

INSPECTION REPORT

HEADCORN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Headcorn, Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118291

Headteacher: Mr J Holditch

Reporting inspector: Mrs J M Punnett
17826

Dates of inspection: 14 – 17 October 2002

Inspection number: 247865

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kings Road Headcorn Ashford Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Jack Keeler
Date of previous inspection:	January 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17826	June Punnett	Registered inspector	Mathematics	Characteristics of the school Results and achievements Teaching How well is the school is led and managed? What should the school do to further improve?
			Physical education	
			Information and communication technology	
			Music	
			English as an additional language	
9115	Dr Terry Clarke OBE	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? Partnership with parents
16760	Dorothy Latham	Team inspector	English	How good are curricular opportunities?
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			Geography	
10270	Sandra Teacher	Team inspector	Science	
			Foundation Stage	
			Special educational needs	
			Religious education	
			History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Headcorn Primary School educates boys and girls aged from four to 11. It serves a village community between Maidstone and Ashford in Kent. During the term of the inspection, there were 19 children in the Foundation Stage, nine of whom were part-time. In total, there are 195 full-time pupils. There are fewer pupils on roll than at the time of the last inspection. Across the school there are nine more boys than girls on roll. About five per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. Approximately 16 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, including one with a statement, which is below the national average. During the last school year, 21 pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and 11 left it at times which were not those of the normal transfer for most pupils. This degree of mobility is not unusual. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds at the school. Children enter the school with broadly average levels of attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school was judged to have serious weaknesses when inspected in 1999. In January 2000, HMI judged that overall the school had made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues. There is good teamwork that supports teaching and learning and answers the varying needs of most pupils. The management of pupils' behaviour is good. The staff have worked hard to remedy the school's serious weaknesses, although there is still some way to go with raising standards in religious education and information and communication technology. The roles of the curriculum co-ordinators are under-developed, and are having insufficient influence on raising standards across the school. Children in the Foundation Stage have a very good start to their education due to very good quality teaching. The overall quality of teaching is good across the school. The leadership and management by the headteacher and his senior staff are good, and as a result there are good improvements in the quality of teaching. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and gives them a good start to their education.
- The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and his deputy are good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and enthusiasm for school are good, and this enables them to make the most of their educational opportunities.
- Pupils' attainment in art and design and physical education exceeds expectations by the age of 11.
- The school's links with parents and the involvement of the parents in the work of the school are excellent.
- The links with the community are very good, and result in the school being at the heart of the village community.
- The school uses the talents of individual staff very well, and enables those with particular expertise to teach several groups of pupils.
- The provision of extra-curricular activities is excellent, enriching what the school can offer its pupils.

What could be improved

- The range of activities in information and communication technology (ICT) to ensure full coverage of National Curriculum requirements in Years 3 to 6, and the use of ICT in all curriculum areas.
- The use of the outcomes of assessment in all subjects.
- Standards of attainment in religious education and ICT in both key stages, and in science in Years 1 and 2.
- The role of the curriculum co-ordinators to enable them to raise standards in their subjects.
- Challenge for higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2, especially in mathematics and science.
- The matching of daily curriculum plans, especially in the non-core foundation subjects, to the level descriptors of the National Curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1999, when it was identified as having serious weaknesses; this is no longer the case. In January 2000 it was further inspected by HMI who concluded that satisfactory progress had been made in most identified areas of concern. However, taking account of the high standards on entry, pupils made unsatisfactory progress overall, and there were significant weaknesses in the teaching in Years 1 and 2. This has been rectified through staff changes and careful monitoring of teaching by the headteacher. The school's improvement since the January 1999 inspection is good and substantial improvements have taken place during the past four terms under the leadership of the new headteacher. The school has improved in all the areas identified by the 1999 inspection due to the support received from the local education authority and the commitment of the staff and governors.

The school acknowledges that there is still some way to go with standards in ICT, religious education, the role and influence of the curriculum co-ordinators, and the teachers' use of on-going assessment information in subjects other than English and mathematics. The school is on course to reach the targets it has set for pupils to reach Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 2003. The quality of teaching is good overall; it is very good in the Foundation Stage, an improvement since the last inspection. A good team spirit has been established and a clear commitment to improve exists. The headteacher has a good vision for the development of the school, which has been effectively communicated to all within it, and he is well supported by the staff, governors and parents. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	B	B	C
Mathematics	B	C	B	C
Science	C	D	B	C

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The information shows that in 2001 standards in English, mathematics and science were above average when compared to all schools, and average when compared to similar schools. Boys achieve less well in English and mathematics than girls. Between 1999 and 2001 there was a sharp improvement in science standards. In 2002, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in English increased by 11 per cent, in mathematics by eight per cent and in science by one per cent. During the inspection, the work seen in English, mathematics and science was average. The work seen in ICT and religious education was below average. In art and design and physical education, standards of work exceeded expectations. Achievement in swimming is satisfactory. The standards found in most other subjects are satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in design and technology and geography.

The inspection findings are that the current Year 2 pupils are attaining average standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics. Standards attained in science are below average. In ICT and religious education, standards are below expectations. Standards in most other subjects are in line with those expected for pupils' ages; in art and design they are above expectations for pupils' ages. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards of work in geography. Performance fell in the 2001 national tests, partly due to staffing difficulties, but improved in 2002. Children in the Foundation Stage are on track to achieve, and some will exceed, the 'Early Learning Goals' in all aspects of their work.

Pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning and achieve standards that reflect their potential. Higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress, although they are not always sufficiently challenged in Years 1 and 2, especially in mathematics and science.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils enjoy their work and apply themselves well to it.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are courteous and friendly and work well together.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect one another and often help each other. Very good relationships between pupils and all adults who work in the school are a key factor in the very good ethos of the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils mostly attend regularly and on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall, and teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. The teaching of English is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Mathematics is satisfactorily taught in Years 1 to 3, and well in Years 4 to 6. The quality of teaching of literacy is good across the school, and numeracy teaching is good in Years 4 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 to 3. Teachers have a good understanding of most subjects they teach and use this well to extend the learning of most pupils. They manage behaviour well so pupils can listen and learn. Relationships are very good so pupils feel confident and this helps them to learn well. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and receive sensitive support from their classroom assistants, enabling them to contribute to the lesson. There are some inconsistencies in teaching between year groups and subjects, which monitoring of teaching has not tackled successfully. The main inconsistency is that work is not always set that appropriately challenges higher-attaining pupils, especially in Years 1 and 2.

The quality of the pupils' learning and progress reflects the quality of teaching and is very good for children aged under five, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good overall in Years 3 to 6. Strengths in learning include the way the pupils take turns and use equipment effectively and the enthusiasm with which they take part in lessons and answer questions when they are motivated by the teaching. The major weakness in the pupils' learning is their lack of independence.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory, because statutory requirements are not fully met in ICT in Years 3 to 6. The provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The good knowledge that the staff have of the pupils helps them to feel confident and secure.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils currently for whom English is an additional language
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, but there are too few planned opportunities within the curriculum. The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The ethos of the school is one of caring and valuing all who work in it.

Parents hold very positive views of the school and many regard it as a 'mini-community'. The staff encourage pupils to attend regularly and punctually. Systems for assessing the progress pupils make are securely in place in English and mathematics, but less so in other subjects. Assessment information is not used well to ensure that pupils make the progress they should in all subjects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher, together with his deputy, gives good leadership for the very good ethos of care and mutual respect that permeates the school. The leadership in raising standards is satisfactory, because the roles of the curriculum co-ordinators are under-developed, resulting in lower than expected standards in many subjects. Many of the systems for managing the school are good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Many governors are newly appointed; as a result the governing body has not yet developed a cohesive structure to its working. Governors involve themselves well in the life of the school, and have satisfactory systems in place for reviewing the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Much information is now available, and the school is beginning to track pupils' progress through the school in some subjects. The school does not yet make full use of assessment information in all subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Funds are targeted satisfactorily at priorities.

The process leading to the formation of the school improvement plan is satisfactory. The accommodation is good overall, with extensive grounds and an on-site swimming pool.

However, the accommodation for the Years 5 and 6 pupils is unsatisfactory due to the restricted space for the older pupils. The ICT suite is located in the Years 5 and 6 building, which makes access difficult for other pupils in the school. The Years 5 and 6 pupils have limited opportunities to develop their library research skills, because they are situated at a distance from the main building. Resources are satisfactory, and the school has a staff with a range of experience and expertise. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High standards of behaviour are promoted and maintained. • Parents receive a very good level of information from the school. • Extra-curricular activities are very good. • The school is almost like a 'mini-community', very friendly with very good staff involvement. • The school deals with any complaints immediately. • Staff, including the headteacher, are very approachable. • Real improvement in the atmosphere since the new headteacher arrived. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consistency between classes in the way home/school contact books are used. • Homework is 'hit and miss'. • Swimming pool not properly maintained. • Some concern expressed about the impact of the large Reception intake on future class sizes.

Parents are very positive about the school, commenting especially about the very good ethos, and the approachability of the headteacher and his staff. The inspection team finds the provision of extra-curricular activities to be excellent. There are improvements in the setting of homework although some inconsistencies remain. The school is addressing this, and a meeting for parents about homework is planned for the spring term. The governors are considering the maintenance of the swimming pool at a special meeting dedicated to this issue. As part of the management of the school, the headteacher and governors will be considering their plans for the re-organisation of classes during the next academic year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children who enter the Foundation Stage have average attainment, although there are variations from year to year. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall and the children achieve good standards. By the end of the Reception year, most are on course to meet the recommended national targets in respect of their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative and physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. The children become increasingly independent and organise themselves in a responsible way. They are confident and take part in discussions eagerly. Their love of books is evident and most children can listen to stories for good periods of time. They are well aware of the need to behave well and most manage to do so in the classroom, outdoors in the playground, during whole school assemblies and during physical education lessons in the hall. All staff work hard as a team to promote good attitudes in the children and motivate them to participate in all activities. Those with special educational needs, are supported well and make appropriate progress in relation to their prior attainment.
2. In the end of Year 2 tests, in 2001, when compared with all schools, standards were very low in reading, and well below average in writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, they were very low in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. The science assessments made by teachers in 2001 were very low in comparison to the national average. In 2002, standards in reading were below the 2001 comparative national results, in writing broadly average when compared with those results, and in mathematics above average. The trend in standards in these tests and assessments since 1999 showed a sharp decline in 2001, partly due to staff turbulence at the school. There are no significant differences in the attainment of girls and boys, although historically girls have performed less well in reading, writing and mathematics tests.
3. On the evidence of inspection, pupils by the end of Year 2 should achieve average standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics, and have average literacy and numeracy skills. In science, pupils attain below average standards. This is due to the lack of opportunities to extend and challenge the higher-attaining pupils in science and mathematics lessons, and weaknesses in assessment. Pupils' mathematical and numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed, and nearly all pupils are confident in using numbers. In science, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding about how plants grow, and know how to conduct a fair test. Standards in ICT are below expectations, as teachers generally lack confidence in using the technology to support learning in all subjects. In art and design, standards are above expectations; in design and technology, history, music and physical education, standards are in line with expectations. Pupils' attainment in religious education is below expectations due to the lack of good quality written work. Compared with the findings of the school's last inspection, standards are lower in English, mathematics and science, although higher than in 2001. This is a different group of pupils, and their attainment on entry is not as high as it was for their predecessors. The standards attained in physical education are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection. These findings reflect the fact that the new school year has just begun, so the pupils are very new to Year 2. Pupils' attainment in art and design and ICT is better

than in 1999. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in geography.

4. By the age of 11, in English, mathematics and science, pupils did not perform as well in the 2002 national tests as they had done in 2001. In English, mathematics and science, standards in the 2001 national tests were above average when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils achieved average standards in all three subjects. In the 2002 national tests, the results were lower in English at Level 4+ but higher at Level 5. The mathematics results were lower than the previous year both at Level 4+ and at Level 5. In science, the 2002 results show an improvement at Level 4+ but are lower at Level 5. Over time, the school's average National Curriculum test points for all three subjects have improved broadly in line with the national trend. The school's targets for 2001/2002 were not met in either English or mathematics, but it is likely that the 2002/2003 targets will be met in both subjects.
5. On inspection evidence, by the end of Year 6, pupils should attain average standards in English, mathematics and science, reflecting the abilities of the current Year 6 group of pupils. Speaking and listening skills are generally average, and often good. In ICT, standards are below expectations, as a result of curricular requirements not being met and control, monitoring and modelling not being taught due to the lack of equipment. In art and design and physical education, standards are above expectations. With the exceptions of ICT and religious education, where standards are below expectations, in most other subjects, they are in line with expectations. However, there was insufficient evidence to reach a judgement about standards in design and technology and geography. There have been sound improvements in art and design, compared with the last inspection, when standards were broadly in line with expectations, and in ICT, when they were judged as well below average. Now there is only one aspect of the subject that is not being taught owing to lack of equipment. In music, religious education and physical education, standards are similar. Lower standards are found in English, mathematics and science compared with the 1999 inspection findings. The most significant factor affecting standards in Year 6 is the wider range of more complex special educational needs in this cohort of pupils.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and reach appropriate standards considering their previous attainment. The good knowledge which teachers and learning support assistants have of their pupils helps them to feel confident and secure. Pupils' progress is more marked in literacy and numeracy, because they receive support that is well matched to their needs. Once a week, a specialist teacher comes into school to help a small number of pupils with the practical aspects of their literacy skills, and this enables them to make good progress towards their targets. There is a policy for helping more able pupils, but identification of all such individuals is not yet complete.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good; behaviour, personal development and relationships are good. Attendance is satisfactory.
8. Ninety seven per cent of parents responding to the parents' questionnaire said that their child likes coming to school and this view is confirmed by seeing pupils reach school in the morning. They are very enthusiastic when they reach school and quickly get down to their classroom tasks, which, at the start of the day, often take the form of quiet reading, while they wait for registration. They show a very good level of interest in

different activities, particularly the wide range of extra-curricular activities, provided by the school.

9. Behaviour is good in the classroom and across the school. Pupils are polite and courteous, say 'please' and 'thank you' and hold doors open for each other and for adults. When the teaching is less good and the pace of the lesson slows, the behaviour of some pupils falls below the usual high standard. Although behaviour is good outside the classroom, pupils can be too boisterous when letting off steam in the playground. For example, on one occasion the headteacher had to admonish a group of boys for playing boisterously in the quiet area. The school has received some very favourable comments, from members of the public, on the good behaviour of pupils on school trips. Last year the one fixed term exclusion was for a racist incident, which the school dealt with promptly. No bullying was observed during the inspection and parents say that, if it occurs, the school deals with it quickly and effectively.
10. Pupils understand very well the impact of their actions and show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They are kind and considerate, for example they are eager to help the pupils at the school, who have disabilities. Respect for feelings is covered in some personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. In one lesson, pupils were asked to consider, for their next lesson, the effect of their actions on the feelings of others.
11. The under-fives make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The strength lies in the good relationships between adults and children and the way in which the teacher and learning support assistants know each child personally and cater for their individual needs, for example asking about their family or sharing a child's interest in reading. This makes the child feel important and valued. Children work together in a friendly and supportive manner and show respect for each other, adults and visitors. They take part in a variety of self-chosen and adult-led activities, and handle resources sensibly. Children are well behaved and good at sustaining concentration when working. They play well with others, share and take turns and respond well to adults. They follow instructions, listen carefully to what they are told, and begin activities eagerly. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, and show obvious pleasure in friends' successes, such as sharing their experiences of their weekend news. They line up and move around the school in a sensible manner. They show good social skills during lunchtime in the dining room and when playing with the rest of the school at break-times. The planning for outdoor play is restricted at present, until the new building development has been finished.
12. The degree of initiative and personal responsibility taken by pupils is good. Year 6 pupils act as buddies for children in Reception and they take the opportunity to help around the school and at assemblies. Older pupils are proactive in the classroom in producing work for their topics. For example, in a Year 5 history lesson, groups of pupils showed originality in preparing a newspaper, covering aspects of the 'Great Plague of London' in 1665. Younger pupils help tidy up at the end of lessons and take registers back to the office, but they do not get as good opportunities to use research skills as pupils do in Years 5 and 6. One of the headteacher's successful strategies is to encourage disaffected pupils in Year 6 to take responsibility and they respond to this.
13. Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are very good across the school. An incident last year, involving a pupil from a minority faith group, was dealt with quickly by the school and governors, and resulted in a temporary exclusion. This was a rare occurrence. Pupils work very well together in groups and in pairs, for instance a group of Year 3 pupils in a speaking and listening lesson worked very well reading their

parts in a play in groups. They listened well to each other and showed appreciation of the good work of the other groups. Pupils like their teachers and other members of staff very much and are happy to approach them and talk.

14. Attendance is satisfactory. While the attendance was just below the national average last year, the figures were distorted by the school having to keep a pupil, who never attended the school, on the roll for over a term. They could only remove him from the roll when they were informed he was attending another school. The figures are occasionally be distorted by the authorised absences allowed for certain groups of pupils. Pupils usually arrive promptly. This is a similar picture to that found in 1999.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The last inspection found teaching to be variable with significant weaknesses in Years 3 to 6, and the planning of lessons, teachers' expectations, marking, homework and subject expertise were areas of concern. Although the setting of homework remains inconsistent there have been huge improvements in the overall quality of teaching, which is now good in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good where previously it was good. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, as at the last inspection. Teaching is good overall across the school and many lessons are very good or, occasionally, excellent. The teaching of English is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6, while much work has gone into improving the teaching of writing. This remains a focus of the school's improvement plan. In mathematics, teaching is good in Years 5 and 6, and satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 4, although there is a mix of very good, good and satisfactory teaching. A very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the literacy hour. Literacy and numeracy are taught well overall, especially in Years 5 and 6.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. However, teachers' planning does not always take into account the differing needs of individual pupils. Teachers make good use of adult support in their classes, they organise the groups so that the less able have support. Teachers work well with learning support assistants and meet with them before lessons to discuss learning objectives, but assistants often sit inactive during the whole class introduction, which is not best use of their time. Teachers are involved in drawing up pupils' individual education plans. Learning objectives are mainly based on targets and strategies for literacy and numeracy, but there is little mention of other subjects of the curriculum. Where appropriate, behaviour management strategies are identified and targets are set with parents. The resources are satisfactory, although not always selected well for pupils with special educational needs and there is only occasional use of ICT. The assessment of pupils' progress does not always relate specifically to targets set out in individual education plans.
17. The progress of higher-attaining pupils has improved as teachers in the upper years use 'setting' in both English and mathematics. However, in some other lessons, the work is not always suitable for higher or lower-attaining pupils. The work in pupils' books showed that when set the same task, lower-attainers do not always finish it and so are at a disadvantage when asked to recall their previous learning. Sometimes, higher-attaining pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2 in mathematics and science, are not always challenged by their work and so do not achieve highly. Some teachers are more skilled than others in setting appropriate work, so there is inconsistency across year groups, which the monitoring of teaching has not yet tackled. Assessment of pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is weak, and is already identified by the school for further development.

18. Overall, the teaching in the rest of the school is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach, although there are some weaknesses in factual knowledge in religious education. Teachers generally lack confidence in teaching ICT, and this results in lower than expected standards in the subject. Computer skills are satisfactorily taught in Years 1 and 2, but the use of the computer as a tool for learning in all subjects is under-developed. Teachers' expectations in science and mathematics are too low in Years 1 and 2. In many subjects, teachers use specialist language well, so pupils learn its meaning and discuss their ideas with precision. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in years 3 to 6. Phonic skills are taught thoroughly across the school. Teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills to overcome their slowness. Numeracy is taught satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, and well in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy, and apply it well. Good mental 'warm-up' sessions encourage pupils to answer questions.
19. The teaching of the Foundation Stage is very good. The adults work closely as a team and their interaction gives a very good model for children's personal development. The adults have high expectations of the children's work and behaviour, so they behave very well and work hard to attain high standards. Provision for all areas of learning is very good.
20. Relationships in the classrooms are very good and teachers manage the behaviour of pupils very well. This ensures that all pupils have good opportunities to listen and learn, and enables those who take longer to answer questions to gain in confidence. A few older pupils with special educational needs have yet to develop good listening and concentration skills.
21. Resources are used well to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and to motivate them. In a Year 4 numeracy lesson, the teacher helped the pupils to gain the concepts of 'input' and 'output' as mathematical functions. He did this very successfully using the 'Smartboard'. Pupils' enthusiasm was boundless as they mentally worked out what number would be needed if the output number was – 15. The sharply paced session was a very good example of use of ICT enriching pupils' opportunities in mathematics.
22. There are some weaknesses in teaching, but most use of are individual rather than consistent across the school. A common factor, however, is the lack of consistency in the quality of marking, although there are good examples in the upper juniors. The work set to match the needs of pupils in Years 1 and 2 lacks precise targeting, and this means that the higher-attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they might. In a few lessons, the pace is slow or the introduction goes on for too long, so pupils lose interest. Accommodation is the restricting factor for Years 5 and 6, as this limits their opportunities for independent learning, in spite of good or better teaching. The school has just introduced achievement targets in English and mathematics. They are shown in the front of pupils' books, and when they are better established will give pupils good opportunities to keep track of their own progress.
23. The headteacher has much information about teaching, which feeds the school improvement plan. Tremendous improvements have come about during the past year, and more are planned when the curriculum co-ordinators have a greater knowledge of their subjects across the school, gained through monitoring of lessons. A group of parents raised concerns about the consistency in setting homework. This inspection finds that the use and provision for homework has improved since 1999, although some

inconsistencies remain between classes. The school has plans to address this at a meeting with parents in January 2003.

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

24. Overall, the quality and range of the learning opportunities provided by the school for its pupils are generally satisfactory, but one aspect of the National Curriculum for ICT is not being addressed. This unsatisfactory situation was also signalled in the previous report, and has therefore been long-standing. However, the school is aware of the situation, which is soon to be remedied, since the required equipment is already on order. The curriculum overall reflect the aims of the school. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as religious education, personal, social and health education, and an introduction to two modern European languages (French in most year groups, and German in Year 4). In religious education, pupils lack the opportunity to explore sufficiently effectively other faiths and their cultural backgrounds, but in art and design and in physical education provision is good, giving pupils a broad experience in a wide range of relevant aspects of these subjects. Health and sex education, and the misuse of medicines and drugs, are taught as part of personal, social and health education and through the science curriculum, within the context of caring relationships and self-responsibility for a healthy life-style. The school has a detailed development plan which focuses on all aspects of the curriculum on a rolling schedule of priorities; this forms the basis for developing curriculum planning, and is an improvement on the situation reported in the last inspection.
25. Provision for literacy and numeracy is good. The National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies have been firmly established, and the effectiveness of teaching strategies for both literacy and numeracy skills is good. The teaching time for the different subjects of the curriculum is carefully allocated, with an emphasis on English and mathematics. There are policies and schemes of work for all subjects, although those for geography are out of date. Yearly, termly and weekly planning is satisfactory, and the planning of lessons is also generally satisfactory, although there is a lack of referencing to National Curriculum Level Descriptors by teachers in planning. This often makes matching work to the different abilities of pupils more difficult. Despite this, the provision of different work for different individuals and groups, to match their pace of learning, is generally satisfactory in English and mathematics, and is good in Years 5 and 6. In other subjects, it is sometimes good but sometimes lacks effectiveness. Planning in literacy and mathematics is enhanced by information from assessments and their analyses, including the tracking of individual pupils' progress through the school, as well as that of different ability and gender groups. Overall, teachers' planning has improved substantially since the last inspection, and the school is well poised to further this improvement, since procedures are already in place to make more use of assessment to influence planning in other subjects.
26. Monitoring of how effectively the planning for the curriculum and its assessment is implemented, and monitoring of lessons, has been thoroughly developed in English and mathematics. Although this aspect of the co-ordination of subjects is sometimes weak or non-existent in other subjects, good procedures to extend this evaluation through the roles of senior management staff and subject co-ordinators are already in place. This situation, again, is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is addressing its practice in marking, but despite improvement in this aspect of assessment, it is not yet fully consistent in terms of approaches and quality across the school. Further training for staff on marking is, however, already planned and in the development schedule. The use of, and provision for, homework has improved since the last

inspection, and there is a good homework policy; pupils have homework folders and homework notebooks, and homework is often well integrated with on-going work in the classroom. However, some inconsistencies remain between classes. The aims of the school show a strong commitment to equality of educational opportunity for all pupils, and this is reflected well in all aspects of school life.

27. The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, in which all members of staff are involved, and some parents as well. These activities are well supported by pupils, and include a variety of games and sports, ballet, pottery club, chess club, choir, French, and the ecology club. Pupils are able to take part in various sporting activities with other schools. Visits to places of interest take place, in connection with various subjects such as history and geography, and visitors speak to the pupils on topics of interest.
28. There are very good links with the community that make a positive contribution to pupils' experience and learning. Because the school is seen as a part of the village, the community, including the Parish Council, makes a positive impact on the work of the school. Many of the activities of the 'Parents, Teachers and Friends Association' (PTFA), involve sponsorship from local businesses and individuals. Members of the PTFA do not hesitate to visit shops and businesses to ask for support. Pupils are involved with the community, for example every week they join pensioners for lunch at the school and their paintings are displayed in places like doctors' surgeries and the library. Harvest gifts are taken to the elderly, pupils take part in local festive events, and there are also links with local traders such as the garden centre and the supermarket. The school has links with outside agencies such as social services. The school also has a direct link with the DfES through the success of its partnership with parents. Community links are made further afield through school visits and the links with a school in Holland. There are positive links with local playgroups and with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer.
29. The provision the school makes for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is particularly good. That for cultural development is also good, but while it is quite strong on aspects of pupils' own cultural heritage it is less so with regard to multi-cultural aspects. Provision is satisfactory for spiritual development, which covers opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to reflect on their own lives and those of others. There is no overall policy, statement or focused whole-school approach to provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
30. The reverence shown in prayer during assemblies and the appreciation of music on some of those occasions contribute to the spiritual dimension of pupils' development. This was apparent when pupils reacted with surprise and appreciation to the rhythms of 'An American in Paris', with its jazzy melody, and to the expert performance of one pupil who played the theme tune from the 'Overture to William Tell' on his flute. Listening to whale sounds from the depths of the ocean made a special impression on pupils from Years 5 and 6, and enhanced their sense of drama when writing their poems about whales. Other pupils in the same classes developed their abilities to feel empathy through gaining insight into the plight of Anne Frank, imprisoned with her family in an attic during World War II, from reading and discussing her diary.
31. Pupils' moral and social development are well supported. Pupils know right from wrong at appropriate levels for their ages, and class rules generated by pupils themselves are displayed in the classrooms. Staff have high expectations of their pupils in these respects, and provide good role models, showing consistency in their respect for both

adults and children. The school has a positive approach to the management of behaviour and uses rewards positively. The system of rewards is enhanced by the regular holding of 'achievement assemblies', when examples of good work, good effort or good behaviour are highlighted. Moral issues are taught sensibly, and often centre on day-to-day issues arising in school. The school creates a strong sense of identity as a caring community, and social development is well promoted. Collaborative modes of work are often used in class lessons, and pupils share responsibilities for the tasks and chores of classroom life. Independence is encouraged at appropriate levels for age, and this is done especially well at the top of the school, although it is not always successful during lessons due to the space restrictions. Pupils care for their school environment, take part in a variety of school activities and events, and relate well to the older residents of the village who visit for lunch.

32. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school makes use of the local environment and the local community, as well as integrating aspects of literature, poetry, drama, music and art and religion within the cultural heritage to which pupils are exposed. They enjoy book weeks, author visits, theatre visits, musical concerts, the work of artists, sculptors and potters, visits to historical places of interest with links to their history studies, and visits to local churches. However, despite some events promoting a multi-cultural perspective, when visitors came to the school from Germany, Canada, and Holland, provision for pupils' experience and understanding of multi-cultural issues and traditions remains a weak part of this aspect of their school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good, the education and personal support and guidance provided for pupils are good and the monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is satisfactory. Pupils receive their education in a very caring, supportive and secure environment.
34. The school has proper procedures in place for child protection, with the headteacher, who has received the appropriate training, as the named adult. The school's child protection policy follows that of the local authority. The effectiveness of the policy is sustained by staff being kept up to date on procedures during in-service training days, and child protection is included in staff induction for both teachers and support assistants. The school is well supported by Kent Social Services. A very good feature of the relationship between the local authority and the school is the fact that the school has to discuss a potential case first with the Kent Child Protection Officer before making a referral. Parents may be involved at this stage if appropriate.
35. The local authority has delegated health and safety matters to the school and the procedures are very good. Responsibility is in the hands of the buildings committee of the governing body. The school carries out its own audits twice yearly and members of staff have the opportunity to raise issues with the senior management team at their weekly meetings. The buildings committee is carrying out risk assessments with the help of the caretaker. The school also has very good procedures for caring for sick and injured pupils, which are administered by a competent school secretary, who, along with a number of other members of staff, has received full training in first-aid. Minor injuries are recorded meticulously and any pupil receiving an injury is given a note to take home. The school secretary administers any routine medication and has attended a course on the administration of medicines in school. A list of pupils with chronic illnesses and emergency procedures is kept in the staff room. The local authority has agreed to improve access for the small number of disabled pupils in some sections of the accommodation. Overall, this aspect has improved since the last inspection.

36. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Registration takes place promptly in the morning and afternoon. The school has a first day contact policy and parents said that a number of them had received telephone calls from the school when their child had been absent. The school has regular contact with the education welfare officer, who follows up any pupil who has unexplained absences. The award of attendance certificates encourages pupils' good attendance. In spite of good procedures, the attendance level remains around the national average, due to a number of factors like a high rate of family holidays during term time.
37. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. The school has a good behaviour policy in place, which includes the elimination of bullying. The range of rewards and sanctions is appropriate and some of the awards were seen taking place during a special assembly. Sanctions cover a wide range and the class teacher has the option to involve the pupil's family before more formal steps become necessary. The small number of bullying and racist incidents is handled promptly.
38. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. The closeness of the school to the community helps the teachers to get to know the pupils well. There are no formal procedures in place, but the tracking of pupils picks up social as well as academic problems. If a problem arises with a pupil, then that pupil is monitored. If a teacher makes a referral then the headteacher, the special needs co-ordinator, class teacher and the parent all become involved. Where necessary the school involves outside agencies. It encourages parents to tell the school of any family problems which might affect a pupil's progress and development.
39. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and development is satisfactory overall. In literacy and in mathematics it is good. In the other subjects it is currently inconsistent across the school, and not yet fully effective. Assessment is strong in English and mathematics; data analysis is thorough and used well to influence planning, enabling a better match of work to pupils of differing abilities and at different stages of learning. Data is analysed by ability groups, the differences between boys and girls are surveyed, and analysis by ethnicity is also carried out when applicable. Pupil tracking to gauge individual, group and class progress in these subjects is already well established, and pupils are provided with specific individual targets which are shared with them, and which are changed regularly as they make progress.
40. In the other subjects across the curriculum, the degree of such monitoring varies between subjects and between teachers, being sometimes weak and sometimes satisfactory. Good procedures have been developed, and are in the process of being implemented fully. A valuable new initiative is the introduction of some elements of self-assessment, aiding the development of pupils' ownership of their work and feelings of responsibility for their own progress.
41. Personal support and guidance for pupils in their academic work are generally good: staff care about their pupils and give effort to helping and guiding them and to developing their independence in ways suitable for their ages. They take note of personal development and record any significant points of change and progress. The school has a very good up-to-date policy for assessment and a good assessment schedule for the whole school across the academic year. However, this is not yet fully implemented in the non-core subjects, or in science. Termly assessment weeks take place, as well as the appropriate national tests and assessments, together with a number of optional tests and others of the school's choice. Parents receive annual reports on their

children's progress in all subjects, and also have the opportunity to consult teachers on two other occasions in the year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The parents' views of the school are very positive; the effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good, while the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is excellent. The school's partnership with its parents has been recognised by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), who have invited them to join a consultation group. The partnership is a strength of the school and has been further improved since the last inspection, since parents say that the school is now more approachable.
43. The parents' views of the school, as indicated by those expressed at the parents' meeting and in the answers to the questionnaires, are very positive. The comments which accompanied the questionnaires, made by a small number of parents, were overwhelmingly positive. Most parents spoke of the improvements since the arrival of the current headteacher. The only questions which were answered less than 90 per cent positively were those on homework and the information parents receive from the school on pupils' progress, although, at the meeting, parents said that school reports were good. Members of the 'Parent, Teachers and Friends Association' (PTFA) confirmed the positive views expressed by parents.
44. The school has very effective links with parents. The quality of information provided by the school is good. Both the very well-designed school prospectus and the governors' annual report are informative and of good quality and contain the relevant statutory information. The school sends out regular informative newsletters, although they could be presented in a more attractive way. School reports are of good quality and give parents good information about pupils' progress during the previous school year, although pupils' targets are kept separately. The statutory requirement for reports to include pupils' National Curriculum levels at Years 2 and 6 are met. The school has regular open evenings where parents can discuss pupils' progress. Since the headteacher has been at the school, he has held regular meetings with the PTFA, so that they can raise parents' concerns. Teachers are available at the end of the school day to talk to parents, and the headteacher is in evidence in the playground at the start and end of the school day. This latter practice is very good and maintains an important link with parents.
45. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is excellent. The PTFA is a very active body, which gives excellent support to the school. They regularly raise around £10,000 per year and in some years have raised as much as £20,000. A few years ago they paid for the swimming pool. The way the money is spent is school led and the wide range of equipment purchased with the funds has a positive effect on pupils' learning. The PTFA's contribution goes much further than fundraising; for example, a large number of members come into the school to carry out manual tasks such as putting up shelves and painting the classrooms and other parts of the school. A large number of the parents help in the school as volunteers, both in the classroom listening to readers and around the school. The school makes excellent use of parents' skills, for example that of a parent who is a sculptor. They support pupils on school visits and run many of the school clubs. Parents also help their children with their homework. One parent said that pupils see the school as an extension of home. The excellent impact that parents have on the work of the school ensures that they make a very good contribution to pupils' learning both at school and at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. Overall, the leadership and management of the school provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other key staff are judged satisfactory because the roles of the curriculum co-ordinators are under-developed. The purposeful development of the school is clearly indicated by the good improvement which the school has made since it was last inspected by HMI in January 2000. The school has made sufficient improvement to overcome its serious weaknesses. During the past two years, the local education authority has given sound support to the school and continues to do so. The key issues for action have been addressed successfully, for the most part. Although, standards fell back sharply in 2001, they have risen again in English, mathematics and science, as shown by the 2002 national test results for eleven-year-olds.
47. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and there is evidence of a real partnership, utilising well the deputy's talents and skills. There is still room to develop the role of teachers with curriculum responsibilities. At present there are no regular opportunities for them to monitor their subjects, or to share good practice with their colleagues. They also lack some understanding about their management roles and responsibilities, and this weakness has yet to be addressed by the school through in-service training. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching by the headteacher are strong features of his management and are having a positive impact on raising standards at the school.
48. Assessment practice in subjects other than English and mathematics is inconsistent, including marking, which has been identified as a key area for development by the school. There are good procedures in place for the induction of new and newly qualified teachers to the school. Job descriptions are in place, which is an improvement. The school has taken appropriate steps to ensure that performance management procedures are in place to support staff development.
49. The school has good links with the playgroup. Transfer arrangements with local secondary schools are also good. The school works actively to promote educational inclusion, although pupils of differing abilities are not always fully extended. The development plan is set out in detail for one year, and broadly for three years. The last inspection found the development plan to be too short-term, but this is no longer the case.
50. The school complies with the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Further co-ordination is required to clarify the range, scope and functions of the learning support staff, and to ensure that their work is monitored and relates closely to the targets as laid down in the pupils' individual education plans. Learning support for these pupils is good. Pupils of all abilities are included well in all lessons and school activities. Resources are satisfactory and are usually provided in the classrooms where most lessons take place for the majority of special educational needs pupils.
51. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily, apart from not fully meeting the requirements for information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6. There are new members of the governing body, and governors are working to achieve a coherent working pattern. The governors have an appropriate committee structure that assists them to manage their work effectively. They have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Through focused visits and their committees, governors are suitably informed about the school. They are beginning to work effectively as 'critical friends'. Relationships with the school are good.

52. Overall, the school monitors its performance well. The headteacher has a good knowledge of the school, is addressing the school's weaknesses and setting appropriate targets for school improvement and curricular planning. Careful financial planning, administration and monitoring of expenditure ensure that the school's resources are used well to promote the pupils' learning. The governors oversee all aspects of the school's income and expenditure. The very recent audit of the school's finances identified some areas for improvement, and these have been suitably addressed. The day-to-day management of finance is satisfactory. In order to ensure best value for money, three quotations are obtained when significant expenditure is planned. The school is yet to utilise information and communication technology fully for administration and for the education of the pupils. Criteria to determine how well the money used is spent are not yet established, but the governors have a draft finance policy in place. The strategic role of governors is satisfactory.
53. The staff who are involved with children in the Foundation Stage are suitably qualified and experienced. Overall, staffing requirements are met and there are sufficient well-qualified teachers to allow the curriculum to be taught effectively, although some teachers lack confidence in teaching the full range of information and communication technology requirements in all curriculum areas. The support staff are well qualified.
54. Accommodation in the school as a whole is good. Overall, the accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. However, the classrooms allocated for Years 5 and 6 are too cramped and restrict pupils' opportunities for independent learning. The extensive grounds are well maintained. The school's swimming pool suffers through a lack of professional maintenance, and this occasionally limits the times when it can be used. Storage in the school is limited and makes access to library resources difficult. There is a designated medical room.
55. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, and provide adequately for the curriculum. In the core subjects of English and mathematics, they have been improved to provide for literacy and numeracy teaching. There are a number of outdated and worn copies of books in the library, and the book resources in classrooms would benefit from being extended. The present range of computers is good and exceeds government recommendations. However, some computers would benefit from being replaced.
56. Statutory requirements are met in all areas, with the exception of the control aspect of the information and communication technology curriculum in Years 3 to 6. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good overall; the quality of teaching is good, and the quality of the school's leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership. These factors mean that the school now gives satisfactory value for money. Previously the school had serious weaknesses and gave unsatisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to raise attainment, and ensure that all pupils achieve as highly as they should, the headteacher, governors and staff should:
- (1) Provide a full range of activities to ensure full coverage of National Curriculum requirements in information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6, and improve its use in all curriculum areas.
(Paragraphs 3, 5, 19, 24, 74, 82, 88, 94, 111, 134)

- (2) Make a greater use of the outcomes of assessment in all subjects in order to raise attainment.
(Paragraphs 3, 16, 17, 22, 26, 39, 40, 41, 46, 48, 87, 97, 101, 110, 111, 122)
- (3) Raise standards of attainment in religious education and information and communication technology in both key stages, and in science in Years 1 and 2 by improving the educational provision in these areas.
(Paragraphs 3, 17, 19, 22, 84, 86, 112, 130)
- (4) Enhance the role of the curriculum co-ordinators to enable them to raise further standards in their subjects by increasing the opportunities for them to monitor standards and promote the sharing of good practice.
(Paragraphs 46, 47, 88, 98, 103, 111, 116, 122, 134)
- (5) Provide a greater challenge for higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2, especially in mathematics and science.
(Paragraphs 3, 17, 18, 22, 25, 78, 84, 86, 87)
- (6) Ensure that daily curriculum plans are better matched to the level descriptors of the National Curriculum.
(Paragraphs 16, 22, 25, 103, 133)

Other issues which should be considered by the school

- (1) Further develop opportunities for pupils to gain first-hand experience of a wider range of cultures and faiths.
(Paragraphs 24, 130)
- (2) Integrate more opportunities for pupils' spiritual development into the curriculum as a whole.
(Paragraphs 24, 29)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	15	13	21	1	0	0
Percentage	2	29	25	41	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	195
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	32

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	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	12	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	8	10
	Girls	6	12	13
	Total	15	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	54 (93)	71 (93)	82 (83)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	9
	Girls	13	13	6
	Total	22	23	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (93)	82 (93)	54 (87)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	16	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	11	14
	Girls	10	7	10
	Total	23	18	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (79)	69 (62)	92 (88)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	11	13
	Girls	10	8	8
	Total	23	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (n/a)	73(n/a)	81 (n/a)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	195
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	42	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	45	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	55	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	51	16	1	3
The teaching is good.	39	55	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	45	22	3	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	44	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	55	7	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	35	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	51	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	39	9	0	1

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

58. The Reception class offers pupils a good start to their school life. The majority of children join the school with attainment similar to that of most children at this age. All pupils make good progress so that by the end of the Foundation Stage (the end of the Reception year), the majority of children reach the expected national targets (the early learning goals) in all the areas of learning. Children who learn more quickly will exceed the learning goals. There are close links with parents and the local education authority services.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is good. The strength lies in the good relationships between adults and children and the way in which the teacher and learning support assistants know each child personally and cater to their individual needs, for example, asking about their family or sharing a child's interest in reading. This makes the children feel important and valued. Children work together in a friendly and supportive manner and show respect for each other, adults and visitors. They take part in a variety of self-chosen and adult-led activities and handle resources sensibly. Children are well behaved and good at sustaining concentration when working. They play well with others, share and take turns and respond well to adults. They follow instructions, listen carefully to what they are told, and begin activities eagerly. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, and show obvious pleasure in friends' successes, such as sharing their experiences of their weekend news. They line up and move around the school in a sensible manner. They show good social skills during lunchtime in the dining room and when playing with the rest of the school at break-times. The planning for outdoor play is restricted at present, until the new development has been finished.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Children make good progress in communication, language and literacy. They are on target to reach standards expected at the age of five. They have many opportunities to speak and listen to adults and to each other, in groups or as a whole class. For example, they listen attentively and, when required, join in enthusiastically reading a big book about '*On the Way Home*'. At other times, children demonstrate confidence when taking part in discussions and answering questions. Through carefully chosen stories, children recognise an increasing number of words in familiar contexts. They know their phonic sounds and read many common words. Children who learn more quickly read texts confidently from the school's reading scheme, others use picture clues and tell the story in their own words. Children develop good skills in selecting and handling books. The children who learn more quickly can discuss the characters and the plot. They can predict what will happen in the story. They form simple sentences using word banks. The children who learn more slowly find this more difficult and are given more opportunities to develop their literacy skills through a variety of language-based play activities. Parents are closely involved in helping to develop their children's literacy skills. Reading books are sent home for parents to practise or read with their children.

Mathematical development

61. Children make good progress and by the end of the Foundation Stage are reaching standards in line with the expected early learning goals, particularly in early number work. Children count the dots on a dice, with accuracy. They enjoy number rhymes that involve early addition and subtraction. Many children count confidently to ten and beyond. They recognise numerals to ten and combine groups of numbers. Some learn to write number sentences. Children know their basic shapes and have begun to look at, and identify, three-dimensional shapes. The teacher makes good use of a success ladder to motivate the children to form and sequence their numbers clearly. They learn to count the number of 'smiley' faces they receive for their good work. Strengths in teaching include clear explanations of meanings to ensure understanding and to clear misconceptions. Group activities are well planned, with a range of number games, and are effectively supported by adults through systematic teaching based on a thorough knowledge of what children know and can do. Display is used effectively to promote learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Provision for children's development in this aspect of the curriculum is good, and most children are set to reach the expected level by the end of Reception. Good opportunities are provided for children to extend their understanding of their local community and beyond through various visits: for example, to the local farm and to the local shops. Through such visits and explorations of themes, the children comment on and ask questions about what they see and do. Children develop the skills of cutting and joining when they design and make a Teddy's bed. They consider appropriate materials involving the use of card, paper, wool and sponge. There is good cultural development in painting and writing about the Christian and Jewish Harvest festivals. French, as an additional language, stimulates their literacy skills and they learn successfully to count up to ten in French, listen to French folktales and play in the Boulangerie. Their spiritual development is promoted successfully through their fascination and wonder when observing sunflowers. They use words such as 'yellow like the sun', 'burst', 'smooth' and 'patterned'. Opportunities to use and develop skills in information and communication technology are more limited. The computers are not always used and the range of programmable and communication toys is limited. However, there are clear plans for a 'Technology Bench' within the new classroom.

Physical development

63. Provision to promote children's physical development is good and children in the Reception class at present exceed the expected standards. They handle pencils, brushes, scissors and glue carefully and become confident users with careful guidance by staff. At present, children have opportunities to run, skip, jump, balance and climb, either outside or in the school hall. More able children can successfully walk the complete length of the balance beam. The new outside environment will be an additional stimulating resource and contribute effectively to children's physical development.

Creative development

64. Children's achievements in music, art and imaginative play meet the desired early learning goals by the end of Reception. They use a good range of media to draw, paint, print and make models. They enjoy singing songs from memory and song is used well as a teaching aid. There are good opportunities to use the sand, water, art materials, dressing-up clothes and musical instruments independently through choosing the tools, materials and containers that best suit what they want to do, without recourse to an

adult. These opportunities are extremely valuable to the children, who benefit from their use.

65. The quality of teaching for the children in the Reception class is very good. All activities are carefully planned and have clear learning outcomes. Adults use conversation and questions very effectively to draw out children's ideas and develop their confidence. The support staff make a valuable contribution to the early years' team and help by making detailed assessments of the children, so that it is clear what they have learned or where they might need additional support. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

ENGLISH

66. At the time of the last inspection, standards by Year 2 were average in reading and below average in writing. In this inspection, standards in Year 2 are judged to be average in both reading and writing and this is an improvement. In the 2001 national tests, standards attained in Year 2 showed that reading was well below the national average and writing was very low when compared with all schools; when compared with similar schools, these standards were both very low. The results of the national tests in 2002 in Year 2 show reading to be rather below the national average for 2001, while writing is about average; comparative national figures for 2002 are not yet fully available. The comparison of the current judgement with these test results shows considerable improvement for Year 2. As they move from Year 1 to Year 2, pupils make good progress. Those with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets as they are given suitably adapted work and receive good support in the classroom. No significant differences were noted in the performances of boys and girls in Years 1 and 2.
67. Standards in English in Year 6 reported in the last inspection were above average. In this inspection they are judged to be average against expected levels for the age group nationally, and this represents a decline. It is also a decline from the standards attained in the 2001 national tests which were above average when compared with all schools, although average when compared against a sample of similar schools. When this comparison was made, however, on the basis of the year group's previous attainment lower in the school, these standards represented above-average performance. Results in English for Year 6 in the national tests of 2002 showed a reflection of the national proportions in the tests in 2001 reaching Level 4 or above, but a much larger proportion than nationally of those pupils reaching Level 5. This indicates an improvement from the year before, but accurate comparisons cannot yet be made for these figures, since national comparators for this year are not yet fully available. In spite of these results in 2002, the school gained the result of 74 per cent of pupils at Level 4 or above, not meeting its set target of 80 per cent. The decline in Year 6 standards represented by the judgement of this inspection, despite very good teaching in Years 5 and 6, is due to three factors. Firstly, the current Year 6 started from a below-average base in the subject when they finished in Year 2, so they have made good progress from Year 3 to Year 6. Secondly the composition of year groups often varies from year to year, and in the current Year 6 the proportions of higher-attaining pupils and lower-attaining pupils differ from those in the last year, with an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs. Thirdly, this year group of pupils is likely to have suffered turbulence due to frequent changes of teaching staff on their journey through the school. Pupils' progress accelerates during their last two years in the school, when they make significant headway, due to the quality of teaching they receive. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Although

there are sometimes differences between the performances of boys and girls, these are not notably significant as they are not large and vary from year to year.

68. In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are average. Pupils listen attentively to stories and poems, and to explanations and instructions, and most speak clearly and fairly fluently for their age, able to express their ideas and their wants and needs. They are confident about speaking, and do so sensibly, using an appropriate range of vocabulary to give explanations and answer questions.
69. Pupils in Year 6 attain average standards in speaking and listening. However, this is not the case in all year groups above Year 2, since in Years 3 and 4 pupils have weaker skills in this aspect of English. In Year 6, pupils speak with confidence and listen with concentration in a wide range of situations. For instance, they listened with awe to a dramatic reading from a text describing first-hand experiences of a bomb raid during World War II in a history lesson, and were able to discuss afterwards the feelings people must have experienced. They are able to work well in pairs, using each other as sounding boards for reviewing and evaluating their ideas and their work, and can take part in group discussions sensibly.
70. Pupils' reading skills in Year 2 are average. Most pupils read carefully and confidently, and they are able to use their knowledge of initial letters and of some word structure to sound out simple unfamiliar words. Most pupils have average phonic knowledge and skills for their age, and even lower-attaining pupils can form and decode simple three and four-letter words. However, when it comes to meeting unfamiliar words in context, the lower attainers find it more difficult to decode quickly. Pupils enjoy shared reading opportunities with their teachers in the literacy sessions, as when they joined in with enthusiasm during the reading of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*.
71. In Year 6, standards in reading are average. The average and higher-attaining pupils read fluently, confidently and accurately, with appropriate expression. They enjoy reading, making their own choices among a variety of modern children's classics, and they can also make use of appropriate non-fiction texts to support their learning across the curriculum. Lower-attaining pupils also read confidently, and often fluently at their own levels, and have a variety of sound strategies with which they can tackle new words. They understand what they have read and can discuss ideas, events and characters in a story. The more able pupils are beginning to make inferences and deductions from texts, but do not yet, at this stage in the year, find it easy to discuss genre and authorship style with reference to textual features. Most pupils, while able to use indexes, have not yet acquired library skills and do not understand the system of numerical categorisation of books in the library. This reduces their ability to access information.
72. Pupils' writing skills are average in Year 2. At this stage in the year, they are just getting to grips with an understanding of story structure, and know that stories have a beginning, a middle and an end. Although phonic skills are very sound, the secretarial skills of writing down words are still at a slow stage, which tends to impede the flow of meaning and imagination. Letter formation is generally careful, but again, for most pupils, is still slow. Handwriting is done using separate letters rather than joined writing.
73. In Year 6, standards in writing are average for age across the year group. Within that, among the higher-attaining pupils, there are some very good writers who express themselves clearly and with precise vocabulary, reflecting imaginative and creative expression. They are able to write with a good sense of empathy in the first person, such as when creating an entry for a World War II diary. Average pupils write

competently, and all groups, even the lower-attaining pupils, strive hard for appropriate effects in their writing, developing a good awareness of audience. Some of these pupils used excellent words for impact in their poems about sharks and whales, predators of the deep, in a literacy lesson where they had listened to a tape of whale noises and discussed attributes of these mammals, sharing ideas together. Grammar is very well taught and even less-able pupils are able to discuss features such as similes, metaphors, rhyme, rhythm and alliteration in poetry and prose. While less-able pupils usually rely on simpler grammatical forms and often need support for spelling, most are able to spell well and use punctuation appropriately, as well as beginning to paragraph their work effectively. Work is generally neat and most pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work in attractive formats. Work from last year shows that pupils have the opportunity to write and make books for younger pupils to enjoy, with book-making skills achieving very attractive products.

74. In all classes, standards in literacy are the same as those found in English, and the development of literacy skills across the curriculum is also the same. While literacy skills are average in Year 2 and in Years 5 and 6, this is not the case in Years 3 and 4, where they are below average standards for age. A basic problem is caused by slowness in writing and spelling, which impedes the setting down of ideas and the flow of thought and understanding. Information and communication technology is used for editing and word-processing across the school, enabling pupils to produce well-presented work, but there is a lack of consistency across the school in the degree to which computer skills are integrated into literacy activities.
75. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory, and this is the same as that reported in the last inspection. Teachers' planning is appropriate and takes account of pupils' differing needs and abilities. Lively approaches to shared reading sessions engender enthusiasm, and books are well promoted. Phonic skills are taught very thoroughly. While pupils have far more opportunities to write independently than was the case reported previously, their rate of writing is slow, through a lack of sufficient practice and sufficient strategies to overcome this barrier.
76. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is good overall, an improvement since the last inspection when it was reported as unsatisfactory due to poor matching of work to pupil capabilities. This has changed considerably; in Years 5 and 6, work is very well matched to pupils' differing needs, including setting, and capabilities, through the careful use of assessment and its influence on planning. In Years 3 and 4, the matching of work is satisfactory, although this varies from unsatisfactory to good. Assessment has improved, and is now strong in reading and writing, with many opportunities for evaluating pupils' progress. Pupils' performance through the school is tracked on an individual basis, and test results are fully analysed. From these data, individual learning targets are set on a regular basis, and these are shared with pupils. Good opportunities are used for writing, often in connection with integration of subjects across the curriculum, such as in geography and history, and pupils write for a wide range of purposes. There is not a strong enough focus on developing pupils' speaking skills in a structured way, and there is a lack of an identified sequence of such skills to support their development through the school, together with a framework of milestone assessment points. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is skilled, creative and imaginative, and ranges from very good to excellent, being very good overall.
77. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a very good grasp of her subject, and organises it well. She monitors lessons, samples work, surveys planning, and analyses assessment in the subject. English is enhanced by a variety of special events and activities such as book weeks, author visits, poetry days, theatre groups

performing to pupils, and other drama occasions. Classroom resources are generally good, but the library provision is problematic, since it has to be, by the nature of the building, fragmented into three areas: one main library outside Years 3 and 4 and two subsidiary library areas near Year 2 and between Years 5 and 6. Access to the full range of stock is therefore not easy for pupils at the top of the school. Books are appropriately categorised by colour code and by a simplified standard numerical system. The stock is adequate, but some categories are under-represented, such as books on a multi-cultural theme.

MATHEMATICS

78. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged as average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. This inspection judges standards to be average by the ages of seven and 11, which indicates the same judgement for the age of seven but is not as good as previously for the age of 11. The 2002 national tests show an improvement compared with the 2001 results, with a good increase in the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress across the school. However, the higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not make as much progress as they could as a result of insufficient challenge in their work.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 to 3 and leads to steady progress by the majority of pupils. This is similar to the previous inspection when it was 'sound and sometimes good'. Previous work shows most work at an appropriate level, although the higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Pupils work on place value, and they show an understanding of halves and quarters. They show sound skills of doubling and halving, and extend their knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes. They satisfactorily collect a variety of data and represent this in chart and graph forms for investigations.
80. In Years 5 and 6, the work is consistently good and pupils make more rapid progress. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good or better. In both lessons, work was very well planned for all ability groups and teachers managed the lessons extremely well. Both teachers were very keen and their lively manner motivated the pupils well. The lessons had a very brisk pace and were challenging for all. Pupils are 'set' for mathematics in Years 5 and 6. The higher-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked hard on adding two numbers at speed and identifying co-ordinates. They calculated the lowest common multiples in preparation for adding and subtracting fractions. A very good level of questioning enabled pupils to quickly work out their answers, but too few opportunities were given for pupils to be creative in their mathematical thinking. The very good summing up of the lesson showed just how much they had learned. The teachers showed excellent relationships with the pupils and ensured a very good working environment, where pupils were attentive, well behaved and extremely keen to learn. A scrutiny of work shows pupils in Year 6 make good progress and work at levels relevant to their age or abilities. They use efficient written methods for computation, such as short multiplication and division, and higher-attaining pupils are able to do long multiplication and division. Pupils work at a good level with fractions and percentages and they use this knowledge to work out everyday problems. They show a good level of understanding of regular shapes and their properties and find the areas of parallelograms. They use and apply their knowledge of decimals and they measure accurately for length, capacity and temperature.
81. Teachers are secure with the National Numeracy Strategy and they apply it well. Across the school, they show good management of the whole class and groups, and

pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Pupils of all abilities are included well in all lessons, especially the mental 'warm-up' sessions. Teachers explain what pupils are going to learn. They provide good mental warm-up and pupils are keen to answer. When pupils are engaged in the activities they concentrate and work well.

82. Mathematics is appropriately used across the curriculum. In science, pupils use accurately a range of measurements, collect data from their investigations and display them in a range of graphs. Measuring skills are appropriate in technology. There are time lines in history and sound use of mathematical skills in map work in geography. With the exception of the Year 4 class, there is limited evidence of the use of computers to support the development of mathematical skills and to extend pupils' knowledge and skills in information and communication technology.
83. The subject is satisfactorily managed. Assessment of work and analysis of other assessment data are satisfactorily used to identify areas for development and set pupils' targets. The provision of training has been good and has led to the increased confidence of teachers. Marking is still inconsistent. However, in Years 5 and 6 it is good, and helps pupils to improve their work. The accommodation for the setting of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory, and does not lend itself to investigative work. However, teachers and pupils manage well in very limited space. Resources are sparse in some aspects of the subject, and are planned for improvement during the next spending round.

SCIENCE

84. At the time of the last inspection standards were below the national average in Year 2, and in line in Year 6. Standards in work seen during the inspection show some improvement, but were still below average for Year 2. Overall, pupils' achievements in Year 6, including those with special educational needs, are good, but a significant proportion in Year 2 are achieving less than they should. Standards are very similar to those at the time of the last inspection, and need to be improved further in the younger classes. There has been too little progress in provision for higher-attaining pupils and for all pupils in experimental work.
85. Pupils in Year 6 make straightforward observations of the outcomes of practical work, and record them on charts and simple graphs. They understand scientific concepts such as *reversible and irreversible*. They investigate the properties of chalk and granite using scientific enquiry methods. However, there is too little progression between their work and that carried out in younger classes, and this has restricted progress over time. Pupils in Year 3 are reaching good standards in their work on light and shadow, taking delight in watching shadows move, and regularly measuring the size of the shadow relative to the movement of the sun. These pupils take pride in their work, which helps to raise their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils record their work in a scientific way, using appropriate vocabulary and diagrams. They formulate tables from their data, draw graphs or use data-handling software. This contributes to literacy and numeracy and information and communication technology skills.
86. By Year 2, most pupils can make simple observations and are beginning to learn scientific facts, such as the names of the senses and the parts of the body. Some work has good features, for example in listening to a range of sounds, and pupils are sometimes excited by their work, developing a sense of wonder at different types of taste. However, pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to use their speaking and listening skills and attempt any explanation, however tentative, of what they have seen.

Higher-attaining pupils only occasionally work to an above-average standard, and standards in Year 2 are not as good as they should be. There are weaknesses in the presentation of pupils' work, and some is left unfinished.

87. Teaching during the inspection was satisfactory overall, with some good teaching in older classes. Analysis of pupils' work, however, showed some unsatisfactory teaching over the course of the year, particularly in the scope of work for higher-attaining pupils and in assessment and marking. Where the teaching is good, teachers have good subject knowledge, use questions effectively, pace their lessons well and have high expectations of the pupils in terms of behaviour and learning. One teacher makes very good use of the 'smart board' to hold pupils' attention with text, graphics and data handling. In a minority of lessons, time is not managed well, and teachers spend too long on the introduction, rather than allowing pupils to get on with the investigations. Some teachers do not use assessment and marking effectively to help pupils improve their work.
88. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped, and the monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet used to show teachers how to improve. Planning does not yet provide for the systematic development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in investigations and in designing experiments. The library is not contributing effectively to learning across the school. Information and communication technology, the school grounds and the local environment are under-used.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Standards in art and design were reported as satisfactory in Year 2 and in Year 6 in the last inspection report. No lessons were observed in Years 1 or 2 due to time-tabling factors, nor in Years 3 and 4. Lessons were seen, however, in Years 5 and 6, and teachers' planning, a portfolio record of work across the school, and displays in classrooms and communal areas of the school provided a wealth of evidence. From this evidence, in this inspection, standards are judged to be above average in Year 2 and in Year 6. This represents an improvement in standards since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in this subject, take pleasure in their work, and make good progress in art and design through the school. Pupils with special educational needs do well against the individual targets set for them.
90. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is good in Years 1 and 2, where pupils learn to handle media such as paint textiles and collage materials, and are given well-planned opportunities to draw, paint, print, weave, and construct images in a variety of ways. There is good teaching of basic skills, as in the painting and printing involved in the 'autumn leaves' display in Year 1, and of colour awareness and selection in the flames depicting 'The Great Fire of London' in a wall display in Year 2. Pupils also have the opportunity to do their own free and individual painting, such as in the 'self-portraits' produced by Year 1. Effective links are made to pupils' studies in other subjects, enhancing their learning and making economical use of teaching time.
91. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 6 is very good indeed, and it is good overall from Year 3 to Year 6. An analysis of pupils' work across all year groups indicates that the teaching of a range of skills in art and design enables pupils to make good progress in their learning and to achieve high standards in what they produce. Pupils from Year 3 to 6 keep sketchbooks, which are used well to keep records of observational drawings and details of designs, as well as features of interest in terms of forthcoming work. These are actively used in designing and planning their art assignments, particularly in a more structured and purposeful way by Years 5 and 6. Teachers provide pupils with

well-planned opportunities to use a wide range of media and learn a variety of techniques in their work in order to create different effects, and again there are good links to other subjects to exploit the use of time and of interest. Work is also adjusted, where suitable, to meet the differing needs of pupils and to enable all pupils to make the best progress they can.

92. In Year 3, pupils have developed their understanding of colour mixing, starting from a restricted palette, and producing a very attractive display of shapes in muted colours, and have explored weaving techniques, again using attractive colour ranges, while recent work includes the techniques of quilling. In Year 4, a display about Viking life was enhanced by shield patterns produced by pupils, using painting and soft printing techniques, and clay work modelling Viking artefacts. Recent work included some very intricate Viking patterns of exacting design; pupils in this year group also produced a striking batik hanging displayed in the school foyer, while learning about wax resist techniques. Recent work in Year 5 included further work on printing techniques, observational drawings, and bird and feather studies, while in Year 6 previous work included the making of gargoyles out of clay, and studying the designs of William Morris to produce wallpaper designs. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were making clay pots using a bird theme to enhance the shape, having already made their designs in their sketchbooks in a previous lesson. The designs were derived from their bird study drawings, and from observation of an attractive display of ceramic bowls and pots made in bird designs on show in the classroom. The careful development of the design process, together with the skills imparted to the pupils by the teacher and her helper, a parent with pottery skills, enabled the products to be achieved with individuality, care and success. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils worked in groups of four to produce their versions of Van Gogh's painting of his pipe and chair, involving preliminary processes of sketching, discussion, drawing to scale using a grid, and matching portions of the picture with accuracy in terms of line and colour. This exercise also demanded a high degree of colour perception, with a lot of discussion about different shades and how colour perception can vary from a close perspective to one further away. Pupils worked well in collaboration, and learned much about Van Gogh's painting style, as well as about his life and work which were the subject of a classroom display.
93. There is a good art and design policy which incorporates a number of usefully structured grids for the guidance of teachers to aid the gradual building of progress as pupils pass through the school, for activity themes, and for the use of materials and the teaching of processes. Good methods of integration with the use of information and communication technology are also detailed, together with a list of the good range of software available. There is a good scheme of work, helpful to teachers with its overview of different areas of art and its guidance on the integration of studying the work of famous artists, craftspeople and designers alongside practical activities. A balance between two-dimensional and three-dimensional work is also specified. Teachers' planning is thorough, and there is termly assessment of pupils' performance and progress, carried out to guidance provided in the scheme of work which shows methods of evaluation for a range of different activities.
94. The co-ordinator for art and design has already carried out some monitoring of lessons, as well as surveying planning, but this is suspended while she is on temporary leave. She has also monitored the work done in different year groups, and has created a portfolio of work across the school. The school has recently had a visiting artist who conducted a sculpture workshop, using clay, and there is also a regular pottery club meeting after school. Older pupils sometimes visit art galleries as part of special enrichment experiences. Artwork from the school is displayed in local surgeries, the library and the village supermarket, and is changed seasonally, forging useful

community links. Display around the school is of a high quality, and enhances the communal areas in an interesting and eye-catching way. The art trail, based this time mainly on the work of Klimt and of Turner, with its interactive questioning, leads pupils to want to find out about these artists, and helps them come to an appreciation of visual imagery in different styles. Resources are now adequate for both the practical and the knowledge-based strands of the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. In the last inspection there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards. Although teachers' planning showed that appropriate tasks were provided, work seen indicated more focus on developing the skills of making, than on planning and evaluating designs, and this was seen as a weakness. In this inspection, the opportunity for observing lessons in this subject was limited and only one lesson was observed, in Year 2. Standards in this lesson were satisfactory. Since no lessons were seen in classes from Year 3 through to Year 6, no firm judgements can be made about standards at the top of the school, or about pupils' progress in the subject as they pass through the school. However, evidence from teachers' planning, examples of pupils' planning and evaluation sheets, and examples of pupils' work indicate that standards and progress are satisfactory.
96. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Year 2. Pupils are given appropriate tasks, which are designed to be interesting to them and to motivate them to learn, such as in the lesson seen where they were designing puppets. The teacher created an interesting context by showing them a variety of different types of puppet, and making some of them 'speak'. Pupils planned their designs with rough drawings, then modified and refined these, making more specific shapes and features, finally to be redrawn onto cardboard for the actual puppet shape. Monitoring by the teacher while pupils were planning was helpful and led to improvements in design. The quality of teaching and learning cannot be firmly judged across the rest of the school, but indications from planning, records and examples of work indicate that it is satisfactory. Year 6 have designed and made structures for shelters, and subjected these to testing for evaluation, looking for successful materials, and they have produced Mexican dishes in their food technology in connection with an Aztec topic. Emphasis on the planning, modifying and evaluation phases is substantially in evidence, which is an improvement on the situation reported in the last inspection. However, since monitoring is only just being set up in this subject, a consistency of approach across the school in focusing on the process as well as the product is not yet fully secure.
97. In the last inspection, the subject lacked a policy and a scheme of work; this is now remedied, and there is a satisfactory draft policy in place, with appropriate health and safety guidelines incorporated, and a set of national guidelines has been adopted as a scheme of work. Suggestions for assessment are included in the charts that accompany these guidelines, and assessment points are incorporated into the half-termly planning for the subject. However, assessment is not yet monitored or surveyed in this subject, so consistency of approach to the effective evaluation of pupils' progress is not yet securely assured. Despite this, the curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and the school is now well poised to develop this subject further.
98. The role of the co-ordinator is not yet fully developed, since monitoring of lessons, sampling of work and surveying of assessment are not yet carried out on a regular and systematic basis, although planning is looked at, some informal monitoring has been done, and staff have received some guidance. There are few enrichment experiences in this subject at present, although information is available from web-sites via the

Internet and by the use of CD-ROM. Resources have been updated from almost non-existent to adequate in the last year, with immediate benefits to the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

99. In the last inspection no firm judgement could be formed about standards, in either Year 2 or Year 6, since geography was not being taught during the period of the inspection, and evidence other than lessons was insufficient. A small quantity of previous work examined was reported as indicating that some pupils achieved expected standards for their age, but that in general progress from Year 3 to Year 6 was unsatisfactory. In this inspection, the same situation has occurred, with no geography being taught during the period of the inspection; this is due to geography being paired with history, so that blocks of one or other subject take place over a half-term period. However, the situation has meant that, once again, no firm judgement about standards can be formulated. A sample of work from last year's Year 6, selected and supplied by the school, shows good standards in well-presented studies independently researched and written by pupils on topics such as mountains and water. Pupils have described formation processes and environmental changes through using their enquiry skills with secondary sources and are able to communicate their knowledge and understanding using appropriate geographical vocabulary. This work shows that pupils at the top of the school can achieve good standards, but because the sample was small it does not indicate the overall standards of a full year group. However, taking this work as a guide, together with evidence of the planning in the subject across the school, indications are that standards in the subject are satisfactory.
100. The policy for the subject is still out of date, but the school is aware of this and it is scheduled for review and replacement. There are appropriate health and safety guidelines for staff organising and leading field trips. Since the last inspection the school has adopted a set of national guidelines for the subject as the scheme of work, providing for comprehensive coverage of the National Curriculum in geography throughout the school. This is an improvement on the previously reported situation when no scheme of work existed. Termly, half-termly and weekly planning is derived from these guidelines, and is satisfactory.
101. Provision for assessment as part of the planning process is in place, but it is not clear how consistent this approach is in practice across the school as yet, since the system has only recently been set up and has not been monitored. Weaknesses in using the school grounds for study have been remedied, and, as in the previous report, much work is centred round the local area. Although alternative and contrasting places are studied, there have been no recent visits to places within a local range which contrast with the immediate locality of the school. The residential trip to the Isle of Wight for those in Years 4 and 5 does not include a specific geography field study focus. Information and communication technology is used to provide for experience of contrasting place studies, through access to web-sites and the use of CD-ROM.
102. In the absence of lesson observations in the subject, it is not possible to make a firm judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in the subject, although evidence from the work seen and from teachers' planning indicates that it is at least satisfactory.
103. The role of the geography co-ordinator is relatively undeveloped as yet, being currently restricted to an overview of termly and half-termly planning and the responsibility for resources. This is unsatisfactory. There is no monitoring of lessons, sampling of work, or surveying of assessment, although an action plan for the subject has been drawn up detailing these aspects of the role for development in the near future. Planning is in

terms of content only, and does not utilise reference to National Curriculum Levels, rendering it less useful for the integration of assessment, and, in turn, for using assessment to influence future planning in order to match work to pupils' capabilities accurately. There is little in terms of enrichment experiences to enhance the subject. Resources were reported as poor in the last inspection, and this situation has been somewhat remedied in the intervening period, particularly with regard to atlases, but overall resources remain inadequate. While now adequate for some areas of geography study, there are other aspects of the programme for which resources are old and out of date, and these need renewing.

HISTORY

104. Standards in history have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils attain standards in line with those expected for their age, and progress is satisfactory.
105. Pupils in Year 6 are able to talk about historical times and can relate facts to specific periods such as life in Britain during the 1930's. In Year 2 pupils investigate the events surrounding the great fire of London and the life of Samuel Pepys. Their studies support their literacy work by making links between the great fire and writing a diary. They are still learning to develop their research skills and to consider the variety of interpretations made about the past.
106. Although pupils with special educational needs do not have identified targets in history, they receive good support either from a teacher or a support assistant and, at times, work is modified to meet their particular needs. For example, there is good inclusion in Year 3 and all pupils make notable progress when they spend an afternoon simulating the experiences of pupils in a Victorian school. They write on slates and play with balls and ropes.
107. In Year 6, pupils know the difference between primary and secondary sources of evidence and can research information, for instance on World War II, by accessing the Internet and through studying books. However, only the most able pupils are able to summarise their findings or make links between the information gleaned. Too many pupils rely on copying extracts from a text without a full understanding of what is written.
108. Work in history supports the development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. For example, pupils write essays about how Guy Fawkes felt when he was discovered in the Houses of Parliament. They learn about 'The plight of the Jews' and describe the feelings of Anne Frank locked away in an attic. They discuss racial prejudice and consider difficult moral issues, such as dying for your faith.
109. Pupils' attitudes to history are good. They show interest and share their ideas confidently. When given the opportunity, they seek information with enthusiasm but, when sources of information are limited, for example, pupils have to share books, some lose concentration and work more slowly.
110. Teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is most effective where teachers reinforce the techniques that can be used to gather information. They call upon their own good knowledge of history to involve pupils in discussions, and provide additional snippets of information that help to engage pupil's interest. One example is the way in which all Jewish books were burnt on Kristallnacht. Where teaching is less effective, the learning objectives are factually based and do not relate to the teaching of historical processes

and skills. Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always help pupils to make progress and learn from their mistakes.

111. The role of the co-ordinator has not yet been developed, as the co-ordinator is new to this role. The scheme of work does not consider how pupils will build up their historical enquiry skills year by year. It does not include assessment procedures, use of the library and information and communication technology. There are few visits or visitors to help enrich the history curriculum overall. Displays are interactive and well designed, with good use of artefacts to improve both teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. At the time of the last inspection, standards were well below average. Although this inspection finds below-average standards in Years 1 to 6, this is a slight improvement since the last inspection. The subject does not fulfil National Curriculum requirements in Years 3 to 6 as the control and monitoring aspect of the subject is not taught due to the lack of equipment. This equipment is on order and these aspects are planned for development later in the year. This aspect was not being taught at the time of the last inspection, and in that respect there has been no improvement. The ratio of computers to pupils is better than the national average and the new computer suite is beginning to have an impact on raising standards.
113. Although only a few lessons were observed, indications from these and other evidence are that the quality of teaching and learning in the aspects covered is sound across the school. The previous inspection made no judgement about the quality of teaching. Teachers are becoming more confident users of computers but will require further training to teach the full range of the curriculum. By the end of Year 2, pupils have been soundly taught to produce text and pictures and to handle and display simple data. They plan and command to make things happen and can talk about their experiences inside and outside school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress.
114. By the end of Year 6, pupils can handle text and data at a level appropriate to their age. They use a variety of fonts, colours and sizes. They cut and paste their work and can draft and redraft to screen. They can access CD-ROM information and the Internet for research in geography, history and science, and do this confidently. They are able to use electronic mail. Standards of attainment are low in controlling, monitoring and modelling, as the school lacks some basic resources such as equipment for control and for sensing. Pupils have had few opportunities to control events in a predetermined way, sense physical data, and explore patterns and relationships with the aid of computer simulations or models. Pupils make limited use of computers in other subjects. They use word processing across the curriculum to a limited extent to present their work and handle and display data in mathematics. In some classes the Internet is used well for research. Pupils of all abilities make good progress as a result of the good quality teaching of the subject in the lower juniors.
115. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards the subject, and many have access to computers at home. They treat the resources sensibly and work well collaboratively when sharing a machine. Pupils' behaviour in the computer suite is very good. Support from an interested governor enhances provision for the older pupils.
116. There is no permanent co-ordinator for the subject, and at present the headteacher is 'care-taking'. There is a sound policy but the subject would benefit from a well-versed co-ordinator who is able to support colleagues in using the computer to support learning

across the curriculum. The headteacher provides sound leadership and recognises the weaknesses. There is a good range of computers, including 18 linked machines in the computer suite. Years 3 and 4 would benefit from having computers in their classrooms rather than outside in the general resource area. The subject enhances pupils' personal and social development as they work well in pairs, sharing tasks, taking turns and sensibly discussing which options they will choose.

MUSIC

117. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be in line for pupils' ages in Years 1 to 6. Current findings are similar. Pupils enjoy their music making, especially when singing together. Standards of singing were judged as 'good' at the last inspection, and this remains the case. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriate standards and take a full part in all musical activities.
118. The previous inspection gave no clear judgement about the quality of teaching. This inspection finds that the quality of teaching and learning is sound overall at both key stages, and the lessons taught by the subject co-ordinator are good. Lessons are planned well and prepared with a broad range of musical activities that are suitably challenging. Most teachers help pupils to be aware of what they are expected to learn and they accomplish this by sharing the learning objectives with pupils at the start and end of lessons.
119. By the age of seven, pupils sing a variety of songs tunefully, with good control, and enjoy using appropriate actions. They are able to sustain a good rhythm when singing during assemblies. Pupils in Year 1 have a sound level of understanding about instruments and how to play them. Good links are made with literacy as pupils say 'The Milkman' poem and represent the sound of milk bottles in the crates by using a tambourine. Teachers work hard to stimulate pupils and help them to feel successful.
120. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have a good understanding of rhythm and basic musical structure. In class lessons, teachers use a variety of methods. Pupils recalled 'ostinato' from the previous lesson and, in groups, successfully created their own 'sound' compositions.
121. Pupils learn to play recorders and woodwind instruments during peripatetic music lessons. During the inspection, pupils listened carefully to the musical theme for the week by Gershwin, when entering and leaving the hall for assemblies. One pupil confidently played the 'Overture to William Tell' on his recorder at the start of an assembly.
122. The subject is confidently led by the co-ordinator, who provides good support for staff. There is a sound policy for music that is due for review. Most year groups use a commercial scheme of work. There is room to ensure that this is followed more closely in all classes. Assessment and recording of pupils' progress are at an early stage of development. More opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching would help to raise standards in the subject.
123. The school has a satisfactory range of resources, including an electronic keyboard. The pupils would benefit from having more books about composers in the library, and whole-school displays about the 'music of the week' would further enhance provision. The use of information and communication technology is under-developed in the subject. All pupils have opportunities to join the choir. Each year, the choir sings for 'Elder Care' in the village. All pupils take part in the productions at Christmas, which

allows every member of the school to take part in making music. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in the yearly major productions, which are a great success and well supported by parents. Visiting musicians, such as those who demonstrated musical instruments from around the world, enrich the subject. During the last school year, pupils joined in the 'Kent Messenger Schools' Festival', where six of the school's pupils took the main parts. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they make and reflect on music together, share instruments and take part in musical productions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged as above expectations in both key stages. This inspection judges standards to be in line with expectations in Years 1 and 2, and exceeding expectations in Years 3 to 6. Almost all Year 6 pupils can swim 25 metres, and some much further than that. There is satisfactory improvement in standards since the last inspection, although the judgement on the current Years 1 and 2 is lower. This is because this inspection took place during the sixth week of term and the Year 1 pupils are only just into that year group and are very young. Pupils with special educational needs make progress according to their abilities and take part in all activities.
125. In a Year 1 gymnastics lesson, pupils showed an average range of agility and competence in creating shapes using various parts of their bodies and remembered their learning from a previous lesson satisfactorily. Some are very nimble, while others who are less agile move less well but often try hard. Pupils do not understand as well as they should the physiological aspects of simple warm-up and cool-down procedures because not all lessons include these. This aspect of physical education needs consistent emphasis in pupils' early years so that they understand the impact of exercise on their bodies.
126. In Years 6, pupils' overall attainment in dance is good, with pupils showing above-average achievement. When responding to music from 'The Battle of the Dance', pupils demonstrated very expressive movement using different levels. Pupils were also able to demonstrate that they could appraise others' performance through appropriate evaluations after watching their peers.
127. Pupils develop good, positive attitudes towards physical education during their time in the school and look forward to their lessons. Behaviour is good in lessons, with pupils showing a good sense of fair play and sharing resources well. Many participate in the excellent range of extra-curricular physical education activities which the school provides. These include rugby, athletics, netball, football, cricket and short tennis. After-school and weekend swimming is available for children and their parents, using the school's pool. All clubs are well supported by pupils.
128. The teaching of physical education is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Very good teaching of dance has contributed to the good standards in Year 6. Teachers are confident about teaching the subject and use published schemes of work to give pupils a good experience across a range of indoor and outdoor disciplines. As pupils get older, teachers encourage them effectively to appraise others' performances and their own.
129. Physical education is co-ordinated well. The co-ordinator has monitored lessons in Years 3 to 6, and plans to visit Years 1 and 2 lessons later in the year. Assessment sheets for gymnastics and athletics are passed on each year to a pupil's new teacher,

though this only takes place in Years 3 to 6 and would benefit from being extended to Years 1 and 2. A sensible balance of the curriculum gives pupils a progressively more complex range of experience in indoor and outdoor activity. Older juniors have a good opportunity to experience outdoor and adventurous activities during residential visits. Resources are appropriate for the range of experiences provided and the school's facilities, hard and grass play areas and their own swimming pool, are very good. The maintenance of the school pool would benefit from some professional advice. The link with the physical education department of a local secondary school enhances provision, as secondary teachers provide in-service training for Headcorn staff.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Standards in religious education do not meet the full requirements set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. There are still significant gaps in the knowledge and understanding of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Improvement has been unsatisfactory since the last inspection and, although there is now a scheme of work in place, it is likely that it will not be fully covered by the end of Year 6. Resources have improved, although they were not seen in use during the week of the inspection and there are few artefacts on display. There are few visits or visitors from the different faith communities other than Christianity. Major festivals of the world faiths are not always celebrated. Religious education is not given a sufficiently high status within the curriculum.
131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen, teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject, plan effectively and relate the moral issues to a religious base.
132. Year 3 pupils are led into a discussion on the 'Creation' story from the Old Testament and learn the origin of the Jewish Sabbath. There is moral development when they consider caring for God's world. They are learning to form their own opinions and present a point of view. Year 6 pupils learn how to handle the Moslem Qur'an in a sensitive manner by washing their hands before touching it. They are given opportunities to consider the moral messages contained within stories. However, the work is insufficiently challenging and does not match up to standards of work in, for example, literacy or history.
133. Teachers do not yet assess pupils against the attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus. This leads them to plan work that is not always matched to pupils' needs, including the needs of higher-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. This is preventing the school from gaining full benefit from the good teaching in individual lessons. As a consequence, older pupils have similar knowledge of Bible stories commonly taught to younger children, such as the story of Joseph and his brothers or the parables of Jesus, but have more limited knowledge of the world's leading faiths.
134. Work in religious education does not make an effective enough contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to write independently, and too much is copied. Work is not always recorded. There are too few links between religious education and the literacy hour, and limited use is made of the library and computers in teaching the subject. The subject co-ordinator has yet to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the good quality teaching in individual classes, and the respect with which pupils and teachers throughout the school treat the subject, place it in a good position to make further improvements.