

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S ISLAND C of E (AIDED) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Chatham

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 132056

Headteacher: Carol Rookwood

Reporting inspector: Paul Evans
20737

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th January 2001

Inspection number: 230825

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Voluntary aided
School category:	Mixed
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Island Way West Chatham Kent
Postcode:	ME4 3ST
Telephone number:	01634 891050
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd Canon John Saunders

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Evans 20737	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
Graeme Norval 9624	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jacqui Cousins 22942	Team inspector	Provision for children in the Foundation Stage Science Design and technology Music Physical education	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
Bob Battey 2866	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's Island Church of England Primary School is a new school, which opened in September 1999, providing education for children aged 4 to 11 years. The school was built to provide education for children living on St. Mary's Island. Pupils have joined the school from all over England, and beyond, as their families have moved into the area. Few island children attend the school at present, but more will do so as St. Mary's Island develops. One hundred and eighty-seven pupils presently attend the school full-time, 93 boys and 94 girls. Twenty per cent of places are held for children from Christian families within the Medway area. St. Mary's Island is one of only two Anglican Church schools in the area. Eighty per cent of children do not live within walking distance of the school, some travelling as far as 10 miles to and from school each day.

Thirty-eight per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. A significant number of these children have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Five pupils (2.6 per cent) have a statement of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Four per cent of pupils are from an ethnic minority background, but there are no pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language. Four per cent of pupils have been identified as being eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Children have average levels of attainment on entry to the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The headteacher and all the teaching and support staff have done very well in establishing the school in its early days. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall. The quality of leadership and management is also good. The school cares very well for the welfare and personal development of all its pupils.

Taking into account the context of the school, the fact that it is not yet fully established, the quality of education and support that it offers to all its pupils and the money that it spends, the overall effectiveness and the value for money provided by the school are both good.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The level of teamwork amongst all the staff is very good.
- The school provides very good care for all its pupils.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The school promotes very good behaviour and relationships.
- It promotes very good attitudes to school amongst all its pupils.
- It involves parents very well in the day-to-day work of the school and their children's education.
- Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility and to show initiative.

What could be improved

- The partnership in management within the senior management team and between the senior management team and the governing body.
- Whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' work and the use of that information to guide future planning.
- The monitoring of the delivery of the curriculum and the quality of teaching.
- The delegation of management responsibilities to subject co-ordinators.
- Certain areas of the buildings which cause health and safety problems and impede pupils' progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

St Mary's Island Church of England Primary School is a new school and only opened to pupils in September 1999; therefore this is the school's first inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

Standards in national tests in Key Stage 1 in 2000 were well above average in reading, average in writing and well below average in mathematics. The school's performance in science, as judged in teacher assessments, was above the national average. However, these results cannot be used to judge the standard of education provided by the school, as all of these pupils had attended the school for less than a year.

Results or comparisons of test results at the end of Key Stage 2 are not reported because the group of 11-year-olds had, at the time of the national tests, fewer than 10 pupils. Target setting has been difficult for the school in the period immediately after opening because of the constantly changing nature of each year group. However, after lengthy consultations and several changes to predictions, the school and the local education authority have agreed targets for attainment at the end of both key stages up to 2004. Inspection evidence supports these judgements in respect of the present school roll and the balance of abilities of pupils in each year group. The targets are attainable but challenging, although some changes may still have to be made as more pupils join the school and other pupils within the school improve their rate of progress.

Inspection evidence of the current group of pupils in Year 2 supports the judgement that they are in line to reach average standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics by the end of the key stage. The standards of work seen in English, mathematics and science in the present Year 6 group support the judgement that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are on target to be above average in English and average in mathematics and science.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. All pupils are keen to come to school and have great enthusiasm for all aspects of their school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in and out of classrooms, and show respect for each other and for all adults they encounter. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with their teachers.
Attendance	Good.

All pupils are keen to attend school. This is the first time that some of the pupils have enjoyed school. The very good, consistent management of the behaviour of all pupils enables the development of good levels of behaviour throughout the school. The level of relationships between pupils and between them and all the staff is very good. There is a high level of mutual respect.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good	very good

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

The national strategy for the teaching of literacy has been satisfactorily introduced. The quality of teaching in literacy is good overall with some excellent teaching in both key stages. The strategy for the teaching of numeracy has been well introduced and pupils are taught the skills of mental calculation well. During the week of the inspection 39 lessons or parts of lessons were observed across all areas of the school. In 16 per cent of lessons, the quality of teaching was excellent and in another 15 per cent it was very good. The teaching in 48 per cent of lessons was good and in the remaining 21 per cent the quality of teaching was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Throughout the school the teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants is very good. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning, maintaining their attention and focussing their concentration on their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The statutory curriculum is in place and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The curriculum is enriched by the very good provision of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The support provided for these pupils by learning support assistants is good.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Provision for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures for improving attendance and promoting good behaviour are very good. However, procedures for assessing pupils' progress and the use of assessment to guide future planning are lacking in consistency and are presently less than satisfactory.

The partnership between the school and parents is very good. The statutory curriculum is in place and it is supported and extended by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The care and protection provided by the school for all its pupils are very good. However, there is a lack of consistency in the assessment of pupils' progress and the use of this information to guide future planning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has provided very good leadership and management to bring the school to this point. There are some good elements in the partnership in management of other key staff. Good overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has provided very good care and support to the school in the early part of its establishment. However, the governors must now further develop their role as true partners in the management of the school.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Less than satisfactory. The school's evaluation of its own performance is not yet fully developed
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The use of the school's finances has been the focus so far. There is now a need to develop a greater understanding of the principles of best value.

The match of teachers and learning support assistants to the demands of the curriculum is very good. The quality of learning resources is very good, but they are no more than satisfactory in quantity and must be further extended. The school's accommodation is new and in a very good state of repair and decoration. There are, however, certain aspects of the buildings that impede pupils' progress and there are some concerns for health and safety. The headteacher has led the school to this point in its development very well and has been given support throughout by all her staff and the governing body. However, the school has not yet developed true delegation within the management structure or fully developed the role of the governors in the management of the school. The use of the school's finances has been the focus of best-value judgements so far. The school must now develop a greater understanding of the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that their children like attending school. • They are comfortable about approaching the school with any questions or concerns. • They feel that the school works closely with them. • They feel that the school is well led and managed. • The school has high expectations for their children. • They feel that the teaching in the school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information about their children's progress given in annual written reports. • The range of extra-curricular activities.

In returned questionnaires and at the meeting held for parents, very few highlighted any aspect that they would like to see improved in the school. Parents were very positive about the whole provision offered by St. Mary's Island School. Inspection evidence supports the positive view of parents that their children are happy to attend school and that the school has high expectations of them.

However, although the annual written reports meet statutory requirements, they do not give enough detail to parents about the progress of their children. In this area, inspection evidence supports the views of a small number of parents. The views of a very small number of parents about extra-curricular activities are not supported by inspection evidence. The level of provision in this area is very good and is a strength of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. St Mary's Island C of E Primary School has grown steadily since its opening in September 1999, and the task of judging pupils' attainment when they enter the school is, therefore, difficult. Pupils have joined the school in all year groups from reception to Year 6. The number of pupils admitted who have special educational needs is well above the national average at 38 per cent, and many of them have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The fact that pupils have also come from many different parts of the country has also created difficulties for the school because pupils have been identified as having different levels of attainment across a wide range of the curriculum, based on their varying prior experiences. Overall, inspection evidence supports the judgement that attainment on entry to the school is average. However, with pupils having joined from so many different areas and schools, there is no typical class group at present. Each group of pupils has its own unique profile.
2. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests and assessments for seven-year-olds in 2000 were well above the national average in reading, average in writing and well below the national average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science were above the national average. Teacher assessments for this group of pupils were relatively accurate considering the very short time that pupils were attending the school before they took the tests.
3. The standards achieved by this first group of pupils aged seven depended on the education they had received in their previous schools and not on what has happened in St Mary's. Similarly, because the school is new it has not previously been inspected and there is no collected information about trends over time.
4. Similarly, it would be inappropriate and unhelpful to the school to judge these results against those of similar schools, because no accurate data exist for schools that are at a similar point of development.
5. Inspection evidence of the current group of pupils in Year 2 supports the judgement that they will be average in speaking, listening, reading and writing by the end of the key stage. Similarly, standards are average overall in mathematics and science in the present Year 2 class.
6. Given the average standards being achieved by children at the end of the Foundation Stage¹, a significant number of whom entered the school with below average standards in literacy and numeracy, the standards achieved are in line to be maintained at average levels.
7. No information about standards in national tests for 11-year-olds is published in this report. In the 2000 tests and assessments, fewer than 10 pupils were entered. The size of this group does not provide reliable information on which to make judgements.
8. The standards of work seen in English, mathematics and science in the present Year 6 group support the judgement that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average in English and average in both mathematics and science.

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class.

9. Target setting has been difficult for the school in the period immediately after opening because of the constantly changing nature of each year group. However, after lengthy consultations and several changes to predictions, the school and the local education authority have agreed targets for attainment at the end of both key stages up to 2004.
10. Inspection evidence supports these judgements in respect of the present school roll and the balance of abilities of pupils in each year group. The targets are attainable but challenging, although some changes may still have to be made as more pupils join the school and the rate of progress of pupils within the school improves.
11. The National Literacy Strategy has been soundly introduced and the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are attaining average standards in both these areas of the curriculum. In Key Stage 2, standards in literacy are average overall, but they are above average in the present Year 6 group. Standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2 are average overall, but there is good development of pupils' mental strategies and their ability to explain their thinking. Standards in science are average in both key stages.
12. Inspection evidence shows that standards in design and technology, history and geography meet expected levels in both key stages. In information and communication technology, standards also meet expectations throughout the school. However, pupils' progress is restricted by the positioning of the good computer suite in a very small area of the building, which limits the amount of time that pupils can spend using computers. The school prides itself on its choir and its band. For those pupils involved in both these activities standards in musical attainment are good. Standards in music in both key stages meet expected levels. Standards of art and in physical education are similar to those found in other schools, although there is some lack of depth in the curriculum in the area of three-dimensional art.
13. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good. The school makes good provision for these pupils and can take real pride in the effect that the school's attitudes to their care and development have on the standards that they achieve. This is particularly true for the high number of pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Very good levels of support and highly effective behavioural management enable these pupils to make good progress without restricting the achievements of their classmates.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' very good attitudes to school aid their social development and academic progress. Their enthusiasm for the many activities offered by the school is excellent. They take part in singing with enthusiasm and many look forward to the programme of day and residential visits. The choir is one of the few invited to sing in Rochester Cathedral in the near future. A number of parents whose children have had poor experiences elsewhere comment favourably about improved attitudes since joining St. Mary's Island School.
15. Attendance is good, reflecting pupils' keenness to come to school. This also makes a positive contribution to their progress. Attendance is slightly above 95 per cent, with no unauthorised absence. Parents strongly support the school's expectations of good attendance and punctuality. There are very few term-time holidays and there is no pattern of age or gender difference in absences. Ill health is the main reason for absence.
16. There have been no exclusions since the school opened and pupils' behaviour is good. A number of pupils behaved badly at previous schools, but their parents comment on the

significant improvement in their behaviour since they came to this school. Overall, the school is orderly and strong support is given to the few pupils who still find good behaviour a challenge. In classrooms, pupils are well behaved and concentrate on their work. This aids their learning. The single, narrow corridor feeding seven classrooms is only passable because pupils have good manners, corridor discipline and respect for each other, staff and visitors. Parents and other helpers comment favourably about pupils' behaviour on outside visits.

17. There is very little evidence of bullying and the school has a very effective approach to make sure that none will occur. A pupil with special educational needs commented that he was bullied a little at first, but that it was quickly stopped by staff and has not happened again.
18. Pupils make very good progress in personal development. There are many opportunities for all pupils and children under five in the Foundation Stage to show initiative and accept responsibility. All the pupils in Year 6 have monitor duties in corridors, playgrounds and elsewhere. They wear their badges with pride and willingly describe their duties. Pupils from all year groups volunteer to be a 'playground friend'. This shows both initiative and a willingness to accept responsibility for the welfare of other pupils.
19. The school's ethos encourages respect for the feelings of others. However, knowledge of and respect for the beliefs and values of others are underdeveloped. The school acknowledges that there is a need for further development of citizenship, particularly to prepare pupils for life in Britain's multi-cultural environment.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall. In the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good and in Key Stage 2 it is very good.
21. During the week of the inspection 39 lessons or parts of lessons were observed across all areas of the school. In 16 per cent of lessons, the quality of teaching was excellent and in another 15 per cent it was very good. The teaching in 48 per cent of lessons was good and in the remaining 21 per cent the quality of teaching was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.
22. Excellent or very good teaching was observed in all three stages of the school. This high-quality teaching was typified by the sharing of learning objectives with pupils, high expectations of pupils' involvement and effort, good pace and very good behavioural management. Throughout the school the teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants is very good. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning, maintaining their attention and focussing their concentration on their work. In a very good lesson on creative development in the Foundation Stage, the teacher gave a very good introduction. She challenged children to use stones, paint and shapes to create patterns and models of 'creatures' to a high standard. This caused children to apply very good levels of imaginative design. The learning support assistant worked very well with a small group of children using the joint planning to involve them all thoroughly in the activity.
23. When teaching is at this high level the very consistent management of children's behaviour by the class teacher and the learning support assistants often maintains the quality of pupils' learning. The high level of teamwork between these members of staff within classrooms is a significant factor in some classes with high levels of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. For example, in one lesson in literacy in a Key Stage 1 class the teacher shared the learning objective with the class before using her very good skills in storytelling to set the scene for the pupils' work. She used a very good

range of teaching skills to maintain a high level of pace while managing the behaviour of a significant number of disruptive pupils. When reading from a big book she used a long pointer with a 'magic hand' at one end to point to each word. The hand would occasionally 'quiver' when it recognised that one of the pupils was behaving particularly well. This quickly recaptured the attention of the whole class. The very close teamwork between the teacher and the learning support assistants maintained a good level of pupil learning throughout in spite of a high level of distracting behaviour.

24. The quality of teaching of literacy is good overall with some excellent teaching in both key stages. Many teachers demonstrate high-level skills as storytellers, which captivate pupils from the beginning of the lesson. Short-term planning is undertaken within the framework of the National Literacy Strategy and teachers create an excellent atmosphere for learning and a high level of challenge. Pupils respond very well to this well-structured approach. In an excellent lesson on parts of speech in Key Stage 2, the class teacher struck an excellent balance between her input and allowing pupils to use their very well developed skills of speaking and listening to express their ideas and preferences.
25. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well introduced. The balance of lessons is good and a particular strength is the development of pupils' mental strategies of calculation. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, the teacher's excellent questioning skills enabled pupils of all abilities to be successful in the very highly paced mental introduction. She cleverly matched the pace of her questioning to the level at which pupils were able to learn about reflective symmetry. Once again pupils were captivated by the enthusiasm in the exposition and worked very hard at their tasks throughout the lesson. Two pupils were withdrawn from this lesson. One was given specialist numeracy support by a visiting teacher. However, another pupil was withdrawn for specialist musical instrument tuition. This pupil missed approximately three-quarters of the numeracy lesson, which means that she does not have equality of access to the mathematics curriculum. When teaching was satisfactory it lacked elements of the good pace and high expectations demonstrated in lessons of the highest quality.
26. Through its weekly planning for literacy and numeracy, the school requires teachers to evaluate the daily progress of the pupils. These evaluations lack detail and are not used enough to inform the planning for subsequent lessons.
27. With good levels of assistance from support staff, teachers modify their teaching methods and resources effectively. As a result of this effective support, pupils with special educational needs learn satisfactorily alongside their fellow pupils. These pupils have good opportunities for small group or individual work. For example, at Key Stage 1, pupils with learning difficulties in literacy successfully discuss and complete partly prepared sentences with good levels of understanding and accuracy. This level of support enables them to complete similar work to that of the pupils in the rest of the class, who are able to write sentences unaided.
28. The teaching of history is very good, and in music, physical education and information and communication technology teaching is good overall. The quality of teaching in personal, social and health education is very good overall and is often excellent enabling pupils to learn to respect each other's feelings and to learn to keep their promises.
29. While very good and excellent teaching was observed in both key stages there were a greater number of lessons of this very high quality observed in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1.
30. Throughout the school the development of day-to-day assessment and its use to guide future planning is inconsistent and there is no whole-school approach yet in place.

Marking is unevenly developed and good practice is not consistent throughout the school. For example, a very good example was seen in Year 6 where marking is used to influence planning and the curriculum input is appropriately modified to meet the pupils' needs, but this good practice was not seen in other classes.

31. While the monitoring of the delivery of the curriculum has been undertaken in some areas, for example in mathematics and information and communication technology, it has not yet developed into a regular and rigorous system for monitoring the quality of teaching. This is less than satisfactory. This is recognised by the school as an area for development.
32. The use of homework is regular and has a satisfactory effect on raising pupils' standards of learning.

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

33. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children at the Foundation Stage of learning are good. The activities cover all the six areas of learning, in the early learning goals², appropriately.
34. The curriculum provided at Key Stages 1 and 2 suitably includes all aspects of the National Curriculum, as well as sex and drugs education and religious education. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. In the short time it has been open, the school has made good progress in providing a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented fully.
35. All subjects of the curriculum are adequately supported by a nationally recognised scheme of work. The school is making good advances in developing and reviewing policies for every subject of the curriculum. Its forward planning clearly identifies its intentions to have up-dated policies and its own scheme of work in place for all subjects.
36. Teachers who have curriculum responsibilities are not given time to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum and its delivery in lessons. There are two reasons for this: firstly, the short period of time the school has been open and secondly the absence of key staff through illness. One effect of the absence of careful monitoring is that pupils are not able to develop their skills sufficiently in all subject areas because the school does not identify potential or actual problems. For example, the timetabling of art and design and design and technology alongside each other means that there are inconsistencies in the amount of time given to these two subjects across all years, as they were planned to have.
37. Pupils do not clearly recall their work in art when they are asked about it. The three-dimensional aspects of art and design are underdeveloped. The school is justifiably developing a good reputation for the musical aspects of the creative arts through its choral, instrumental and band work. Its drama group has performed at two local events and is working with a local dance company. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and develop their skills in searching for and finding information. The opportunities for pupils to carry out independent and collaborative research and investigations are too limited. Some lessons are too teacher-directed. Subject co-

² Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

ordinators do not yet have their own budgets and are not able to provide sufficient materials for pupils to conduct their own research. Despite the good use of local loan services, the school does not have enough non-fiction books for research purposes. It is making effective use of information and communication technology.

38. Teachers' termly planning is satisfactory, although it does vary in quality. Much is carefully adapted and designed to match the needs and interests of the pupils. Weekly and daily lesson plans do not consistently take account of information gained from an assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as they learn. This reduces the quality of pupils' learning. On some occasions teachers revert to the use of photocopied tasks taken from published schemes, without sufficiently modifying them to meet the particular needs of their pupils.
39. Samples of work in literacy, in particular towards the end of Key Stage 1, show pupils completing tasks in which there is not enough challenge. This restricts their attainment and progress.
40. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum. The school implements a good policy of equal opportunities for all. It offers good levels of support and provision for pupils with special educational needs across the school. It provides these pupils with an appropriate curriculum, mainly within their classes, and fully meets the requirements of the nationally agreed Code of Practice³. It provides effectively for pupils with emotional and behavioural needs through its good levels of support for these pupils and its good programme for personal, social and health education. Led by the very good management of the co-ordinator for special educational needs and supported by the good input by all class teachers and support staff, individual education plans express pupils' needs well. These individual education plans and statements of special educational needs are well reviewed with very good levels of input from parents and specialists from agencies outside the school.
41. The potential of information and communication technology to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs through the provision of individualised programmes of study has not yet been sufficiently developed.
42. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. These include dance, cookery, art, chess, football, drama and Internet clubs. The school is successfully building up a good reputation for its creative work in music. It has a school recorder group, a choir and a school band, which perform regularly in school and are starting to give public performances. Evidence of high standards was seen during the inspection, when the school band of 16 pupils successfully played for hymn practice. The high standards the school choir attains were illustrated when they sang two-part descants to *All things bright and beautiful*, accompanied by a most complex rhythmic input. The school has been asked to take part in a musical production in Rochester Cathedral in March. It is one of only four schools in the Medway area to be invited. Parents comment favourably on the good range of community links and residential experiences pupils are receiving. These include three-day residential visits for the whole school, and a five-day residential visit for Year 6.
43. Parents play a full and active part in the school. They offer good levels of support for the delivery of the curriculum, working under the guidance of class teachers. They support the wide range of after-school activities and community experiences very actively. The

³ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

many visitors invited to the school, such as musicians, dancers, storytellers and artists, further enrich the curriculum.

44. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall. Provision for their spiritual development is good. Acts of collective worship provide pupils with good opportunities for reflection and prayer. All teachers attend assemblies and prayers and hymns are well matched to enable pupils to reflect upon their spiritual qualities. The personal, social and health education programme is well developed to enable pupils to discuss and understand the implications of their actions. Throughout the school there are many opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of care and respect for themselves and for others and to talk about special moments in their lives. A good range of opportunities is provided in assemblies for pupils to reflect upon readings from holy texts that bring out religious themes. Good opportunities are provided for performances of music. Aspects of drama and dance are starting to be successfully implemented in the curriculum. A very successful history lesson in Year 2 gave pupils a very good range of opportunities to develop their awareness of the lives of people during the Great Fire of London. They acted out how people felt and responded at the time very well.
45. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. They are aware of the rules and show good levels of behaviour. All staff have a positive approach to behaviour management. The school buys in the services of a counsellor, who works weekly with pupils with special educational needs. Teachers use group sessions, known as 'circle time', very effectively to give pupils the opportunity to think about others' feelings and how they can contribute to their relationships with others. Pupils are proud of their environment, keep the building tidy and assist with the giving out of resources and keeping them in order.
46. The school's council, which has representatives from all classes in the school, successfully debates issues of concern. During the inspection pupils expressed concern that some of the large number of daffodil bulbs planted in the autumn around the school grounds were being trodden on. This issue was raised with the whole school in an assembly led by the headteacher. The school has prefects and monitors and each pupil in Year 6 has a personal responsibility. The stationing of these prefects and monitors strategically around the school, before and after assembly and during lunchtimes, does much to achieve the very good manner in which pupils move quickly around the school and the harmonious relationships and atmosphere created. Pupils and adults in the school provide good role models and achieve very good relationships at work and at play.
47. The provision for pupils' social development is good. In assemblies and personal, social and health education sessions, issues such as kindness, friendship and caring for others are taught effectively. Pupils are given opportunities to take on a wide range of responsibilities. They shoulder their responsibilities competently and seriously and there is no lack of volunteers. When occasions arise younger pupils work with older ones. At break and lunchtimes pupils play and socialise well together. They have opportunities to seek approval to be in or out of school. These opportunities develop an effective team approach well.
48. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. They learn about the richness of cultures around the world, including Britain and the west, through music, art, geography and history. Visits to galleries, museums and other places of interest stimulate pupils' interest in different traditions and events. Pupils in Key Stage 2 talk highly of their visit to see the ballet *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* at Sadler's Wells before Christmas. The school aims to examine other beliefs and faiths and to help pupils to understand that people may have different beliefs from their own. It intends to further develop its present

inadequate stocks of non-fiction books that celebrate other cultures. At present the school is not allowing pupils a wide enough range of opportunities to examine the implications of a multi-cultural society and their place and work within this society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The assessment of pupils' attainment in mathematics, English and science is not being consistently carried out throughout the school. While teachers have made a start at assessing pupils' levels of attainment to assist target setting, these targets are not based on formal assessments of examples of pupils' work. The school recognises this as an area for development.
50. Assessment opportunities are not consistently recorded on teacher's planning. Information gathered from the day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is not regularly being used to adapt teachers' planning. However, assessment is used well to identify and set individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' personal assessments of pupils do assist them to group according to ability in literacy and numeracy lessons. Throughout the school, teachers and pupils do not address pupils' personal targets on a daily basis. Overall, procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are underdeveloped at present.
51. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by others in the class and by the school's effective procedures. The school has appropriate procedures for the recognition of and provision for these pupils. It effectively uses test results, target setting and concerns expressed by class teachers to decide where extra support can best be introduced.
52. The very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are strengths of the school. The caring atmosphere that is evident throughout the school reflects the high commitment of all the staff. This commitment has enabled a significant number of pupils to gain the dignity and confidence which were undermined by their bad experiences in other schools. Pupils and their parents are aware that they will receive fast and effective support from any member of staff, should they need it. Inspection evidence confirms this.
53. As the school is new and has varying numbers of pupils starting in all year groups throughout the term, induction procedures for new pupils have been established. All staff have specific guidelines to ensure that the essential areas of health, safety and welfare are covered immediately upon entry. Areas covered include fire evacuation, safety rules and instruction in the code of behaviour. New pupils learn that they must discuss any problems with a member of staff and are told about 'playground friends'.
54. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection. The school's policy follows the local guidelines. The staff handbook and instructions for supply teachers stress the procedures to be followed. Most of the staff receive training in immediate first-aid and one member of staff is fully qualified in first-aid procedures. Accidents are carefully recorded and great care is taken to inform parents of any concerns resulting from an accident during school time. The procedures for pupils with serious allergic reactions are available near every first-aid point. There is a small room used as a quiet area for any pupils who need privacy whilst waiting for collection by parents or ambulance.
55. The very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and behaviour are another strength of the school. The headteacher monitors registers each week and calculates the attendance figures for each year group. Parents support the school

strongly in its efforts to maintain high attendance. They telephone or write to the school explaining any absence. Very few pupils are late for school and class teachers strictly observe the times for registration and the closing of registers. These measures aid pupils' personal and academic development.

56. The behaviour policy and the ethos of the school are combined in the words 'high expectations'. The prospectus and other information for parents clearly state that there are no rules, but that there are high expectations. These cover behaviour, attendance, attitudes to learning and respect for others. However, many classes create their own rules through consultation between class teachers and pupils. Class rules support the ethos of high expectations. Most pupils can explain their class rules, together with the reasons for and meaning of them. The behaviour policy contains procedures to eliminate oppressive behaviour. It also contains clear directives on the use of restraint should any pupil act in a way dangerous to themselves or to others.
57. The procedures for supporting pupils' personal development are good and work very effectively. Staff know all the pupils and all the children in the Foundation Stage very well. The school is careful to give pupils in every classroom responsibility appropriate to their age. Visits to locations outside the school for younger pupils develop their social awareness and knowledge of the area where they live or where the school is located. Older pupils also enjoy the residential visits. Personal responsibility on residential visits is a strong feature. For example, on one of the early visits pupils who ignored the rules about bedtime and 'lights out' were taught that this was unacceptable. They recognised that they must show responsibility or be removed from the site and sent home.
58. However, the procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' personal development are not yet fully developed. There is no evidence of pupils' personal portfolios containing a record of their achievements, either in or outside school. There are no records of personal development to pass on to secondary schools. There are, however, detailed and effective records of pupils with special educational needs, particularly of the progress of those with behaviour problems.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

59. The school's partnership with parents is another very good area that supports pupils' progress. Some pupils at the school have a history of truancy, violence and resentment at their previous schools. Parents appreciate that their children leave their history behind and that they make a fresh start on entry to St Mary's Island School. Most parents are impressed by all that the school provides for their children. Evidence from the inspection supports their views.
60. The school values the work of the many parents and friends who help in classrooms. The number who help on a regular basis is larger than in many other schools. Parents become involved in the work of the school. For example, one parent who began by giving classroom help is now studying to become a qualified teacher. Nearly 40 parents attended the first parent-training afternoon for numeracy organised by the school with help from the local authority.
61. The home-school agreement asks for commitment by the teacher, pupil and parent. Reading diaries exist, but their use is variable and the school acknowledges the need for improvement. There is not yet a co-ordinated policy for homework. Inspection evidence supports the small number of parents expressing concern at the parents' meeting.

62. SMILE, the St. Mary's Parent, Teacher and Friends Association, raises substantial funds for the school. The school gives a wish list to SMILE and they jointly decide where to spend the money raised.
63. Parents receive letters, mainly by 'pupil post'. They contain specific requests and general information. There is no regular pattern because they are sent only when needed. At the end of the year the headteacher produces a full report of the school's activities during the last 12 months, with comments on future plans. She is available at the school gate every morning and evening to greet parents and their children. Minor matters are dealt with immediately and appointments are readily made for matters needing longer discussion. Many parents accompany their children to the classroom door, where class teachers are available to receive notes or explanations for absence.
64. The cover of the school prospectus bears the school logo, which pupils, staff and governors helped to design. It is an attractive document, meeting all statutory requirements. There is substantial additional information, which is helpful to prospective parents. The governors' annual report to parents meets requirements.
65. There are two formal meetings each year to discuss pupils' progress. In the summer term, parents can meet the class teacher to discuss the annual written report if necessary. At the parents' meeting and in the response to the questionnaire, a small percentage of parents expressed concern about the lack of detail on pupils' progress in the annual written report. Evidence upholds their concern. There are already plans in place to review the report structure and its content before the next issue.
66. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about their progress. This is done through contacts with teachers at any time the parents wish, and through the termly reviews of individual education plans and the yearly reviews of statements.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

67. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and key staff have worked effectively to establish a new and successful Church of England school in just 18 months. The leadership of the school has rightly focused on appointing and developing a strong team of teachers, who have promoted the teaching of literacy, numeracy and good behaviour throughout the school. The headteacher and staff have very clear aims and Christian values which have shaped the caring ethos of the school. The aims of the school are summed up in their ethos statement:

 "We wish our school to be a place of beauty, where God's wonderful world is celebrated through the creative arts. We want that beauty to penetrate into everyone's spirit, so that our Christian profession is lived out in the way in which we treat each other and our surroundings."
68. The school is now ready to develop a greater level of delegation within the senior management team. A programme of regular meetings should be established. This will assist in future planning. While there has been some monitoring of the quality of teaching to raise pupils' standards of achievement, greater rigour is required to develop this area fully. For instance, teachers' planning is not regularly monitored. The headteacher plans the release of the deputy headteacher from some classroom duties as soon as finances allow this to happen so that her role can be further developed. The deputy headteacher increasingly promotes high standards in all aspects of the school and enables effective teaching and learning to take place. She offers particularly good support to new teachers to the school. Performance management and appraisal have been started and targets have been set for the headteacher. Staff targets are being properly developed.

69. The management of most subject areas is developing at present, but a significant number of staff have only been in post for five months. There are subject co-ordinators for all areas of the curriculum. Most subjects are satisfactorily led and action plans have been drawn up for all areas. However, there are as yet few opportunities for members of staff to share their considerable expertise with others. Subject co-ordinators do not yet monitor teachers' planning regularly. The leadership of English is good and the school has undertaken a significant amount of analysis of this subject. The management of special educational needs has developed the use of detailed individual education plans where reviews are carefully recorded. Class teachers set specific targets for pupils, which are adapted and modified every term. The co-ordinator is a class teacher with a very heavy workload and at present she has no time away from the class to attend to documentation and monitor the pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher has plans to remedy this situation and release the co-ordinator from some of her class commitments, when sufficient resources are made available. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very effectively undertaken by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. There is a very good team approach amongst staff that supports the good overall levels of provision for identified pupils. Funding for special educational needs is prudently and well used. Staff working with pupils who have special educational needs are suitably qualified. The school has a very good match of support staff to assist the pupils' good levels of progress across the curriculum. The school makes good use of the effective, local education authority advisor for special educational needs, ensuring that she fully understands the school's needs.
70. The school has a very good standard of teaching and learning support staff who help pupils in Key Stage 1 and children in the Foundation Stage to make good progress. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make very good progress. A decision made at the end of the last academic year to employ a seventh class teacher has proved to be successful. There are now no mixed-age classes. Teachers have a good spread of academic qualifications to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and early learning goals for children under five. There is particular strength in the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.
71. There are a high number of very good learning support assistants. Some are funded by the local authority to support specific pupils with special educational needs. The others are allocated to different classrooms, mostly supporting core subjects such as literacy and numeracy. They are involved in staff training when appropriate and have full access to the staff room. There is good liaison between teaching and support staff.
72. The administration staff and premises manager are very efficient, often working more than their normal hours in order to meet their own high standards. All three play an active part in the ethos of the school by attending assemblies and supporting out of hours activities.
73. Staff who are new to the school are effectively introduced to the school's procedures, both through the staff handbook and individual mentoring. The headteacher acted as mentor to a newly qualified teacher during the last academic year. There is an abbreviated but helpful handout for supply teachers to ensure that they know the basic school procedures and to whom they should turn for help if needed.
74. The school is not yet an effective provider of initial teacher training. It has the potential to be a provider after this early development stage is complete. Procedures for assessment, reporting and recording of pupils' progress are not yet in place. There are no consistent procedures for staff monitoring. Until these are in place teachers under training would not receive sufficient levels of support or instruction.

75. Learning resources are just satisfactory in quantity to support pupils' progress. Although it is recognised that the school does not yet fully control its own budget, further resources for geography and history are required. There are not enough resources in both subjects for whole class teaching and in Key Stage 2 for research.
76. The school's accommodation is unsatisfactory. The designed space for the library and computer suite is inadequate for either purpose and certainly unsatisfactory for both combined. This prevents the effective delivery of the curriculum. Few pupils have library skills, storage for books is inadequate and the teaching of computer skills is severely limited. There are neither sinks nor water supply in the Key Stage 2 classrooms. This limits the teaching of art and design and design and technology in classrooms.
77. The single corridor that serves all seven classrooms is only usable because of the pupils' self-discipline and good manners. The lack of cloakroom space causes pupils' bags to spill onto the corridor. This makes the corridor a safety hazard, particularly for fire or emergency evacuation. The corridor is too obstructed at any time should the school have pupils or staff who are confined to wheelchairs. The school is, therefore, not suitable for disabled persons.
78. External playgrounds lack markings to enable pupils to play games. The school is refusing to accept the playgrounds or the grass field until the surfaces are level and do not form puddles whenever it rains. The quality of the playground and the field inhibit the full delivery of the physical education curriculum.
79. The school has set appropriate priorities for development. However, the length of time set to achieve them is too long and links to financial planning are not yet fully developed. The school has taken satisfactory action to meet its targets and has started to project the levels that pupils will achieve in national tests.
80. A considerable amount has been achieved in the short period since the school was opened and there is a strong commitment to improve and be even more successful in the future. Two of the three senior management members have had serious illnesses during the last year. All the staff at the school are new and they have been well supported while they were establishing themselves.
81. Technology is used well to manage finances and communication. The specific grants for computers and pupils with special educational needs have been well used. The administrative staff are efficient and help to ensure the smooth running of the school. Financial matters are well organised and handled, although the school has not yet been audited.
82. The governing body fulfils statutory requirements. It has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but does not as yet have very much involvement in shaping the educational direction of the school. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily at present. However, although it has not been able to find any similar schools in the area to compare itself with, it does question its effectiveness and carefully compare prices and contracts.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

83. In order to enable the school to continue to progress towards its final, secure establishment and to further raise standards the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- further develop true partnership in the management of the school by:-
 - a) identifying the roles and responsibilities of the individual members of the senior management team; (paragraphs 68, 69)
 - b) developing strategies to enable all members of the senior management team to contribute fully to the educational direction and vision for the school, so far largely undertaken by the headteacher; (paragraphs 68, 69)
 - c) through professional advice and training, enabling the governors to understand fully their roles and responsibilities in true partnership in the management of the school; (paragraphs 79, 82)
 - d) establishing strategies and procedures which will ensure that there is true partnership between the senior management team and the governors in the management of the school:
 - develop and implement a policy of regular day-to-day assessment of what pupils learn and use this information to guide future planning; (paragraphs 26, 30, 38, 49, 50, 74, 85, 94, 102, 116, 123, 124, 134, 145, 161)
 - develop and implement strategies for the regular and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the delivery of the curriculum and the quality of teaching; (paragraphs 31, 36, 50, 58, 68, 74, 85, 94, 102, 116, 124, 129, 139, 146)
 - further delegate true management responsibilities to subject co-ordinators for establishing and maintaining high standards and achievement in their subject areas throughout the school; (paragraphs 36, 69, 129, 134, 139, 146, 158, 163)
 - ensure that the authority responsible for the commissioning of the school's buildings is aware of the weaknesses identified in this report, and work in partnership with them to develop a comprehensive, time-targeted programme to solve these problems. (paragraphs 12, 16, 76, 77, 78, 98, 104, 124, 149, 150, 153)
84. The governing body may also wish to consider the following minor issues for inclusion in their action plan:-
- further develop the range of resources for teaching and learning, in all areas of the curriculum, as budgets allow; (paragraphs 37, 75, 98, 104, 129, 139)
 - develop stronger representation of and raise pupils' standards in three-dimensional work in art and the area of investigation in mathematics in Key Stage 1. (paragraphs 12, 37, 108, 131)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
16	15	48	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	187
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	64

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	78
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	10	13	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	10
	Girls	12	12	11
	Total	20	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	87 (n/a)	91 (n/a)	91 (n/a)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	21	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	91 (n/a)	87 (n/a)	96 (n/a)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	3	6	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	N/A	N/A	N/A
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	N/A	N/A	N/A
	National	72 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

No comparisons between the school's results at Key Stage 2 are made with national averages because at the time of the tests the group had fewer than 10 pupils.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	180
Any other minority ethnic group	7

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	136,640
Total expenditure	125,895
Expenditure per pupil	2,171
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	10,745

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 39%

Number of questionnaires sent out	162
Number of questionnaires returned	63

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	86	14	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	32	6	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	37	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	49	6	3	2
The teaching is good.	70	21	2	2	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	33	6	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	14	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	21	3	3	2
The school works closely with parents.	75	21	0	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	73	19	2	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	27	3	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	26	5	3	5

Other issues raised by parents

Both in questionnaires and at the parents' meeting the provision of extra-curricular activities and the information that parents receive, particularly about their children's progress, were raised as concerns by a small minority of parents. Homework and the progress that pupils make were also highlighted in questionnaires. The great majority of parents have only praise for the school. Inspection evidence shows that progress is at least satisfactory for all the pupils in the school. The level of extra-curricular activities provided is very good. In these areas, inspection evidence does not support the views of a minority of parents. However, although homework is satisfactorily used to promote pupils' learning, it could be improved both in consistency and range. The annual written reports to parents meet requirements, but could contain clearer evaluation of progress and would be improved if they included targets for pupil's future learning. In these areas the views of some parents are supported. The partnership between the school and the parents is very good and inspection evidence wholly supports the positive views of most parents.

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

85. Children under five are taught in a reception class. These children attend for morning sessions initially and later become full-time pupils. They are taught by one teacher and supported by a classroom assistant. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average. Most can identify what colour objects are. They can recognise their names as they hang their coats on their hooks. They know how to use a book and that words and pictures have meaning. There are good procedures for initial assessments, which are well interpreted, help teachers to plan work and to some extent aid the identification of pupils with special educational needs. An informative record sheet is in use to record pupils' skills on entry and throughout the Foundation Stage. Worksheets which detail letter names and their sounds allow teachers to monitor pupils' achievements, but are not used consistently and are not passed on to the next key stage. This limits the quality of pupils' later learning. The type of activities undertaken by the children are soundly monitored and recorded in individual record books around the classroom. Children make good progress overall in the reception class and are in line to meet the national early learning goals by the time that they move into Key Stage 1.

Personal and social development

86. The children make good progress in reception and achieve good standards by the end of the Foundation Stage. They quickly become accustomed to the school environment and are well prepared for entry into Year 1. Children in the Foundation Stage work well together and share the computer fairly. They co-operate well and hand pencils to others. They look after each other. They have positive attitudes to learning, join in activities happily and keenly gather round the teacher when she is sharing a story. However, 'circle time', which promotes pupils' social development, is only occasionally used when an issue arises. Pupils show independence in the selection of tasks in the afternoon, often choosing from a range of materials on the table. The teaching is based on establishing friendly relationships between children and between them and their teachers. The children understand the difference between right and wrong.
87. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. The teacher and classroom assistant provide a good range of opportunities with an appropriate balance of free and directed activities. Staff greet children warmly in the morning and there is an immediate discussion of matters of interest or importance. Parents and carers approach staff confidently to pass on information and discuss any problems. Staff use their good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children to help them choose a purposeful activity. They listen carefully to children, valuing their comments and encouraging them to expand on their one-word answers or contributions. All children are in line to meet the requirements for their age by the time that they join Year 1.

Language and literacy

88. Most reception children make satisfactory progress in language and literacy. They have satisfactory listening skills and listen attentively to teachers when they are reading to them. Children also listen carefully when they are learning to identify words by their initial sounds. Foundation Stage children sit quietly, follow instructions carefully, put up their hands and answer questions enthusiastically about a story which has been acted out. They use tape recorders and headsets well to listen to their favourite stories, but there

are few non-fiction 'Big Books' for them. They develop sound writing skills when they record their names on the backs of pieces of paper and write down the names of objects. The development of children's writing is sound overall. However, further activities in writing, for example activities being set up on the writing table or in the home corner which encourage pupils to record information for a purpose, would contribute to raising standards. Staff speak to children encouragingly and use praise to good effect. They talk to children about what they are doing and ask challenging questions, which make children think deeply about their tasks. Teaching is always at least satisfactory due to good planning. Pupils are in line to reach the expected targets by the time that they move into Key Stage 1.

Mathematics

89. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in developing numeracy skills. They consistently increase their knowledge of number. Most can recognise the numbers one to five. Many can count on up to 22 and 23 with some support. Half the children can count up to 10 pictures of brothers or sisters. They develop their knowledge of shape well. They can recognise triangles, squares and rectangles. When pupils use the computer they manipulate the mouse accurately to select numeracy activities. The quality of teaching is good. A strength of this teaching is the good relationships that have been developed in the classroom and which help to stimulate the children. However, there is scope for even more use of extension activities and investigation activities for the most able children. Not all children are reaching their true potential, but all are in line to achieve the standards expected by the time that they move into Year 1, in mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

90. The children make good progress when they discuss objects made of wood. The quality of teaching is good and resources are well chosen, enabling good quality conversations to develop around the theme. During the inspection pupils carried out some careful observations of wooden materials and recorded them accurately, drawing them on paper. The teacher showed the children how to examine objects carefully and then invited children to use these skills when they drew the objects they had studied. A science table invites pupils to explore a good variety of objects that create sounds. Interesting questions are displayed, for example "What sounds do they make?" Children are in line to meet the expectations of the national early learning goals by the time that they join Year 1.

Physical development

91. Children in the reception class are in line to meet the requirements of the national early learning goals by the time that they move into Year 1. They have satisfactory opportunities to play with large or wheeled apparatus in the large playground and in their own walled playground. However, this outside play area has no cover to shade children from the sun or rain. They make satisfactory progress in developing motor skills when they go into the school hall and skip around pretending to carry a shopping bag. This increases their flexibility and body control. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in lessons. Weaving is used to develop fine motor skills when pupils create woven pieces of fabric. They make good progress in learning to use a saw and cut wood to make picture frames.

Creative development

92. Very good progress is made in developing creative skills. A good variety of experiences has been planned for the children. In the classroom there is a playhouse, where children can invite others to have a meal or cup of tea. They develop good observational drawing skills, especially when they paint detailed pictures of themselves. They create paintings on stones using a variety of patterns. They make good progress in music when they join in the singing in hymn practice with the rest of the school. They share instruments co-operatively on the whole, developing an understanding of pitch when working with religious music from Uganda. At the end of the Foundation Stage, all pupils are in line to reach the expected levels for their age and a significant number are in line to reach above average standards.

ENGLISH

93. Standards in English are average for seven-year-olds and above average for pupils at the age of 11 years. Results of the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds show that standards in reading are well above the national average. In writing they are close to the national average. As this is a new school, the 23 pupils at the age of seven who took the 2000 national tests had attended the school for less than a year. For this reason a comparison with similar schools would be unreliable. The number taking the national tests at the age of 11 was less than ten. This is too small a number to compare with test results nationally.
94. Inspection findings show that, across the school, pupils are achieving good standards in speaking and listening. Standards in reading and writing are typical for seven-year-olds. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve above average standards in reading and writing. Standards in spelling are satisfactory. Pupils develop good handwriting skills and present their work well. There is no significant difference in standards across the school between girls and boys. The standards that pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils achieve are satisfactory. Because the needs of pupils with higher potential are not yet fully assessed, the work that they are set does not consistently help them to attain the standards they could. One factor in this is that in its first year the school set itself to reach realistic targets of an average standard. It successfully achieved this.
95. When pupils enter the school they show good degrees of confidence in speaking, and their listening skills are good. They quickly acquire the basic skills of reading and develop a good degree of pencil control to support the good styles of handwriting they are developing. In Key Stage 2, pupils' good levels of learning, supported by the good teaching that they receive, particularly in Years 5 and 6, enable them to make good progress. Their reading is good and they express themselves clearly through the spoken and written word. As pupils progress from year to year their confidence grows due to the good or very good opportunities that they have to read, write and discuss their work. The literacy hour is having a strong impact on pupils' learning. There is a good balance across the school between reading, word, text and sentence work. A good range of opportunities is provided within English and across the curriculum in subjects such as science, geography and history for pupils to successfully use their progressively developing writing skills.
96. Teachers use their skills in story-telling well. They read books expressively, with pupils having their own copies to follow. This was seen in a Year 1 class when the pupils responded well to carefully directed questions and began to understand the structures and patterns in *Handa's Surprise*. This enabled them to make their own contributions to a class book and to construct their own sentences with the aid of lists of suitable vocabulary.

97. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities to develop their reading skills. As well as the shared opportunities in the literacy hour, they select individual readers from the school's good range of reading schemes. Their grasp of letter sounds is unevenly developed, which hinders some pupils' ability to tackle new words and limits their progress. The development of pupils' understanding of letter sounds is uneven across the school and is not yet monitored for effectiveness and delivery.
98. By Year 2, pupils clearly know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Most pupils comprehend and discuss with enthusiasm their reading of fiction and non-fiction. They read with an increasing fluency and accuracy. Eleven-year-olds discuss with enthusiasm a wide range of books, including prose and poetry, and talk with a good degree of understanding about different authors. They are able to easily extract, discuss and understand information from the range of texts that they have read. Towards the end of the school, the reading skills of the average and above average pupils are sufficiently well developed to enable them to cope with most texts. However, the opportunities for them to research independently and collaboratively are too limited. The school library is too small and inadequately stocked with non-fiction books to support this style of learning. Due to the good, short-term, attainable targets in individual education plans and the support they receive in classes, pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their reading and often attain close to average standards.
99. Pupils' writing skills improve as they progress through the school and are sound overall in Key Stage 1. Attainment rises in Key Stage 2 to be above average. Seven-year-olds successfully write simple words. They combine them to make compound words, which the more able successfully use in a series of sentences. By the age of 11 pupils, discussing their feelings and impressions arising from an introductory story, show a good understanding of transforming sentences from active to passive and vice versa. They understand the effect of active and passive changes on word order and sense. They have a good knowledge of grammar and punctuation. They use different forms of writing appropriately, for example, when writing about the lives of people in Britain since the 1930s in history. Pupils in Year 5 give good written descriptions of their studies on water and the drains and their operation as part of their geography studies. Due to the good levels of support they receive, pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily developing writing as a means of communication.
100. Standards of handwriting are generally good across the school. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities to practise forming their letters and words correctly. Pupils quickly develop a personal cursive style of handwriting. They apply these well-developed skills across the curriculum and standards of presentation are high. Pupils, throughout the school, do not have enough chance to use dictionaries and spelling checks to further support their use and accuracy of spelling.
101. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2. It never falls below satisfactory and is sometimes excellent. This supports pupils' learning and achievement well. Teachers throughout the school have a good understanding of the teaching of the National Literacy Strategy and how to teach reading and writing. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher's high-level skills in questioning led pupils to become engaged in high-level discussion. They responded to a story, clearly expressing their ideas and preferences with high levels of understanding and enthusiasm. They identified nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs and displayed a very good awareness of the various ways that rules are applied to make plurals from nouns with different endings. Teachers use interesting and varied approaches to writing. Displays across the school show good standards in descriptive and creative writing and the composition of a range of expressive and imaginative poems. When marking is effectively applied, for example in Year 6,

pupils are encouraged to correct their mistakes and to redraft their work. The very good practice seen here is not evenly applied across the school.

102. Teachers generally have suitable termly and weekly plans for the subject. Their use of assessment during lessons and the use of this information to guide their future planning are underdeveloped. Teachers do not sufficiently support pupils to identify common spelling patterns and learn spelling rules. Pupils are sometimes taught to recognise words within words, but this is not consistently developed across classes.
103. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual action plans. These are suitably followed and teaching is suitably modified as a result of this awareness. Here the very good deployment of support staff gives pupils good opportunities to succeed. This was illustrated in a Year 4 class when the learning support assistant, working with two groups of pupils, successfully supported them to complete a worksheet, making a written analysis of the comprehension of a text previously read to them. Pupils responded to her guidance with good degrees of interest and motivation. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs supports the good progress that pupils make and their satisfactory levels of learning.
104. Despite the absence of the English co-ordinator due to ill health, the management of English is developing well. Opportunities have been taken for her to observe classes. Members of the governing body have also observed literacy sessions. The opportunities to report back their findings have not been taken properly. The subject co-ordinator has written a good subject review and has developed plans for improvement. These clearly state the relevant targets for the development of the subject up to July 2002. Inspection findings agree with many of these findings. They include the purchase of further reference books and consistency in teaching reading, phonics and spelling across the school. A more consistent approach to marking and the further training of staff in their understanding of grammar applied to writing are other relevant areas identified. The co-ordinator does not yet have a budget to support these developments. The present arrangements for the library, which is shared as a computer suite, are unsatisfactory. As new building work progresses the school will need to consider the provision of a much larger area for its library, together with a far wider stock of books.

MATHEMATICS

105. In the 2000 national tests and assessments, the standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below the national average. Because all the pupils who took the tests had spent less than a year in the school this does not reflect the standards of education the school provides. The school has begun to develop a strategy for analysing the results of national tests to guide improvement. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented throughout the school.
106. Because of the school's unique situation at this early point in its establishment, comparisons with the results of similar schools cannot be made.
107. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 cannot be judged on the results of national tests and assessments as there were fewer than 10 pupils in the group that undertook the tests.
108. However, inspection evidence supports the judgements that standards in mathematics, in the present Year 2 and Year 6 classes, are in line with national expectations at the ages of 7 and 11 years. There is no measurable difference between the attainment of boys and girls or between the different areas of mathematics. There is a relative lack of depth in the investigation of mathematics in Key Stage 1 where there is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of basic skills in number, shape, space and measure.

109. At present, attainment in all classes in the school is in line with what is expected for pupils of their respective ages and varying levels of ability. The balance of abilities in each class varies according to the differing number of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are very well supported and make appropriate progress in lessons according to their abilities.
110. In the present Year 2 class, average attainers add and subtract numbers to 10, multiply by two and 10 up to 50 and count on and back in tens to numbers beyond 100. They know the properties of two-dimensional shapes and work out change from coinage to £1. Lower-attaining pupils, some of whom have special educational needs, add single digits to totals beyond 10 and recognise simple shapes such as squares, circles and triangles. Higher attainers count on and back in hundreds, double and halve numbers up to 100 and begin to translate experiences in sharing into traditional division. All pupils have good early experiences in collecting data through tallying and translating this information into block graphs.
111. In the present Year 6, pupils add hundreds, tens and units, complete division sums dividing single numbers into tens and units, understand frequency charts and construct bar and block graphs as well as pie charts. Average attainers add and subtract to two places of decimals, use standard measures accurately in weight, time, distance and capacity. Higher attainers find the equivalents of proper fractions in decimals and percentages and draw and measure a good range of angles.
112. These levels of attainment support the judgements that standards are average at the end of both key stages. However, in this early part of the school's establishment it is impossible to judge pupils' progress either in key stages or across the school.
113. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. During the week of inspection the quality of teaching was very good or excellent in a half of lessons and good in the other half. All teachers demonstrated good or very good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy. A particular strength in the delivery of the strategy is the development of pupils' mental strategies for mental calculations and their ability to explain their thinking. Pupils' thinking is often sharpened by teachers' well-developed skills in questioning coupled with the setting of time targets for answering. High-quality lessons are characterised by teachers' secure subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their potential to achieve. Teachers' enthusiasm is transmitted to pupils and a good pace is maintained. For example, in an excellent Year 6 lesson the teacher asked 'quick fire' questions involving the addition of positive and negative numbers which kept pupils alert and interested. Probing questions and good opportunities for pupils to think before answering, coupled with the teacher's very good questioning skills, ensured success for all.
114. Pupils' attitudes to their work and their response to teachers' motivation are good or very good. They show a real interest in solving problems and are keen to explain how they arrive at their solutions. When they are set tasks in lessons they often concentrate well and work well co-operatively in small groups. The number of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems in some classes means that there is always the potential for unsatisfactory behaviour and the possible distraction of others from their work. This is overcome by the very good teamwork between class teachers and learning support assistants consistently applying the school's very good behaviour management policy.
115. Mathematical vocabulary is well promoted and most classrooms have good displays of vocabulary and basic number patterns, which include questions and problems.

Information and communication technology is satisfactorily used in lessons to extend pupils' learning and basic mathematical skills in number and data handling. These skills are well used in other subjects such as geography and science.

116. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning and is usually an extension of work undertaken in classrooms.
117. The school has made a good start to the development of mathematics education for all its pupils. The key areas of development in mathematics are now the day-to-day assessment of pupils' work, the use of that information to guide future planning and the regular and rigorous monitoring of the delivery of the curriculum and the quality of teaching.
118. The very good subject co-ordinator is fully aware of the situation in the development of the mathematics curriculum. Resources for the teaching of the subject are satisfactory in number and all are of very good quality.

SCIENCE

119. Standards in Year 6 are average. The scrutiny of work and classroom observations indicate that the present Year 6 pupils are in line to attain broadly average standards by the time that they leave the school. This is due to the practical approach to the teaching of science and the high levels of teacher subject knowledge. Teacher assessments of standards in science, at the end of Key Stage 1, in 2000 were above the national average. Standards of the current Year 2 are average, due to the use of effective learning methods and the good use of resources. There is no significant difference between how well boys and girls progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress over time.
120. By the age of seven pupils have satisfactory levels of knowledge about life and living processes. Pupils can sort plants and animals into groups. There are weaknesses in the way pupils record their work and they do not use computers often enough to support the recording of evidence and the presentation of results. The standards of investigative skills are satisfactory. They carry out investigations and can make careful observations about the speed that model cars travel down slopes. There is less emphasis placed on the areas of physical processes and materials.
121. By the age of 11 pupils' knowledge of life and living processes is satisfactory. The characteristics of living things are well explained. Pupils demonstrate clear understanding of the three main food types and label diagrams of teeth. Investigations are used effectively when pupils discover how water can be used to separate two solids. Pupils record results well and form conclusions about their work. They use graphs effectively when they draw line graphs to show whether temperature and the number of stirs make a difference to the rate of dissolving sweeteners. Pupils also investigate how materials change when they are burnt. There is less evidence of activities linked to forces and magnets. Pupils know how particular devices can be connected to work in an electrical circuit. Although the quality of Year 6 work is high, the quantity of recorded material is insufficient.
122. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1 with a number of strengths that account for the good progress overall in the school.
123. Teachers revise the previous lesson's content and good questioning skills are used to ensure that pupils think deeply about the topic being studied. This occurred in a Year 6 lesson that was concerned with the designing of burglar alarms using electrical circuits.

Pupils were challenged to think carefully about how circuits are completed so that the electricity flows.

124. Teachers' planning prepares them well for lessons. Shared learning objectives displayed on the board mean that pupils are focused on what they should be learning. Teachers use good subject knowledge to deepen pupils' understanding when they discuss what happens when a material is weighed in water and air. Vocabulary is well developed by teachers so that pupils learn how to explain their observations using increasing levels of scientific language. Most teachers use resources imaginatively to make their lessons interesting and relevant, for example when they utilise a variety of resources to see how materials can be used as thermal insulators. Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes towards science.
125. The quality of teaching ranges from excellent to satisfactory, but it does not consistently challenge the more able pupils in lessons. Plenary sessions are not always well used to assess the level of pupils' learning. Teachers do not keep consistent records of which pupils do better than expected, or not so well. Marking does not consistently explain what pupils could do in the future to improve their work.
126. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has been monitored by the co-ordinator. Assessment does not give teachers a solid base with which to accurately monitor pupils' levels of attainment and progress. This means that some average and more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. The curriculum manager does not monitor teachers' planning. Resources are sound, but there are not enough resources for the study of light. The subject promotes pupils' literacy skills through the introduction of a science vocabulary and through the written reports of scientific activities and knowledge. Numeracy skills are consolidated through data collection and the drawing of graphs associated with pupils' work. The use of information and communication technology in science lessons is in the early stages of development owing partly to the restricted space in the computer area. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development when they work together during practical investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

127. During the inspection, because of the timetabling of art and design on Thursday afternoon and Fridays, it was not possible to see any lessons. The subject co-ordinator could not be interviewed as she was absent from school due to illness. However, an examination of planning, work on display and discussions with pupils indicates that the subject satisfactorily meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.
128. Displays around school show that younger pupils have successfully completed collages, paintings, paper work and made clay hedgehogs to hold a night-light. Older pupils have completed clay and papier-mâché masks.
129. Studying the work of artists such as Kandinsky provides opportunities for pupils to look at the use of style, colours and textures in art. Younger and older pupils show good interpretation, using their observations in their own work. Colour mixing is successfully applied to the range of well-arranged shapes and there is good visual interpretation overall. It is planned for older pupils in Year 6 to examine the work of Gustav Klimt. The decorative themes emphasised in Klimt's work are seen repeated across the school when pupils decorate their poems and written work with a good awareness and application of pattern, colour and design.

130. Pupils have a satisfactory range of opportunities for drawing and for painting. Observational drawings by older pupils of chairs and still life paintings of flowers show a good interpretation of detail and composition. Paintings arising from Year 6 pupils' studies of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in English provide a good visual interpretation of characters and aspects of the play. An isolated example of good computer generated art is seen in Year 4 where the teacher is also the information and communication technology co-ordinator.
131. The curriculum for art is drawn from a recently adopted, published scheme, which is not yet fully implemented across the school. Teachers are not yet fully conversant with the delivery of this scheme. The subject co-ordinator is also co-ordinator for English, literacy and assessment and is the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator. She has not yet had time to assist teachers fully with the implementation of this scheme or to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its delivery. The teachers' plans for art and design have not been monitored and there is no clear direction for the assessment of the subject. The school development plan indicates an intention to have the curriculum for art and design fully in place over the period 2001 to 2002. At present art and design and design and technology are timetabled alongside each other. It is not clear how teachers decide on the priority given to each subject. In some cases, pupils are unsure what they last studied in art and design. The subject is not yet developed to the high level that the school's planning indicates. The three-dimensional aspects of art, the use of sketchbooks and information and communication technology are at present under-represented. There is not enough three-dimensional work. Resources are barely satisfactory. There is no specific budget allocated to the subject co-ordinator for the purchase of materials to cover the adopted scheme of work fully.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

132. Standards meet expectations for pupils at the end of both key stages, despite little evidence being found in Years 3 and 4. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.
133. The standards for seven-year-olds are satisfactory and result from satisfactory teaching. In Year 2, the teaching develops satisfactory designing skills. This was evident from the detailed labelled diagrams of machines and cranes that pupils had drawn. Pupils' designing skills were demonstrated further when they designed their own home. Ten and 11-year-old pupils produce initial and final designs of the model toys and cars they are making, listing the materials they will use.
134. The final products made by Year 5 are of a high standard and demonstrate accurate measuring, cutting and joining skills. Finishing skills are carefully used to decorate their toy structures and mechanisms are well thought out to create successful products. In Year 2, construction kits are effectively used to build a variety of mechanisms that lift small weights.
135. The evaluation of pupils' products formed a prominent part of the Year 5 work. There are three levels of evaluation sheets, which guide the pupils thoughtfully through their analysis of the project undertaken. Pupils carefully describe how they could improve their model.
136. Pupils enjoy the practical activities in this subject, working sensibly and safely together when they handle sharp tools. This reflects the teaching well. The use of assessment of pupils' work and the use of that information to guide future lesson planning is less than satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator works hard to encourage and support other teachers and has been influential in establishing sound standards in the subject.

However, he has not yet been able to take on the full management responsibility for the subject and consequently does not have sufficient impact on the quality of teaching or learning. Design and technology books are not yet established throughout Key Stage 2 and the co-ordinator does not have an annual budget.

GEOGRAPHY

137. During the period of inspection it was only possible to see one lesson taught, in Year 5. There was not enough evidence to make judgements on the standards, progress of learning and quality of teaching over both Key Stages 1 and 2. However, the one lesson seen, displays around the school and discussions with the subject co-ordinator and pupils indicate that the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.
138. Younger pupils focus appropriately on the study of their own locality. Here they successfully make drawings with written descriptions of what they see and understand. Fieldwork studies have been started within the school, outside in the school grounds and in the school locality. Pupils improve their drawing of plans and maps. In collecting and recording observations, they communicate clearly their descriptions of the places that they have studied and what they have observed. The evidence of the work of older pupils in Key Stage 2 is more widely represented in displays around the school. Displays of the lives of people around the world in countries such as India and the countries of South America are well represented. Here there is a good application of the pupils' writing skills, with a clear understanding of what the places are like and the lives of the people being studied.
139. The teacher, who provided photographs of Indian village life for pupils to study, satisfactorily supported the one lesson seen, in Year 5. Pupils successfully developed an understanding of the climate and how this has its effect on the landscape and the lives of the people. Pupils successfully applied previous learning relating to studies of China and Russia. A good display supporting the work in progress shows that pupils are acquiring a good range of knowledge about life in an Indian village.
140. Pupils record their research well using the Internet, with a good application of writing and data handling and with graphs being completed regarding the weather and climate. Other displays show older pupils having conducted a well-researched study of water around the school, the drains and their operation. This good display is contrasted with studies on water in Africa and Uganda and a visit to a local water treatment works. The display is well supported by good standards of pupils' descriptive writing, diagrams and bar charts illustrating rainfall and temperature in Bangalore.
141. The school has not yet developed a policy for the teaching of geography, but has adopted a suitable commercial scheme for its delivery. The school's plans for development show an intention to develop policies and schemes of work for geography between 2002 and 2003. The present co-ordinator took up her post in September 2000 and recognises an appropriate need to further develop her role through in-service training. The school has realistic intentions for this need to be met. At present resources are well supported through loan services. Because the school is at an early stage of development, the co-ordinator has identified the fact that resourcing is insufficient. Inspection findings support this judgement. Teachers give good thought to the gathering of resources to support their lessons and displays. The school has already started to purchase suitable, limited resources. The co-ordinator has no allocated budget and no time to monitor and evaluate the planning and teaching of the subject. The assessment of the subject is at present underdeveloped. Considering the short time the school has been open, the school is making satisfactory progress with the implementation of geography.

HISTORY

142. Standards across the school meet expectations and, for some pupils who are 7 and 11 years of age, they are starting to rise. The school is making good progress in the development of the subject considering the short time that it has been in existence.
143. By the age of seven, pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of the ways people in the past lived. For example, in acting out and telling the story of the lives of people at the time of the Fire of London. This work is successful because the teacher has a clear grasp of the subject and has developed a classroom display supported by pupils' writing about the lives of people at the time. Pupils successfully draw maps of how the fire progressed from place to place and make models of the houses at the time. They show a very good knowledge of how the materials used would have accelerated the fire. Pupils' understanding is clearly shown in their dramatic role-play. Here they show a very good awareness of how people would have reacted and have been influenced by the fire. When questioned pupils respond accurately with very good levels of awareness.
144. At 11 years of age pupils have a good knowledge of the key dates, periods and events in British history. They develop and use this well, as shown when they explore the lives of people during World War II and what it would have been like to be an evacuee. Their understanding is supported by the good range of resources the teacher has provided for them to use as an interactive classroom display about life during the war. The teacher builds on pupils' knowledge and understanding from previous lessons well. Through progressive questioning and answers, supported by illustrations, the teacher brings the subject to life. By using secondary evidence from books, pictures and artefacts, and by asking two people who lived at the time to talk about their experiences, she expands the pupils' understanding very well.
145. At both key stages, pupils are developing an appropriate sense of time. Pupils talk about their parents and grandparents and make comparisons between the past and the present in their families and, as they get older, between the lives of people they have studied.
146. Standards of teaching are good overall. Supported by a suitable commercial scheme, the school is developing a satisfactory range of study across the school. It uses loan services and artefacts well to bring to life the period being studied. Year 4 pupils use Greek artefacts to examine the ways of ancient Greek life and what would have happened during a Greek dinner party. Through their written work, pupils show a satisfactory awareness of Greek gods and goddesses and how these influenced people's lives.
147. The planning of the subject is supported satisfactorily by the scheme of work. However, it is at present unevenly developed. Teachers do not always plan the sequence of their daily lessons in sufficient detail, or assess and record the progress pupils make in their understanding.
148. The newly appointed co-ordinator has developed the subject effectively. Before he came, the range of historical study was too narrow and pupils of all ages were studying the Victorians at slightly different levels. This has now been suitably addressed through staff following the content of the adopted scheme. The school's development plan indicates that the subject will be given a further priority for development from 2001 to 2002. The co-ordinator has advised staff well on the content of their work and this is having a suitable impact on pupils' learning and progress across the school. As yet, he has no time to monitor and evaluate planning and teaching. Resources are supported by the good use of the local library and museum services. However, there are not enough resources available in the classes and in the school library for pupils to conduct

independent and collaborative research. The use of information and communication technology is starting to be usefully developed. The co-ordinator has no allocated budget for the purchase of resources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

149. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) meet expected levels throughout both key stages and in the present Year 2 and Year 6 classes. All pupils receive their full entitlement to all aspects of the subject. Information and communication technology is well used in other areas of the curriculum, for example word-processing in both poetry and prose in literacy and counting, calculation and data handling in mathematics. Word-processing and skills in graphical representation are also used in science and geography. Pupils draw and design, using specialist programmes in art and design, and use both on-screen directions and programmable robots in control technology. Each class has its own e-mail address and although in its early stages of development this aspect is being well taught.
150. Pupils in both key stages have regular access to computers and the development of keyboard and mouse skills are satisfactory. Teachers and parents send e-mail to individual classes and these are sometimes developed into cross-curricular studies. For example, in Key Stage 2 a class had received a message from the deputy headteacher, when she was in the Lake District, which was deliberately unpunctuated. The whole class worked in groups in the literacy hour to punctuate the message properly and compose a reply. This correspondence led to a geographical study of the lakes and mountains of the area from where it was sent, which also involved mathematical skills.
151. This very good project also highlighted the weakness in ICT caused by the poor positioning of the ICT suite of computers in a very restricted area adjacent to the school library. When the class was working on correcting the punctuation in the original message they did so in groups of four. The space around the computers is so restricted that three pupils in each group had to stand and the area was very congested. The class teacher worked very hard to ensure that all pupils had the opportunity to use the keyboard and the mouse, but time was very limited for each pupil. When the exercise was completed the reply was sent, by e-mail, from the classroom link. In a Year 5 lesson in modelling images, the class teacher used a different strategy for managing the use of computers. After a very good whole-class introduction individual pupils used each computer to undertake the main task. While this gave each pupil a good period of time to use the computer, the remainder of the class undertook an associated task in mathematical modelling. Several lessons will be needed before the whole class has been able to use the computers. The cramped space into which the good ICT suite has been built in this new school severely restricts pupils' access and consequently slows the pace of pupils' progress significantly.
152. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. In all of these lessons, the teachers' knowledge and understanding of ICT were clearly good as the level of planning and high-level questioning demonstrated. However, the restricted access to equipment had a detrimental effect on learning in each lesson.
153. All pupils are excited by the curriculum in ICT and take great care when working with computers. However, the restricted space in the ICT suite leads to frustration for pupils who have limited access to the computer and occasionally pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties behave badly. The class teachers and learning support assistants work well as a team to manage this behaviour.

- 154. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to computers and are well supported to make progress appropriate to their levels of ability.
- 155. The good subject co-ordinator is aware of the problems of restricted space. He has very good subject knowledge and provides good levels of support and guidance for all staff. All teachers have been observed teaching ICT by the co-ordinator.
- 156. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' abilities and the use of this information to guide future planning are in the very early stages of development.

MUSIC

- 157. Pupils throughout the school achieve the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music activities. The tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers is a strength of the school's provision and woodwind, guitar, string, brass and choir ensembles further enhance the opportunities for older pupils. This enables more able pupils to attain well. The pupils aged from 7 to 11 years who play musical instruments perform confidently in assemblies for the whole school. The quality of singing that the choir achieved was above average standard when they sang *All things bright and beautiful*. The standards attained by pupils in lessons are average at present.
- 158. Music lessons are well structured. Singing and composing activities are imaginatively led by the teachers using their good subject knowledge. Year 4 pupils co-operated well to produce simple melodies on the keyboards, which they happily performed for the whole class. On this occasion, pupils did not receive feedback from the teacher on how they could improve their compositions. Musical appreciation is mainly dealt with in assemblies and pupils are informed what the piece of music is that they are listening to, but teachers do not make enough of opportunities to set pupils thinking about the music that they listen to, such as *On hearing the first Cuckoo in Spring*.
- 159. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. All the lessons observed were good or very good. The standard of music in the co-ordinator's class is very good and is considerably higher than in other classes where the class teacher's subject knowledge of composition is only sufficient to teach basic music skills of recording notation and creating original pieces of music. Some class teachers rely on commercial tapes for much of their teaching, but they are well chosen and develop singing skills effectively.
- 160. The school has made a good start with the teaching of music, but further development is required. The role of the co-ordinator is not fully developed to enable the raising of standards through the monitoring of teachers throughout the school to develop their expertise and to monitor the quality of teaching at the same time.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 161. Standards in physical education meet expectations for 7 and 11-year-olds. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls.
- 162. Pupils in all year groups enjoy games, swimming, dance and gymnastics activities. All year groups go swimming for half a term each year and Year 1 goes swimming all year round. This is a wise decision made by the school's management as the building is sited on an island on the River Medway and a considerable number of pupils live on this island. The majority of pupils can swim 25 metres unaided by the time that they leave the school. Gymnastics lessons develop body control well and many pupils in Year 6 can formulate a sequence incorporating five activities, which they perform gladly to the class in the plenary session. The teacher uses praise thoughtfully to encourage pupils'

achievements. However, pupils are not taught how to evaluate their own work through careful evaluation or to work collaboratively with others to judge standards of performance.

163. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Dance is satisfactorily developed at present and pupils thoroughly enjoy creating a rhythmic dance about getting ready to go out into the streets. Dances from their own and other cultures are an area for further development. Teachers' behaviour management is good and pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to the music and move in response to the music. Teachers' planning is not consistently of a high enough standard and some teachers do not detail aspects of assessment.
164. Games skills are satisfactorily promoted and pupils make clear progress in their ball skills. Warm-ups are effectively used to enhance muscle control and discuss what is happening to the body when it is exercising. Strategic skills were learnt well by pupils, in a basketball game, due to the good subject knowledge of the teacher. Skilful demonstration and structuring of the lesson faced pupils with increasing challenges.
165. The co-ordinator leads effectively in Key Stage 2 to promote good teaching, but is not active in Key Stage 1 where the quality of teaching is not sufficiently developed to raise pupils' standards further.