teachers are not prepared to let pupils experiment with sound made using a variety of instruments. The lack of confidence in physical education means that the teacher sometimes spends too long talking, leaving insufficient time to use the apparatus. In both these subjects, the lack of opportunities leads to insufficient progress being made in some lessons.

24. Planning has improved significantly since the last inspection. Most subjects are now planned taking account of the latest national guidance and benefit from clear learning objectives for each lesson. Another area of improvement is in providing appropriate work for different levels of ability, although, occasionally, the most able pupils could be further challenged instead of being required to do the same work as others. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well supported by teachers and well-trained classroom assistants. This enables them to make progress appropriate for their ability.

25. The management of pupils in lessons is mainly good and has significantly improved since the last inspection. Expectations of behaviour are usually high and there are good relationships between adults and pupils. This leads to a purposeful working atmosphere where pupils can concentrate and get on with their work. However, there are some occasions when pupils are less attentive and their behaviour is distracting to the teacher and to others. Sometimes, but by no means always, this happens when the pace of the lesson is too slow and pupils become restless.

26. Support assistants are used well in most lessons. In particular, they give good support to pupils with special educational needs. On some occasions, they are used effectively to make assessment notes whilst the teacher is involved with pupils. This was particularly apparent in the reception class. Resources are well prepared and well used, particularly in science, and in a religious education lesson where well-chosen religious artefacts were used to very good effect. Teaching time is usually, but not always used effectively. Pupils sometimes have to sit through long introductions, and in physical education there were unduly long periods of inactivity as pupils waited for their turn.

27. Assessments are used effectively in the core subjects of English, mathematics and to some extent in science, but there is insufficient attention to assessment in other subjects. Marking, which was criticised in the last inspection, is now satisfactory, often with constructive comments to help pupils know what to do to improve. There is now an appropriate homework policy, and homework is making a positive impact on standards throughout the school.

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

28. The school has made good progress in developing the curriculum since the last inspection when serious weaknesses were noted. With the exception of the Foundation Stage, there is now a broad and balanced curriculum. All statutory requirements are now met, with the exception of information technology, where not enough attention is given to controlling, modelling and monitoring aspects of the subject.

29. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has significantly improved since the last inspection and now provides a secure foundation for children's learning. However, although the curriculum is sufficiently broad in that it covers all recommended areas of learning, there remains a lack of balance because children do not have access to a planned area out of doors. This means that children cannot regularly extend their learning to a larger scale or in a more active way. Otherwise, the curriculum plans for a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Planning for the stage in the children's learning takes into account the observations made by both members of staff. This is helping them to meet the children's different needs, including those with special educational needs.

30. Appropriate attention has been given to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. They have been used effectively to guide teachers in their planning, with clear learning objectives stated for every lesson. This is helping to ensure that the programmes build on pupils' previous knowledge and skills.

31. The latest national guidance has been taken into account well in relation to English, mathematics and science. The National Strategies for literacy and numeracy have already been implemented, and the school now meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education. For all other subjects, the school is at a developmental stage, fusing the latest curriculum guidance with what they were already doing. This means that policies and schemes of work for the foundation subjects need to be re-appraised in many cases. With a small staff, and some teachers being responsible for up to four curriculum areas, this is taking a time. Naturally, core subjects have taken precedence, and good progress has been made with these, but most foundation subjects still require a lot of attention to bring policies and schemes of work up to date.

32. Mixed age classes pose an additional challenge for teachers in Key Stage 2, but the school is taking a great deal of care to ensure that every pupil has access to the full curriculum, and that there is no unnecessary repetition. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans with appropriate short-term, achievable targets. These are well addressed by teachers and support assistants within the classroom, enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress for their age and ability. Although higher attaining pupils are usually given sufficiently challenging work to meet their needs, there are occasions when their learning could be extended still further.

33. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The scheme of work that teachers follow is a suitable programme to prepare pupils for adult life. Most work involves class discussions to which pupils willingly contribute. Some younger pupils still lack the concentration needed, but overall they are developing these skills well as they

progress through the school. Governors have agreed a suitable sex education policy, and parents are invited to view the videos used before the pupils see them. The police liaison officer assists with drugs education, where pupils are given appropriate information to allow them to make the correct choices.

34. There is a satisfactory range of sufficiently interesting extra curricular activities undertaken by teachers, parents and professional coaches. Pupils have to pay for most of the activities because coaches run them. There is a satisfactory range of visitors to the school to enhance the curriculum. These have included members of the Sussex Symphony Orchestra, firemen, and visitors from other countries. Visits have included the Bluebell Railway, Fishbourne Roman Palace, the theatre, and a valuable residential visit for pupils in Years 5 and 6, which develops social attitudes as well as academic achievement. The opportunity for a residential excursion is much appreciated by parents and pupils alike.

35. The community makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning. The sports hall is a joint venture with the community, and the school has the use of the recreation ground for physical education. A local illustrator and an author give pupils the benefit of their knowledge and experiences, and other members of the community assist in a number of ways, for example by running the chess club. The local church, fire service, library service and police all make valuable contributions to the life of the school.

36. Relationships with partner institutions are satisfactory. The pre-school playgroup uses the sports hall once a week, giving them an introduction to the school environment. Meetings and sporting activities take place between the cluster schools, and enquiries are being made with a view to sharing in the appointment of an information technology technician. There are specialist days for older pupils to join in at the secondary schools, such as the design and technology day, and staff make visits to the other schools to exchange information. Pupils have an appropriate opportunity to visit their chosen secondary school before they leave Barcombe Primary.

37. The school makes sound provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although there is a newly updated policy, teachers have only just begun to incorporate this into their planning for pupils' personal development. Its impact could not therefore, be assessed.

38. Knowledge and insight into values and religious beliefs is provided largely through a carefully planned program of assemblies and the celebration of festivals, such as Harvest and Easter. The teaching of religious education has been considerably strengthened since the last inspection and now makes a solid contribution to spiritual development. The regular visit of a governor to lead assembly is very valuable. However, few opportunities are yet apparent in everyday teaching that celebrate spiritual moments or improve self-knowledge.

39. Moral development is securely rooted in a sensible behaviour policy and a code of conduct, which is displayed around the school. Each class is encouraged to negotiate and adapt their own class rules. If needed, there are suitable sanctions for unwanted behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour. This approach is reinforced by an appropriate reward system. Good behaviour and hard work are recognised through 'Significant Achievement' awards given out in a special assembly. Staff serve as good role models for their pupils.

40. Social development is satisfactory. Personal and social education lessons help pupils learn about appropriate responses and ways to behave towards each other. Most classes use 'circle time' to develop and reinforce this learning. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are generally harmonious; mixed-age classes offer opportunities for older children to work with younger ones. Care is also taken to reinforce good behaviour at mealtimes. The school runs a variety of trips and visits to widen the curriculum, including a residential visit for Year 6 pupils, and a variety of sporting activities to help to learn how to get on with others in a range of situations. There are strong links with the local community through schemes, such as the distribution of gifts at harvest time, visits from local fire officers and from grandparents to talk about Roman artefacts. The school regularly collects for a number of charities and sponsors a child in the Gambia.

41. Cultural development is satisfactorily developed, especially through English, music and art. For example, there have been visits to the pantomime, and artwork in the style of Paul Klee and Van Gogh (linking with the sunflower competition and donations to a local children's hospice). In music, pupils have listened to 'The Carnival of the Animals' by Saint-Saens and had a visit from the Sussex Symphony Orchestra. Awareness of different cultures and beliefs has been significantly improved since the last inspection by providing displays, artefacts, music and books, including some relating to major world faiths. Visitors have occasionally added to pupils' cultural experience, including a Nigerian rector, and a local Muslim talking about their experiences and beliefs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school offers a caring environment for its pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and monitor them closely; routine welfare procedures run smoothly. There are sensible guidelines for dealing with sick or injured children. There is up-to-date list of those with medical conditions and an appropriately maintained accident book. Eating facilities are clean and pleasant, and the toilets have been improved to a suitable standard since the last inspection. Sensible health and safety procedures are followed, with regular risk assessments and satisfactory day-to-day maintenance. Minor exceptions are found in physical education, where there are some concerns about the movement by pupils of apparatus and the suitability of some kit worn for physical activity.

43. The procedures for child protection, although improved since the last inspection, are not entirely effective. The headteacher is the designated person and has run a comprehensive training session for staff, but some teachers new to the school have missed this session and are unclear as to who the named person is. A further training course has been arranged to include all new staff.

44. Attendance is promoted well: staff have high expectations, and registers are completed promptly each day, according to statutory guidelines. Parents confirm that the school is proactive in 'chasing up' absences. Behaviour management has improved since the last inspection, both through an emphasis on effective teaching and through the introduction of a sound and detailed behaviour policy. There is also a Code of Conduct, which is reinforced through the home-school agreement. Each class negotiates its own set of rules, rewards and sanctions, and this is well understood by pupils.

45. The school has effective procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs. Class teachers discuss pupils with the special needs co-ordinator and, if necessary, with parents, to decide what further help is required. The pupils are set short-term, achievable targets that are regularly reviewed, enabling their progress to be carefully monitored.

46. Class sizes are relatively small, and teachers get to know their pupils well. They give good praise and encouragement in class, and a fortnightly system of achievement certificates, which are displayed prominently, encourages pupils to achieve more. The achievements that are praised relate to personal development as well as academic attainment

47. Sound progress has been made in improving assessment procedures, a particular weakness in the last inspection. A whole-school policy for assessment has been introduced and its implementation monitored. In important areas, the good effect of the policy is apparent as, for example, in teacher's planning. Effective assessment procedures are now well established in English and mathematics. In ICT and science, although the assessment procedures are in place, they need time and support to become fully effective. But in other subjects, there are no clear and consistent approaches to assessment; a feature recognised by the school in its improvement plan. At the same time, assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage have significantly improved, so that planning is now supported well by a clear approach to observing and talking to children in order to see what they know, can do and understand.

48. Increasingly, pupils' results in national and other assessments are being used to identify strengths and weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding. In some instances, this analysis is used to inform planning in order better to meet pupils' needs as, for example, through the provision of 'booster' classes.

49. Teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils in their care. They work closely with them to improve both their academic achievement and their personal development. However, there are not enough opportunities offered for pupils to take responsibility (for example, in science or design and technology lessons) for choosing tools, materials or recording methods. Chances are missed to encourage pupils to become more independent, particularly as they get older.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents' and carers' views of the school are largely positive, although with concerns in specific areas. The vast majority of respondents in the questionnaire were happy with behaviour (over 90 per cent) and teaching (88 per cent). Most feel the staff are approachable and have high expectations of their children. They agree with the attitudes and values promoted and say that their children are happy to come to school. Most feel that teaching, behaviour and the use of homework have all improved since the last inspection.

51. Some parents felt they did not have enough opportunity to meet the teachers formally to discuss progress. However, the inspection found no evidence to support this: in fact the school offers two evenings a year for individual consultations and a curriculum overview evening at the beginning of the year. In addition nearly all parents say the staff are approachable and that informal discussions are easily arranged. Some felt that the work was

not challenging enough for the more able pupils. Overall, more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged, although there is scope for improvement in aspects of their written work, science and design and technology. There is no clear and consistent approach to letting parents know about their child's baseline assessment at the start of the Foundation Stage.

52. The school provides a generous range of information for parents. There is a prospectus and regular newsletters, both from the headteacher and from the chair of governors. Reports to parents have improved since the last inspection and now contain targets for improvement. In addition the school offers appropriate parents' evenings, as outlined above, and both a whiteboard in the playground and notice board within the school for parent teacher association and other business. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted appropriately about their progress.

53. The annual Governors' report to parents lacks some important elements, including the arrangements for the next election of parent governors, information on the professional development of staff and, most crucially, the progress of the Action Plan following the last inspection

54. Parents' involvement in the school is satisfactory, though marred by the recent decision to discontinue the practice of parents working in their child's classroom. While parents acknowledge that there may well be good reasons for the change, they do not know what these are, and feel aggrieved at the way in which the decision was handled. This has adversely affected many parents' view of the school. Indeed, about 30 per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire, do not think the school is well led and managed. The meeting with parents showed that doubts about the school's management are often associated with concerns about communication. Many parents were unaware of the 'suggestion' box and some were unhappy with the responses to their concerns they had received from either the headteacher or the chair of governors. Clearly, there are some difficulties and misconceptions in the channels of communication between parents, school and governors that need to be improved.

55. More positively, there is a home-school agreement, reading diaries are used effectively and parents receive a presentation book of their child's work each year. Parents come in to see class assemblies; they also support homework enthusiastically and recognise that its use has improved since the last inspection. The Parent Teacher Association is very active and successful and has raised a significant amount of money to assist the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The headteacher has overseen the steady improvement of the school in the short time since the last inspection in 1998. The school's community found it hard to come to terms with the serious weaknesses in the school's management, teaching and curriculum, as highlighted in the previous inspection report. The weaknesses were found to be adversely affecting pupils' progress, attitudes and behaviour. Although much still remains to be done, a satisfactory start has been made to tackling the most important issues facing the school.

57. The improvement has been achieved against a background of uncertain relationships between some governors, and between some governors and the headteacher. This situation has slowed the rate of improvement and taken the governors' attention away from their role of supporting the school in relation to the key issues for improvement. It is to the credit of the headteacher and staff that, in spite of these difficulties, a satisfactory improvement has been made.
58. Following the last inspection, several members of the teaching staff left and new appointments were made. The new staff team are supportive of the headteacher, and share a common goal of improving the school.
59. A follow-up visit to the last inspection was made by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) in May 1999 to check on the improvement of the school. The findings concluded that satisfactory progress had been made in addressing the key issues that related to the school's serious weaknesses.
60. The current inspection found that the momentum for improvement has been maintained. Deficiencies in the curriculum and in the school's assessment procedures have been satisfactorily addressed. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has improved. Serious weaknesses in the quality of teaching have been tackled with very good effect. Although the school's aims have been revised, they do not form the basis for governors to assess the work of the school.
61. Measures to improve important aspects of the school, such as homework and behaviour, have been understood and valued by pupils and parents. Other changes to policies or practices have not been communicated so effectively. Recently, unclear explanations for a big change in the way parents help in the school, was a cause for a lot of parental concern.
62. Staff and governors reviewed the aims and values of the school shortly after the last inspection. Equal attention was given to the school's commitment to pupils' standards of achievement and to their pastoral needs. The aims are reflected in much of the work of the classrooms and in pupils' improved behaviour and attitudes to learning. Most parents strongly subscribe to the school's pastoral aims, although a few are less confident about the school's commitment to higher achievement.
63. A key issue in the last inspection was the need to develop the role of the deputy headteacher in the management of the school. The school no longer has a deputy, but a recently appointed senior teacher works closely with the other two subject co-ordinators to support the school's management. Staff with responsibilities for subjects, take their roles seriously and offer at least a satisfactory level of support and guidance to one another. Useful action plans have been prepared for the development of most subjects.
64. The headteacher has introduced an effective approach to monitoring, evaluating and supporting teaching and learning throughout the school. The observation of lessons provides the basis for a good level of support, especially for the newly qualified teachers. The improvement in teaching since the last inspection can, in part be attributed to the planned approach to monitoring and evaluation. However, in order for the process to be fully effective, there need to be more frequent visits by co-ordinators to classrooms.

65. A start has been made to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in teaching in relation to pupils' achievements in national, and other tests and assessments. This is helping the school to see what works well and what needs to be improved, but needs to be strengthened by sharper evaluation. The subject co-ordinators need to play a central role in this process, particularly in relation to pupils' performance in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT.

66. Effective monitoring and evaluating systems have supported the satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.

67. There are satisfactory systems in place so that the school meets the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory and this is reflected in the progress made by the pupils in relation to their individual education plans. Although the governor for special educational needs has effectively been involved in monitoring, evaluating and supporting the provision, the role has been temporarily interrupted during the current term, due to the noted extraordinary circumstances within the governing body.

68. The governing body does not make an effective corporate contribution to the work of the school. This is in spite of the good intentions and hard work of many of its individual members. The governing body has found it difficult to work together to support the headteacher in tackling the school's serious weaknesses. From the start, many governors have been unsure of what, if any, contribution they had to make because their strategic role was not clearly defined. This has meant that there has been no clear and consistent approach to monitoring, evaluating and supporting the work of the school. Governors, often acting as individuals, have dwelt unduly on detail and have been deflected from the 'bigger picture'. Taken together, these shortcomings and attempts to resolve them, have delayed or interrupted the work of the governing body in the following areas:

- Governors finding out for themselves how things are going in the school through a clearly understood approach to monitoring;
- Governors' role in checking the school's progress towards meeting the targets of the post-OFSTED action plan and keeping parents informed about this;
- During the current term, the governing body's ability to carry out its role in relation to special educational needs.

69. Many governors and staff acknowledge that there has, at times, been a discouraging and unconstructive working relationship in the governing body. The inspection strongly supports the view that measures taken this term by the governing body are allowing the school's management to begin to move forward. There is a strong will to resolve past difficulties and to 'move on'. To this end, governors have taken up the opportunities for training, re-appraised the school improvement plan and drawn up a protocol of good practice. Roles and responsibilities are now clear and pave the way for an effective working relationship between senior management and governors. Taken together, these measures provide a sound basis to guide the governing body forward with a shared sense of purpose and community.

70. Following the last inspection, the school improvement plan was reviewed. Although it has provided the staff with a useful tool for improvement, its value has only recently been recognised by the full governing body. The priorities in the revised plan include the most

important issues for improvement. Clear targets are suitably linked to pupils' performance, wherever this is relevant. However, now that these are in place, they need to be used to assist the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school in a systematic and constructive way.

71. Although the main educational priorities are appropriately supported through the school's financial planning, the governing body relies too heavily on the headteacher in evaluating its spending. The otherwise useful school improvement plan does not include enough financial detail of the expected costs of each priority.

72. The school administrative officer is efficient in keeping records and in ensuring a flow of essential information between the headteacher, the full governing body and the finance committee. The inspection confirms the findings of a recently conducted external audit, that satisfactory administrative procedures are in place and that the governors carry out appropriate financial checks and controls. However, although most specific grants are used appropriately for their designated purpose, decisions made in relation to spending a grant for additional administrative support for small schools were made retrospectively rather than in a planned way. While this, in itself is in order, it does mean that spending cannot be assessed to see if it meets its intended objectives.

73. The school is aware of getting best value in some important areas, for example in getting various quotations before installing a security system. However, the governing body did not seek sufficient independent guidance on the educational value in investing in the upgrading of donated computers. Although a start has been made in using a detailed analysis of assessment results to consider how to target spending on support for individuals and groups of pupils, there is scope for further development.

74. A team of appropriately qualified teachers and support staff meets the needs of all aspects of the curriculum, including that for children aged under five. Classroom support staff work hard and are very much members of a staff team. The additional training taken on by many staff, including classroom assistants is having a positive effect on many aspects of pupils' learning. However, opportunities for the headteacher to develop her professional skills have been 'little and late'. At times this has made it difficult for her to carry out some aspects of her role, particularly in relation to financial management. The problem has been recognised and a start made to provide relevant professional training for the headteacher.

75. The school makes satisfactory use of new technologies and has started use them to support the management of assessment procedures. In modest, but increasingly apparent ways, ICT is used to present data, including the analysis of pupils' performance, in a format that is easy for staff and governors to understand and to use. The school is aware that this is an area for development.

76. The school buildings provide a satisfactory level of accommodation. The key issue for improvement has been completed in relation to the pupils' toilets. A temporary arrangement has been made to provide a staffroom but, as yet, the school's administrative office has not been improved. The school is clean and well maintained, and the learning environment is enhanced by imaginative and pleasing displays of pupils' work. Classrooms are light and

adequately spacious. Satisfactory use is made of the extensive grounds, both for recreation and as a year-round learning resource. However the children in the Foundation Stage do not have access to an outdoor area to support different aspects of the curriculum. This means that children cannot regularly and easily extend their learning, on a larger scale and in a more active way, beyond the adequately sized indoor classroom.

77. The school is reasonably resourced in most areas of the curriculum, including ICT and numeracy. Resources for the under fives are satisfactory with the exception of resources for outdoor activity and non-fiction books. There is a satisfactory ratio of computers to pupils. Most resources are well organised and accessible. More use could be made of the immediate environment, in the village and further away, to support learning. However, very good use is made of residential centres for Key Stage 2 pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. In order to build on the existing strengths of the school and to improve the quality of pupils' learning and the standards they reach, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- Raise standards in information and communication technology by:
 - * Providing pupils in both key stages with greater access to computers;
 - * Providing pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, with a greater range of opportunities to develop their skills in monitoring, controlling and modelling.

- Develop the contribution the governing body makes to the improvement of the school by:
 - * Ensuring that governors focus on the school's priorities for improvement in the action plan and, in turn, the school improvement plan.
 - * Ensuring that the recently clarified roles and responsibilities remain the basis for guiding its work, particularly with regard to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the action plan.
 - * Continuing a programme of governor training tailored to needs, in particular to governors' role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
 - * Ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of the governing body finance committee and headteacher in relation to financial decision-making are clearly understood and set out in writing:

- Improve communications with parents by:
 - * Improving the quality of communication with parents, especially in relation to changes in routine and other important decisions;
 - * Ensuring that omissions in the governors' annual report to parents are rectified.

- Extend the opportunities for children in the reception class to learn through activity by:
 - * Developing a suitable outdoor area specifically for the use of children in the Foundation Stage;
 - * Developing a curriculum to include frequent outdoor learning opportunities.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	34	51	9	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)	97
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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 the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	5	11	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	80	80	80
	National	86	88	93

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	4	4	5
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	87	87	94
	National	70	69	78

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 the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	8	6	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	5	3	7
	Girls	2	2	3
	Total	7	5	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	50	36	71
	National	78	75	89

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	6	5	7
	Girls	3	2	3
	Total	9	7	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	64	50	71
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	95
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

**Qualified teachers and classes:
YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	19.2

**Education support staff:
YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	240,075.00
Total expenditure	222,875.00
Expenditure per pupil	2,322.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	17,200.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	96
Number of questionnaires returned	61

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	33	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	38	10	3	11
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	59	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	48	12	2	8
The teaching is good.	33	53	5	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	49	15	7	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	35	3	5	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	45	10	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	25	40	26	5	7
The school is well led and managed.	20	40	20	13	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	22	57	7	5	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	29	10	8	7

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

79. There has been an improvement in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. Serious deficiencies in the curriculum have been successfully addressed. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing literacy and mathematical skills. All the teaching is at least sound and this is having a positive effect on children's learning.

80. The class does not have access to a secure outdoor area for learning. This limits progress in all areas of experience, because there are too few opportunities for children to learn by working on a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors.

81. Although a good start has been made to developing links with the children's pre-schools and parents, more remains to be done, especially in giving planned opportunities for parents to support activities in the classroom.

82. Children enter the reception class full-time in September if their fifth birthday falls before the end of December. Children with later birthdays can enter school on a 'mornings only' basis before becoming full-time at the start of the term in which they have their fifth birthday.

83. Nearly all of the children have attended one of the local pre-schools, part-time, before starting in the school. Most of the children entered the class with broadly average skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal development. Several children begin at a stage of development in reading and writing above that typically found for their age. This is confirmed by the initial assessments carried out during the first seven weeks of the new term.

Personal, social and emotional development

84. Although most children enter the class with good levels of confidence and independence, many need considerable support and guidance in accepting the needs of others. Within a few weeks of having started school, most children respond well to the new experiences and to the consistent expectations of adults. The clear routines to the day help them to grow in confidence. This is reflected in their increasing independence in choosing and carrying out activities.

85. Many children need considerable help in learning how to take turns, listen to others and to be sensitive to each other's feelings. The staff help the children to develop their awareness of being a member of a group by serving as positive role models and by involving themselves in the children's activities, such as role play and board games. The staff understand the importance of role play in helping children to make sense of their world. In the 'Greengrocers', children talked about food and eating, and learned about taking turns to be the shopkeeper and how to share the 'food'.

86. The staff handle the occasional difficult situation in a sensitive and positive way so that the children feel valued and more secure in themselves. The children are encouraged to develop personal independence and real responsibilities, such as getting changed for games.

87. The indoor environment reflects things that are familiar in the children's everyday lives, and there is strong emphasis on giving children an early awareness of different cultures and traditions.

88. Most of the children are likely to reach or nearly reach the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of their time in the reception class.

Communication, language and literacy

89. For the most part, the children enter the school with typical speaking and listening skills for their age, and with well-developed early reading and writing skills. The teacher provides many good formal and informal opportunities to promote these areas of development, and the children are likely to reach the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of reception year.

90. The children listen to favourite nursery rhymes and stories and respond to simple instructions. They recall the main plot of a story and describe a character, often with considerable detail. In discussion, children show their good understanding of how a book 'works'. They identify the title and suggest how the story might end. Children freely choose books from the book area and share them with a friend, or 'read' alone. They regularly take books home to share with their families.

91. The staff are good listeners and show the children that they value their efforts to communicate. Even so, many of the children find it hard to take turns and to negotiate with others. The staff are aware of this, and work hard to encourage children to talk and listen through activities, such as sharing nursery rhymes and 'show and tell times'. There is a well thought-out role-play area, although more needs to be done to draw children, boys in particular, to use it and to develop their communication skills.

92. The children have good pencil control and many have some knowledge of letter shapes. They are keen to attempt writing outside of planned situations, making lists in role-play, labelling drawings and sending messages. This helps them to understand 'writing' as a means of communication.

93. At the start of each day, there is an appropriate focus on language and literacy which, as the year progresses, develops into an adapted 'literacy session' based on the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. A good understanding of phonics is developing through effective word, sentence and text work. Most children can name initial sounds in familiar words and will attempt to 'write' their own name.

Mathematical development

94. Each morning, the teacher leads a number activity in which the whole class are encouraged to count, say and use numbers and to recognise numerals. Nearly all of the children can count to at least ten, and many to 100. They recognise numerals up to 10 and most can write them. The children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

95. The children are less confident as mathematical thinkers, and they need opportunities to use and apply their knowledge to everyday situations, such as cooking. Although there are useful planned situations to develop the children's mathematical learning, opportunities within practical activities and daily routines are not fully exploited. Staff need to be more aware of the mathematical possibilities in activities, such as water and sand play.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

96. The provision for this area of learning is satisfactory. The children make sound progress and are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

97. Although the staff take the children on walks to investigate and talk about similarities and differences in the natural world, it is difficult to make up for not having a suitable outdoor area. Opportunities are limited for children to learn through exploration, structured play and talk from first-hand experiences. There are not enough opportunities to experiment, try things out and, most of all, to think and talk about their experiences.

98. There are some well-planned activities for the children to talk about their families and events in their lives, to work with materials and to use technology. Many of the children can describe their house and where it is. They talk confidently about what they like and do not like in their neighbourhood. They are developing an understanding of different places, times and cultures through stories, imaginative play and discussions with adults.

99. The computer is used well and the children are becoming familiar with the main features of the keyboard. Some use the keys to make directional movements, and some who have computers at home can name parts, such as the mouse or space bar. The children are learning to work with simple tools, such as scissors. They select and choose resources and handle them with care and confidence.

Physical development

100. The children make sound progress in developing their physical skills, and are likely to meet the early learning goals. The absence of an outdoor area limits the opportunities for children to extend their physical skills in a safe, but more adventurous way, for example on climbing frames, tree trunks or wheeled vehicles. The children need opportunities to develop a better sense of the needs of others in the space around them.

101. There is regular access to the school's halls for the sound development of other physical skills such as dancing, jumping, balancing and climbing in space and on apparatus.

102. There are good opportunities for the children to develop their fine motor skills, and they handle scissors, brushes and other tools and materials safely and with a good level of control. They hold and use a paintbrush well to make strokes, and most of the children can hold a pencil correctly. They are introduced to new skills, materials and tools, such as cutting card with scissors and working with different kinds of malleable materials. However, there is no evidence of resources for woodwork, such as hammers and nails.

Creative development

103. The provision for creative development is satisfactory, so that it is likely that children will achieve the early learning goals.

104. The children are keen to experiment with crayons and paints, selecting and mixing colours to give their desired effect. They use paint, glue, paper and collage materials to create an interesting bonfire collage. The children develop skills in a systematic and effective way, as in designing a 'Mendhi' hand pattern. However, there are not enough opportunities for them to explore concepts and ideas through their own representations, and in a more individual way.

105. The children sing familiar songs with enthusiasm and a growing awareness that the way they sing can affect the 'mood' of a song. They can clap a simple repeated rhythm and create movements in response to different kinds of music.

106. There are good opportunities for the children to develop their imaginative play in the 'greengrocers', which is well equipped with bright and attractive props. They take on the role of different characters, and older children explore and develop their roles and feelings to create their own settings. The children use the reasonable range of construction materials to set up imaginative play situations. Again, the older ones organise each other into taking different roles.

ENGLISH

107. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for the end of Key Stage 1 were above average in reading and well above average in writing compared with both all schools nationally and with schools in similar social circumstances. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection and on 1999 results. There has been some fluctuation over the past four years, but these are the best results achieved. Inspection evidence reflects the latest results, and shows that standards for the present Year 2 are above the national average.

108. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for the end of Key Stage 2 were well below the national average, and very low when compared with schools in similar social circumstances. Results have been consistently good over the four years before the fall in results in 2000. The small cohort makes comparisons year on year less reliable and in addition, there were a number of particular circumstances concerning this cohort. For example, their results were not good in Key Stage 1 in 1996, and four pupils expected to reach Level 4 left before the test or were absent. In addition, the cohort was subjected to some of the unsatisfactory teaching identified in the last report. Current inspection evidence suggests that the attainment of present Year 6 pupils has risen again to above the national average.

109. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills although, from the time they enter school, their listening does not match their often, confident speaking skills. They are encouraged to extend their vocabulary; for example, Year 2 pupils found a number of verbs instead of 'screwed' to describe the action of the teacher with a newspaper. Older pupils consider how language has changed since the time of Dickens by

reading extracts from *Oliver Twist*, and finding the meaning of 'thereon'. Throughout the school, pupils show less inclination for listening, particularly when adults are providing detailed explanations and presentations. Sometimes, pupils' listening skills are not specifically developed, for example, by encouraging them to frame questions in response to what the teacher has been saying.

110. Good attention is being given to phonic awareness and knowledge in both key stages, which is having a positive impact on pupils' reading skills. Younger pupils can identify syllables within words and use this to help them decipher longer words. They have positive attitudes towards reading and books, and regularly take books home to read. They use the contents and index pages of non-fiction books well, but are less skilful at locating books in the library. Older pupils read with improving fluency and accuracy and can discuss their likes and dislikes of books and authors. They make effective use of the library to locate specific information, particularly in their topic studies. Reading corners in all classrooms offer a range of colour coded fiction books. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support and encouragement with their reading and are making good progress. However, their limitations with reading do have an impact on learning in other subjects where reading is required.

111. Pupils' writing in Key Stage 1 is of a good standard. They are developing a wide and varied vocabulary. For example, they find exciting words to describe fireworks and bonfire night, and they suggest a variety of 'watery' words to include in their poem to describe the floods. Most are writing in sentences, with some correctly using inverted commas. Pupils in Year 6 are writing with a good awareness of the conventions of English. They plan their stories carefully and know how to develop it through drafting and re-drafting. They adapt their writing for different purposes, for example when writing the results of their science experiments or when writing a letter of thanks. The standard of handwriting is good when undertaken in their handwriting books, but this does not transfer to their writing in other situations, and work is often casually, and sometimes carelessly presented. Pupils are encouraged to use dictionaries and word banks, and their spelling is usually accurate. For example, Year 2 pupils have been learning '-ight' words, and some correctly spell 'firelighters'.

112. Teaching is sound across the school, and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The introduction of the structure of the National Literacy Strategy has helped ensure that all lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Effective activities are chosen to interest and excite pupils, and the success of this is reflected in their work. For example, when younger pupils were writing instructions for lighting a fire, the teacher had prepared all the required items needed, and proceeded to go through the actions, using paper, kindling wood, firelighters, logs and matches. Following pupils' writing, they then read out their instructions for other pupils to follow, doing everything except striking the match! Older pupils were equally motivated when finding out about words that are not often used nowadays. The teacher rang a hand bell and read aloud from a scroll in the manner of a town crier, using words such as 'char-a-banc', 'hither' and 'sundry' which the pupils then looked up.

113. Teachers encourage pupils to look carefully at the use of words. For example, one group adapted the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood' for a bedtime story, so that there were no scary words or incidents. Another class looked at the importance of headlines and what could be deduced from them. Literacy lessons always finish with an appropriate discussion of what has taken place, with pupils giving examples of their work. This encourages them to think about their work, thus consolidating their learning.

114. In some lessons, teachers spend too much time talking to the whole class, with some pupils taking very little part. Similarly, some pupils do not do enough work in their group sessions. These factors lead to underachievement. Teachers mostly provide appropriate work for different levels of ability. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well supported by teachers and well-trained classroom assistants, which enables them to make progress appropriate for their ability. Occasionally, the most able pupils are not fully challenged, being required to do the same work as other pupils.

115. The literacy co-ordinator is very effective in overseeing the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and setting a good example for others to follow. She is effective in monitoring planning, standards of work and the teaching of English, which is having a positive impact on standards. Assessment procedures are in place and used well to set whole school and individual pupil targets, although the use of individual targets is inconsistent from class to class. The curriculum is enriched through visits from writers, poetry days and book weeks. The contribution made by homework is good and has considerably improved since the last inspection.

116. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection, in particular, through: improved quality of teaching; the development of a coherent curriculum; a structure for assessment; and co-ordination of the subject, including monitoring.

MATHEMATICS

117. Seven and eleven year olds achieve standards above those expected for their age. This is an improvement at Key Stage 1, and a similar picture in Key Stage 2 to the standards noted in the last inspection.

118. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2000 were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. However, the results were an improvement on 1999. The inspection evidence shows that this trend has continued and that standards in the current Year 2 are above the national average.

119. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced with good effect, contributing to a greater consistency in the quality of teaching and to a secure curriculum. In turn, this has helped to raise standards, particularly in Key Stage 1.

120. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 2000 were very low in comparison with all schools and with similar schools. This was in stark contrast to the results in previous years, all of which had all been well above average. The drop can mainly be attributed to the difference in ability between pupils in this and other year groups,

unsatisfactory previous learning. In addition, four pupils expected to reach Level 4, either left before the tests or were absent. The findings of the inspection show that pupils in the current Year 6 achieve standards above those expected for their age.

121. The inspection found no compelling evidence to suggest any difference in performance or opportunities between boys and girls at either key stage. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

122. By the age of seven, pupils have a growing repertoire of number facts which they can recall quickly and with reasonable accuracy. They know that 3 add 4 is the same as 4 add 3, and most of them can use this to find out that 4 from 7 is 3. The one in three higher-attaining pupils have a good understanding of the relationship between multiplication and equal addition. They know that $10+10+10$ is the same as 3×10 . Most pupils recognise patterns in numbers because in both Year 1 and 2 they are encouraged to do so. They can quickly tell odd from even numbers by looking at the last digit, and some of them know that even numbers can be divided into two equal whole numbers. Most pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of shape, space and measurement. They describe common two-dimensional shapes and most use the correct terms, such straight, angle and side. They can sort objects according to different criteria, make a simple tally count, and record using a bar chart.

123. Standards achieved by pupils in their final year of Key Stage 2, are above those typically found for their age. They add, subtract, multiply and divide quickly and accurately by recalling known number facts. Many pupils are particularly good at figuring out new problems by using the facts they have learned by heart. For instance, 14×12 could be 12×12 plus $12+12$, or plus 2×12 . Most pupils use their good understanding of place value to handle addition and subtraction of large numbers. They 'round' numbers up to the nearest ten, hundred or thousand. Many of them can multiply and divide by 10, 100 and 1,000. A scrutiny of work from this set of Year 6 pupils shows that they have a sound grasp of shape and measurement and can present their results in charts, frequency diagrams and line graphs.

124. Of the four lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory in three and good in one. The weaknesses in teaching noted in the last inspection have been tackled, and the standard overall has improved. The good lesson was well planned with clear learning intentions, so that pupils knew what to do and what was expected of them. Learning was lively with a good pace. The teacher helped pupils to learn from their errors and to take their learning further with a question or prompt.

125. In all lessons, the teachers encouraged pupils to talk, explain and ask questions so that pupils grew in confidence and were happy to try out and talk about their own ideas. In all lessons, relationships between the pupils and adults were good. Two minor shortcomings prevented satisfactory lessons being good; pupils were not always comfortably seated to see and join in the mental warm-up and introduction to the main task; opportunities were sometimes missed for pupils to explain and demonstrate their work to the class.

126. Homework is given on a regular basis and makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. They get positive feedback to show that their efforts are valued and to help them with any specific points for improvement.

127. The National Numeracy Strategy is making a positive impact on teaching throughout the school and has helped teachers to give their lessons a clear and purposeful structure. A secure curriculum relates well to the framework of the National Numeracy Strategy and to the National Curriculum programmes of study. The strategy has helped to develop links with other subjects, such as science and ICT and this has helped pupils to see the relevance and application of mathematics to everyday situations. Teachers in Key Stage 2 make good use of the guidance in the Strategy to set work suitable for all pupils within their mixed-age classes.

128. The subject is managed well. A well thought-out action plan provides a clear direction for improvement. Satisfactory use is being made of an analysis of test and assessment results to target specific weaknesses in pupils' performance, especially in their ability to approach the language of written problems. Although monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning takes place in a systematic way, it needs to be more frequent in order to ensure the further improvement of the subject programme. In particular, the co-ordinator needs to give more attention to the relationship between teaching, learning and pupils' performance.

129. The school has made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum has been made secure with the effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards of teaching have improved. Standards achieved by pupils are rising. The staff are aware that to consolidate this improvement they should:

- * Strengthen the link between the monitoring of teaching and of pupils' performance, so that they can see what works well and what needs to be done
- * Re-establish the role of the numeracy governor in monitoring and supporting the work of the school

SCIENCE

130. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum teacher assessments for the end of Key Stage 1 were above national averages and those of schools in similar social circumstances. This is better than the results the previous year, especially for the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3. However, with a cohort size of only 16 pupils, where one pupil represents over 6 per cent, care should be taken with interpretation of year on year results.

131. Inspection evidence shows pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 to be in line with national expectations which is similar to the last inspection. Pupils are able to use their senses of sight and touch to identify and describe various objects. For example, in a 'feely bag' they can describe whether an object is rough or smooth and how many edges it has. When comparing objects they notice differences and similarities such as longer/shorter and heavier/lighter. Pupils can compare the needs of babies with the needs of toddlers, recognising that as we grow, we need less help from adults. They know that we need healthy food to help us grow and can describe their favourite foods. They are developing an understanding of which foods are healthy. They can draw a picture of a healthy meal, and can correctly label the foods, although the lower attaining pupils require help with this. Many pupils can describe the life cycle of a butterfly, a frog or a sunflower. They are developing an understanding of how to experiment and make tests fair. For example, they have experimented with cars running down a ramp set at different heights; with bouncing a ball; and finding out what happens when you break an electrical circuit. There was little

evidence of high scientific attainment, the only differences for more able pupils being in the quality of the presentation. Clearly, there is scope here for higher-attaining pupils to be given greater challenge. All pupils make sound progress, including those with special educational needs who are well supported by teachers and classroom assistants.

132. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were very low compared both with schools nationally and with schools in similar social circumstances. This is a much worse result than in previous years, but once again, the small cohort makes comparisons year on year less reliable. In addition, there were a number of particular circumstances concerning this cohort. For example, their results were not good in Key Stage 1 in 1996, four pupils expected to reach Level 4 left before the test or were absent, and this cohort was subjected to some of the unsatisfactory teaching identified in the last report.

133. Inspection evidence shows pupils' attainment in Year 6 to be in line with national expectations. The recently improved teaching and curriculum planning is already having a beneficial impact on attainment, and pupils are well placed to achieve even higher standards by the end of the key stage. Pupils understand that there are sources of light, such as the sun, and that other objects, such as the moon, reflect light in order for us to see them. They correctly use words such as opaque, transparent and translucent to describe materials, and understand that shadows are formed when the passage of light is blocked. Good attention to investigative skills ensures that pupils are developing appropriate methods for experimenting, and know how to conduct a fair test. For example, when experimenting with sliding a tray on different surfaces to determine how much friction occurred, they were careful to ensure that the actual surface was the only variable which changed. With older pupils, there are insufficient opportunities for them to find their own ways of testing and recording their results, the latter particularly with the use of computers. The practical work in which pupils are involved is effective in motivating and interesting them, leading to sound progress throughout the key stage for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

134. The quality of teaching is sound overall, enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress. Planning is thorough, with clear learning objectives related to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Questions are used effectively to consolidate understanding and push thinking forward. Pupils are very well managed, with good relationships, which enable pupils to get on with their work with little fuss. Sometimes the pace of the lesson is too slow when pupils are required to sit on the carpet for long periods, and opportunities are missed to find information or record results using the computer. Marking is sound, offering pupils advice on how to improve, although too often, insufficient emphasis is placed on the importance of spelling key words correctly. Good attention is given to experimentation, although this is usually teacher directed, with too few opportunities for older, higher-attaining pupils to choose their own methods to experiment and record their results.

135. There is some informal assessment at the end of units of work, and more formal systems are being developed. Co-ordination of the subject is sound. However, the co-ordinator is also co-ordinator for literacy, and the national initiatives for literacy have taken precedence, with the result that there has been insufficient monitoring of the effectiveness of the science programme or of teaching.

ART AND DESIGN

136. Pupils achieve standards in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, which is as it was at the last inspection. Sometimes, work is closely linked with other subjects, such as when pupils were studying the life cycle of a frog, and made a collage of the scene. In science, they grew sunflowers and looked at the work of Van Gogh. On other occasions, they learn specific art techniques. For example, they use a viewfinder and make pencil drawings of what they can see, and they carefully practise colour mixing. Older pupils are able to experience a variety of media, including pencil, charcoal, chalk, powder paint and oil pastels. They make attractive collages with textiles and use clay to make pots.

137. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1, where teaching was good. Pupils were challenged and inspired, enabling them to make good progress with their colour mixing. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 2, but planning indicates appropriate coverage of the required curriculum. However, there is insufficient emphasis on three-dimensional work, the use of a sketchbook to assist with the development of ideas, and on the consideration of the work of famous artists and art from other cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

138. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactory standards. Overall, attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, which is as it was in the last inspection.

139. Younger pupils use construction kits to try out ideas and make pieces move. Most cooperate sensibly, enabling them to understand movement around a pivot, and they make satisfactory progress. Older pupils can also gain understanding from using construction kits, but when the work is insufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able pupils, they lose interest and become restless, causing them to make insufficient progress.

140. Pupils experience working with a range of materials, including recycled products, wood, fabric and food. They plan their work carefully, developing their ideas and modifying their plans. For example, older pupils are involved in planning a fairground ride for Christmas. They have designed carefully on paper, and some are now realising that their plans will need to be modified in order that they can make them. When making hats, pupils combined materials, for instance, putting a card frame inside fabric to strengthen it, and considered methods of joining.

141. The small amount of teaching observed was satisfactory. Teachers plan carefully using national guidelines. Resources are well prepared and pupils are well managed. However, from the lessons observed, and from talking to pupils and teachers, it is apparent that a lack of confidence causes teachers to be very 'safe' in their teaching. This limits the excitement and enthusiasm fostered in the pupils and inhibits their design ideas.

142. The co-ordinator has only been in post since September. Her intentions are to increase her own knowledge, understanding and confidence, and to develop a scheme of work with assessment opportunities clearly identified.

GEOGRAPHY

143. No lessons in geography took place during the week of the inspection and so no judgements can be made about the quality of teaching and learning. Other judgements are made after a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff, and an examination of teacher's planning. Although no judgement on standards was made in the last report, pupils were found to make uneven progress because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and a poorly developed curriculum. Since then, a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum has been developed, although it is not possible to assess its impact. However, standards achieved by seven and eleven year olds are in line with the expectations for their age.

144. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound understanding of local places through studies developed around the school and village. Pupils go on local walks and look at buildings and other features. With some adult help, they construct simple maps of the locality and can describe the position of the school in relation to the schools and their home. Seven year olds are familiar with such geographical terms as river, valley and woods to describe different features, and near and far to describe their location. Some pupils talk about Lewes in terms of its size and distance from the village.

145. Pupils in Year 6 have developed a sound understanding of places beyond their locality. They talk confidently about Lewes as a town on the River Ouse, and suggest reasons why the area has been so heavily flooded. Some of them refer to the Ouse as a tidal river, and relate this to their reasoning. In so doing, they confidently use such geographical terms as flood plain, coast, English Channel and Sussex Downs. They recall the features of a larger town, such as Brighton in terms of its location, facilities and distance from their village. They have a good understanding of maps and can relate shading on a map of the world to levels above and below sea level.

146. Teachers' long and medium term planning indicates that the curriculum is broad and generally well balanced. There is no formalised assessment in the subject. The monitoring role of the subject co-ordinator is not fully developed. This has a lot to do with the post holder's heavy responsibilities in respect of other subjects. The available resources in geography are satisfactory. The school has some reference books and materials, including suitable atlases, globes and large maps. Resources are well maintained and centrally organised. The local area is studied in detail and pupils are able to benefit from reasonable opportunities to visit local places.

HISTORY

147. The last time the school was inspected, there was not enough evidence to judge standards in Key Stage 1, and standards were average at the end of Key Stage 2. Since then, the curriculum has improved and there is a clear and systematic approach to developing skills through enquiry and investigation. Standards in Key Stage 1 are now average, and in Key Stage 2 are above average.

148. Most seven year olds have a sound understanding of the past and a growing sense of the passing of time. They show this in their ability to sequence events, such as in the Great Fire of London and confidently portray these in picture form. They learn about the sources of

evidence and examine extracts from Samuel Pepys's diary about the fire. Some pupils know what an 'eye witness' account is, and understand why it is important evidence. They make comparisons between their lives and those of others who lived a long time ago. When talking about their work, they correctly use words and phrases, such as 'long ago' and 'in the past'. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the past and understand that events in history really happened and that some happened a long time ago.

149. Most 11 year olds recall relevant information and demonstrate a secure factual knowledge of the past. In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn about characteristics of the Anglo-Saxons and recognise changes, through the study of Viking Invaders and Settlers. Year 5 and 6 pupils learn about the Victorians. They know a lot about their customs and way of life. They are increasingly using ICT to support research and investigation in history. In looking at census material, pupils demonstrated their considerable skills in using and interpreting historical sources and evidence. They have extended their use and understanding of historical terms because they are encouraged to do so, and because the teachers have a good subject knowledge and understanding. They correctly describe periods of time in terms of 'era', 'decade' and 'century'. A feature of the one, very good lesson in Year 5 and 6 was that teaching motivated pupils who showed both interest and effort in their work. Well-informed questioning led pupils to use the evidence of a census return for Barcombe to see patterns in occupations and family size. They represented their finding clearly and accurately in various graphic forms. Teachers make effective use of own knowledge and understanding of the subject and use suitable materials and artefacts to support lessons. Teaching of history makes satisfactory contributions to the development and use of literacy skills.

150. Pupils are interested and inquisitive about the past. They show keen interest in finding out about how people lived in the past and how things have changed over time.

151. Resources are adequate in range and quality. Although there are few artefacts relating to different periods in the history, a real effort is made to borrow them from museums or, as in the case of the census, from parents. There is scope to extend opportunities to relate history to local places of interest, although reasonable use is made of the village as a resource. Pupils' learning is well supported by some good displays in classrooms and corridors. There are no formal procedures for assessment of pupils' progress in history. The co-ordinator is well qualified and experienced to lead the subject, is enthusiastic and has clear direction for the subject. She is aware of the need to 'tighten' up aspects of the curriculum so as to avoid undue repetition, especially in Key Stage 1. This should help to make up for the barely adequate time allocation for the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

152. Standards in ICT are below average overall. This is a similar picture to that noted in the last inspection. Although standards in communicating and handling data are average, standards overall are pulled down by a lack of skills, knowledge and understanding in the controlling, modelling and monitoring aspects of the subject, especially in Key Stage 2.

153. From the few observations, discussions with pupils and staff, a scrutiny of pupils' work, and an examination of teachers' planning, it is clear that while access to, and the use of, computers has increased, aspects of the subject are not given enough emphasis. Pupils still do not get enough time to learn about ICT and to apply their skills across the full range of experience required by the National Curriculum.

154. In Key Stage 1, standards are average. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop their communicating and data handling skills. In Year 2, pupils are developing their keyboard skills and mouse control in relation to different subjects, but in particular to literacy. They confidently match letters on the screen to those on the keyboard. Most of them recognise the different key functions, such as the direction arrows, space bar, return and delete. Most pupils can write sentences to accompany their pictures of the Fire of London, and higher attaining pupils accurately write short stories and descriptions. Some seven year olds can move the text around using the mouse and know how to use different fonts and letter sizes. There are examples of pupils entering information onto a graph, albeit with adult help.

155. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their mouse control and are increasingly confident in using the keyboard. Eleven year olds use computer-generated pictures, phrases and graphs to communicate meaning. They store their work on the computer and retrieve, alter and print it out, usually without adult help. Most of them have satisfactory word-processing skills. They draft and re-draft their written work related to different subjects. Pupils in Year 3 and 4, have written their accounts of how they designed a chair in design and technology. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are beginning to use a simple database, and to research and print more 'in-depth' information derived from the CD-ROM.

156. While communication and data-handling skills are adequately developed through reasonable access to the computers within each classroom, there are not enough opportunities for control technology, modelling or monitoring. There is insufficient evidence of pupils using information technology to control events, such as planning instructions and developing sequences for a floor robot or a screen turtle. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have some limited experience of programs to solve problems, take options and look for patterns. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have few opportunities to develop their use of modelling through, for example, music programs, Logo or simulation games.

157. There was insufficient evidence during the course of the inspection upon which to base a judgement of the quality of teaching. Teachers' planning shows that computers are sufficiently used to develop information and communication technology skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 work confidently on a language program that helps to develop their mouse control skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 find out about the human body using a CD-ROM program. Although teachers observe and record individual achievements, these assessments are not yet consistently applied across the school, nor do they always inform the next stage of their planning.

158. The subject is well managed and there is clear direction for improvement. The co-ordinator has a good view of the strengths and weaknesses in ICT. The status of ICT has been lifted so that pupils now have a reasonable and fair access to computers within the classrooms. However, there is scope to extend this further, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils. There is a relevant action plan for the subject's development, although some of the targets are set against an unrealistic timescale. Although existing resources are barely

adequate, they are set to increase with funding through the National Grid for Learning. Rightly, plans for additional resources focus on the need for new, class-based computers and the introduction of e-mail facilities. Mainly because of the appointment of recently trained staff, there is a satisfactory level of subject knowledge and understanding. Although more time is planned for the co-ordinator to monitor and evaluate the subject, the existing arrangement is insufficient to allow her to link together what the school offers with the standards pupils achieve.

MUSIC

159. Attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations. This is the same as the last inspection for Key Stage 2, and there was no judgement for Key Stage 1. However, pupils' achievement is barely satisfactory because of the limited demands put on them in their lessons. Too often, they are not receiving enough stimulating work to interest or excite them.

160. Younger pupils know the names of percussion instruments and can experiment with organising a variety of sounds. They are able to listen and evaluate to make improvements. They can follow a regular pulse. Older pupils are able to identify instruments from listening to music such as the Carnival of the Animals. They write symbols to describe the dynamics for Chariots of Fire, and they record their own percussion accompaniments using graphic symbols. Most of the singing is done as a whole school practice, with little in class lessons. All pupils sing well, in tune and in time, although much of their singing lacks enthusiasm.

161. The teaching observed varied greatly, and was directly related to the teachers' knowledge, understanding and confidence. The co-ordinator's lesson was good. It proceeded at a good pace with an appropriate balance between being teacher led and time for pupils to explore. Opportunities were given for evaluation as well as for performance. Pupils responded very well to this, being attentive and interested, which enabled them to make good progress. The other lessons seen were either barely satisfactory or unsatisfactory. There were insufficient activities to promote interest and enthusiasm, the pace was often slow, and pupils became restless. There were too few opportunities for pupils to experiment with sound. When instruments were used, only a few pupils played them, which limited pupils' progress.

162. This small school is fortunate to have a co-ordinator and other adults with musical knowledge and expertise. There are some pupils who have instrumental lessons for flute and violin. However, music is not a strong feature in the school, and, apart from Christmas and end of year productions, there are too few opportunities for pupils to perform to others. For example, there are no opportunities for older pupils to sing in a choir or play the recorder. The co-ordinator's role is under-developed, with no monitoring taking place.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

163. Standards in physical education are average in both key stages, which is the same as in the last inspection. However, pupils do not always achieve all that they are capable of, largely because of insecure teaching where pupils are not given enough opportunity to be physically active and to practise various skills.

164. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing appropriate control of their movements on the floor and on apparatus. They use their initiative to find different ways of travelling. They practise to improve their sequences, but spend little time in evaluating what they have done. In Key Stage 2, pupils are developing their ball skills and practise passing and controlling a football. Many pupils found this difficult, but were not given a variety of appropriate practices to help them improve. In dance, they practise to build movements to music. In

most schools, boys display more inhibitions than girls when performing dance. The heavy imbalance of boys to girls in the top juniors, with only two girls, means that pupils do not always approach the subject with the right attitude, thus hindering progress. Swimming takes place in the summer term, and information provided suggests that all pupils leave being able to swim 25 metres.

165. Half the teaching observed was satisfactory, with half being unsatisfactory. The main problem is the lack of opportunity for pupils to practise skills at the appropriate level, and be fully active during the lesson. Undoubtedly, safety is of paramount importance, but it is possible to have more than four pupils working at a time in a sports hall of this size. In fact, it is possible to have the whole class working gainfully, in safety. Too often, pupils are sitting waiting for a turn or sitting listening to the teacher talking. Another area for improvement is to ensure that skills practices are guided by the ability of the pupils rather than what it may say in any scheme. Planning which appears sound may well need to be adapted during the lesson if pupils cannot cope with the earlier activities. The unsatisfactory teaching is a direct result of teachers' lack of confidence, and insufficient knowledge and understanding.

166. The subject has not figured highly in the school development plan. There is a need for a scheme of work and identified assessment opportunities. The policy needs updating, with particular reference to safety issues. For example, pupils should not be wearing jewellery, inappropriate clothing such as unbuttoned cardigans, which may catch in apparatus, and long hair should be tied back. There is insufficient attention to training for carrying apparatus in the most sensible and safe way. A new co-ordinator takes over in January who will have more time to devote to the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

167. At the age of seven and eleven, what pupils know and understand about religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This is a big improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when standards were below the expectations. As just one lesson was observed in religious education during the inspection, judgements are based on observations of collective worship in assemblies, a scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and consideration of teachers' planning.

168. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can retell some of the important stories from the Bible and from the Torah. They are aware of Christian and Jewish festivals and feasts, and of other important features of both faiths. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have developed a broader and more detailed knowledge of different religions, including Christianity and Islam. They talk confidently about the Bible and Quran. They have a good level of awareness of the significance of such features as fasting during Ramadan and of Lent leading up to Easter.

169. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are interested in their work and are clearly pleased to have the opportunity to examine and talk about carefully chosen artefacts. They talk confidently about their own beliefs and are respectful of others. The one observed lesson was very good. The teacher had an excellent knowledge of the subject, which she used to ask and answer questions that succeeded in involving the whole class in a lively discussion. The lesson was thoughtfully planned to allow enough amount of time to look at the artefacts, talk about them, and to engage in some searching group work. The session ended with an effective plenary in which pupils presented their findings and the teacher helped them to make some comparisons. The subject is further enhanced by the contribution made by assemblies, often with the support of local clergy.

170. The subject is effectively managed by the headteacher and has improved as a result of a clear and determined initiative. In the last inspection, religious education was found to give insufficient attention to all aspects of Christianity and another world faith. The requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus were not fully met. A sufficiently balanced and broad curriculum is now in place that helps pupils to develop their learning in an effective way. A strength lies in the enthusiasm of staff to teach the subject, in the support received from the local education authority, and in the way the school make up for its modest resources by making imaginative loans.