

# INSPECTION REPORT

**CALLIS GRANGE NURSERY AND INFANT  
SCHOOL**

Broadstairs

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118406

Headteacher: Mrs Alison Marshall

Reporting inspector: Mrs S Vale  
22476

Dates of inspection: 23 - 26 September 2002

Inspection number: 247891

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery and infant

School category: Primary

Age range of pupils: 3 - 7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Beacon Road  
Broadstairs  
Kent

Postcode: CT10 3DG

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Barbara Hooker

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22476	Mrs S Vale	Registered inspector	Art Music Special educational needs	Equal opportunity What sort of school is it? How high are standards? Assessment How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19322	Ms J Bedawi	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30705	Mr G Stephens	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	English as an additional language
24027	Mrs B Kutty	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Newly qualified	Mrs E Wilson-Chalon	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Physical education	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>31</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Callis Grange Nursery and Infant School is one of the largest infant schools in Kent, with 388 pupils on role, including 50 in the nursery. It is a co-educational county, community school. Callis serves a mixed area of bed and breakfast, council and privately owned housing within 'Thanet', one of the most deprived districts in Kent. The school has a high number of 'Looked After Children' (currently 12 children) and many lone parents. Pupils' mobility at the school is about average, with 13 children joining throughout the year and 16 leaving. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is average when compared to most schools. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is broadly in line with the national average. Attainment on entry is below what is expected for pupils of this age.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Callis Grange Nursery and Infant School is a good school. The improving standards, good teaching, excellent leadership and management from the headteacher and the governing body ensure that the school is effective and provides good value for money.

### **What the school does well**

- Attains above average standards in art and design, design and technology, and pupils' handwriting.
- Attains well above average standards in physical education and has initiated good provision in the development of 'The Fizzy Club'.
- The school uses very good assessment procedures to enable teachers to plan their lessons thoroughly and therefore teach very well.
- Excellent leadership and management by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The school provides very hard working learning support assistants and nursery nurses who have a significant impact on pupils' learning and on the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' attitudes to the school and the way they relate to adults and each other.
- The school provides a very good start to children's learning in the nursery.

### **What could be improved**

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT). They are unsatisfactory because there are insufficient resources to enable pupils to effectively learn the required skills.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in 1998. School planning has been improved and priorities in the school improvement plan have been prioritised, and are linked to identified educational needs and the budget. The coordinators' roles in English and mathematics have been reviewed and coordinators show very good subject knowledge. Accommodation has been improved to some extent in that more space has been created in the hall and the under-fives' play area is now enclosed. However, the library situated in the entrance hall is still in need of improvement, but there are definite plans in the school improvement plan for this to happen.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	E	C	E	C
Writing	E	C	E	D
Mathematics	E	C	E	D

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

The table above shows the results for 2001 where pupils age seven achieve well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, when compared to similar schools they are in line with national averages in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. The latest results which pupils aged seven achieved, in 2002, show a marked improvement and are more similar to the 2000 results. This is good improvement on the previous year's results. Other areas of the curriculum show that pupils are also achieving at national expectations but they are achieving above national expectations in art and design, and design and technology. In physical education, pupils achieve well above national expectations. The 2002 results and current inspection findings indicate that the action taken by the school in basic skills and in identifying the cohort which are to receive extra support is having a positive impact on their learning and the standards achieved. However, standards in ICT are unsatisfactory.

By the age of five, pupils' achievements are similar to those expected nationally. Pupils quickly gain the skills to work independently, with each other in groups and listen carefully to adults. This good preparation means that they begin Year 1 ready to tackle the National Curriculum with confidence. As they move through the school, pupils make significant gains in their learning, building on their achievements each year so that by the time they leave Callis Grange standards are in line with national expectations. This progress is particularly significant for the large numbers of pupils who only join Callis Grange School in reception, and who do not have the benefit of the nursery education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very Good. Pupils are keen and want to come to school. The interest which they take in their work helps them to make good progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite and have good manners.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work and play together very well. They show respect for their peers and adults.
Attendance	Satisfactory.



All these factors contribute to the good achievement and progress which pupils make.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Seventy per cent of the teaching seen was good or better, and of this 26 per cent was very good and two per cent excellent. Only three per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The very good and excellent teaching was seen throughout the school and was not confined to a particular subject. Good quality teaching in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, enables pupils to make good progress. Teachers have very good knowledge of these subjects. They use good question and answer sessions to make the pupils think and to ensure their learning takes place. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour and how well they can achieve. This motivates pupils to do their best. Teachers' planning is very thorough and makes good use of the very good assessments which they do. This ensures that all pupils' needs are fully catered for and with the very good support of the learning support assistants, helps pupils to really learn.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a good range of rich learning experiences for its pupils. Teachers often skilfully link different subjects through lesson topics.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The good provision supports pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Provision is effective and gives good support to those pupils who need it.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The provision for moral and social development is very good. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Assessment is very thorough and is used well to plan work to support pupils' individual learning. All staff know their pupils very well. The school cares particularly well for the large number of 'looked after children' in its care.

The school works well in partnership with parents. Parents feel that they are able to approach the school with any specific problems which they may encounter and that the

school deals with them promptly and successfully. Parents are very supportive of all that the school does.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher gives the school very clear and purposeful leadership. This results in very effective teamwork by the staff and a joint commitment to continuing high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. It takes an active role in monitoring the school's finances, standards and the curriculum. This gives governors a good knowledge of the school and allows them to support it well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses the results of annual tests carefully to ensure that high standards are maintained. There is very good monitoring of teaching, by the headteacher, senior management, subject coordinators, and the local education authority. The school knows exactly what to do to continue its good improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's resources are used very well to promote pupils' learning. Improvements to the premises, for example, since the last inspection, such as new mobile classrooms, and the resiting of items previously stored in the hall, support pupils' learning.

The accommodation and learning resources are good overall, but the lack, in particular, of an information and communication technology suite, is having a detrimental effect on pupils' progression in this area of the curriculum. Leadership and management are very strong. The school applies the principles of best value very well, through analysing its 'value added' work and carefully reviewing its systems and procedures regularly.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• They feel well informed about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become more mature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way children are released from school at the end of the school day.</li> <li>• Parents would like to see more activities provided for their children outside of school hours.</li> </ul>

The inspection findings support the very positive views expressed by parents. At the time of the last inspection, and during this inspection, parents commented on their concerns about the way children are released from school at the end of the school day. The inspection team looked very closely at their concerns. Whilst sympathising with parental concerns at collecting young children at the school gate, the inspection supports the decision made by the school, to release children to their parents this way, in the interests of safety. The school itself is too small to cater for just fewer than 400 parents picking up their children and all entering the school at the same time.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. By the age of five, pupils' achievements are similar to those expected nationally. The previous inspection found that pupils aged seven achieved standards in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science, despite starting from a below average base line. Since then there has been a steady increase in standards, except for a dip in 2001 in English, reading, writing and mathematics where results were well below national averages. However, when compared to similar schools, results show that they are as expected for pupils of this age in reading but below in writing and mathematics. This is mainly because of the very large number of pupils with special educational needs, (49 per cent) in this particular year. The school's 2002 national test results show that in reading, writing and mathematics pupils' standards have improved on the previous years results. This is a big improvement and reflects the school's continued commitment to improving standards.
2. Overall, pupils make good progress during their time at Callis Grange, particularly, as they enter the school with below average attainment and leave with average attainment. The 2002 results and current inspection findings indicate that the action taken by the school to improve basic skills and in identifying the cohort which are to receive extra support is having a positive impact on their learning and the standards achieved.
3. Pupils with special educational needs, of lower ability, make good progress. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) has trained teachers and learning support assistants in the early identification of need and in the writing of Individual Educational Plans (IEPs). These documents contain clear targets that include learning and behaviour. Individual Education Plans are regularly reviewed to keep a track of progress. The SENCO, teachers and learning support assistants work well together to provide a level of support that enables pupils to make good progress in relation to their individual needs. Pupils who are gifted and talented are correctly identified by the school, and are given suitable material to support their particular needs. For example, in a Year 2 numeracy lesson, where pupils were using dice to create their own addition sums, one pupil with particular talents in numeracy was given a dice with the numbers 9 -14 on it. This ensured that whilst he was doing similar work to his peers, he was being challenged so that he was able to perform to the best of his capabilities. This is very good practice by the school.
4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior identified needs and this continues as they move through the school. Special needs are assessed and identified early and this has a significant impact on the standards achieved by the pupils concerned. The school is very inclusive and pupils often with complex difficulties are helped to attain well. Some exceed the predictions made for them in SATs tests. There are no significant differences between boys and girls in their achievements. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have a significant impact upon the achievements in particular for pupils with special educational needs.
5. During the inspection, standards in **English** throughout the school were as is expected for pupils of this age. This is an improvement in English when compared to last year's national test results. By the age of seven, pupils listen attentively and

answer challenging questions. Most speak confidently in all situations, including whole-school assemblies. Whilst standards in reading are satisfactory overall, there are a number of pupils in Year 2 who do need extra support in order to increase their reading abilities. The additional and early literacy strategies really support pupils' standards in reading. Standards in writing are satisfactory and pupils take great pride in the presentation of their work. Standards of handwriting are very good for pupils of this age.

6. In **mathematics**, current Year 2 pupils are on target to meet national average performance levels by the end of the year. Since the last inspection, standards in mathematics have steadily improved. By the age of seven, pupils can do addition and subtraction and know about two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes.
7. In **science**, pupils gather a wide range of scientific knowledge as they move through the school. By Year 2, pupils know about the features of living things and a healthy lifestyle. Standards attained in this area are supported by the school's involvement in the 'Healthy School's Standards' programme. This is reflected in many aspects of school life from the breakfast club to science and personal, social and health lessons. All of the work connected with this involvement supports the standards which pupils achieve in science.
8. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in **art and design** and in **design and technology**. Standards throughout the school are above those expected for pupils of this age. Pupils use a variety of media, including, charcoal, pastels, textiles and paint. Pupils build up their skills systematically as they move through the school, and as they mature they use their knowledge to design and refine their work. By the age of seven, pupils' standards in those activities observed in **physical education** are well above expectations for their age. Pupils work to high standards. Throughout the school, pupils are developing a growing awareness of healthy living, keeping themselves safe and the effects of exercise on their body. This is supported well by the provision of the 'Fizzy Club' for those pupils who need extra support in their physical well-being.
9. Standards in **geography** are in line with what is expected nationally. Pupils are competent in the use of map skills and are beginning to develop good inquiry skills. Pupils achieve at levels expected for their age in **history**. Their factual knowledge is satisfactory and they are able to make comparisons well between their lives now and in the past. **Music** standards are satisfactory overall, with some good examples of singing work amongst all ages of pupils. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in **religious education**. They have levels and knowledge expected of their age, and understand the importance that people of different faiths place in their beliefs.
10. Pupils' standards in **ICT** are unsatisfactory despite the fact that the school has worked very hard at gaining new computers and having them networked throughout the school. The school has insufficient resources to enable pupils, including those with special educational needs, to be taught basic skills effectively and too few opportunities to practice and consolidate the skills that they have when learning in subjects across the curriculum.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. Throughout the school, attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils' personal development and the quality of their relationships are very good. Behaviour in lessons and at play-time is good. Attendance is satisfactory.
12. Children who have just started school in the Foundation Stage have settled quickly into school routines because they already know the staff and their nursery through a good programme of home visits and pre-entry sessions. They are happy and involved in the well-planned activities and are learning to share toys, take turns and relate well to other children. In the reception classes, children are made aware of the school rules and so their behaviour is usually good. They listen carefully and do their best to follow the instructions given by adults, responding well to any guidance. The children are curious and enthusiastic learners, showing much interest when, for example, learning about the Jewish festival of Sukkoth, tasting grapes and citric fruits, including lemons, with some determination because of the sourness. These youngest children have a positive start to their education.
13. The attitudes of older pupils in Years 1 and 2 are very good. They understand that they are expected to learn and the approval of their teachers is important to them. Pupils eagerly participate in discussions, wanting to show how much they have learnt. When given the opportunity they enjoy expressing their opinions, for instance, about the resources they use in lessons. In an art lesson, they imaginatively describe dried grasses as 'spiky, curly or whirly' and in food technology capture the feeling of kneading dough as being like a 'wiggly duvet'. Pupils settle to work with a sense of purpose, because they understand what they are expected to do. They work together co-operatively. They take great pride in completing their work, with much effort taken with their handwriting that is much better than is usually produced by infant age pupils.
14. Pupil behaviour is good in lessons and at break times. They are polite and friendly, yet maintain a good level of respect towards adults and each other. Pupils willingly hold open a door or offer a greeting as they move sensibly along the long school corridor. At play, pupils mix happily and treat each other with kindness and care. They are tolerant towards pupils who have difficulty in always behaving well, or those who are quieter or newly arrived in the school. Pupils enjoy and respond well to praise, often beaming with delight when chosen to share their work with the class, or when improved behaviour is recognised. No instances of bullying or thoughtless behaviour were observed and there have been no exclusions.
15. Pupils' personal development and the quality of their relationships are very good. The staff provide a positive environment in which each pupil is respected as a unique individual. Children and pupils soon become aware of this from the time they enter the school. They do their best to model the exemplary teamwork and very good examples set by the adults around them. As a result, pupils are able to develop and mature very well, often able to overcome personal difficulties and build on their strong points, so that they are confident and at ease with their friends and with staff. The few pupils who have English as a second language and those with dual heritage are treated absolutely equally by staff and pupils and this promotes harmony very well. The use of initiative and pupil responsibility is good. Pupils do, when they have the opportunity, think for themselves and offer help readily. They happily carry out routine duties such as returning registers and tidying their classrooms. Circle time provides positive reinforcement of the school's expectations and makes the pupils think about and respect others' views and feelings. As yet there is no formal school council and pupils are often very closely supervised when, for example, going into assembly, or

moving around the corridors at breaks and end of day, giving less opportunity to act independently.

16. Attendance is satisfactory. The majority of pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly. Current registers show that there is some unauthorised absence caused by a minority of parents keeping their children at home for odd days, without genuine reason.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

17. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, whilst the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching remains about the same. The standard of teaching has risen considerably, with more than two thirds of lessons observed being good or better and one in five of these lessons being very good. This has had an obvious impact upon the improving standards of attainment which pupils achieve.
18. The school is fortunate in that it has a relatively stable staff and this has had a significant impact upon the improvements in the standards of teaching which have taken place. At the time of the inspection, consistently good teaching, more than seven out of ten lessons, were good or better and this was not confined to one particular year group.
19. In the most successful lessons, teachers have very good subject knowledge which they share with pupils clearly and precisely. The teaching of English is mostly good and sometimes very good, and has improved significantly since the last inspection. All teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy successfully. Key skills are well taught and this is a major contribution to pupils' learning. Lessons are planned well and expectations are high. Instructions are clear in most lessons and the learning objectives clearly referred to during the lesson, and checked at the end of the lesson to ensure that pupils have understood what has been taught.
20. The very small number of unsatisfactory lessons was not confined to a particular year group or in a particular subject. These lessons were characterised by instructions to pupils being unclear, leading to confusion and insufficient planning to allow pupils to increase their knowledge and improve their skills. Sometimes the result was that the pace was slow and pupils' concentration wavered, resulting in poor behaviour.
21. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive effect on the standard which pupils attain in mathematics. Again, teaching is good overall with only a very small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. The good teaching has a significant, positive impact on pupils' learning as they progress throughout the school. Teachers have a good understanding of the strategy and implement it confidently.
22. Pupils' learning is good and this is as the direct result of the quality of the teaching which they receive. A good feature is how teachers reinforce subject vocabulary, for example, in religious education where the correct vocabulary is used, such as Kippur and Sukkoth when learning about the Jewish religion. Lessons are very well planned so that pupils make good progress. A strength of the very good lessons seen was the way teachers pull together what the pupils have learnt at the end of the lesson, by recapping what has been covered, so that pupils have their own learning reinforced. This is particularly noticeable in an art lesson in Year 1 where pupils at the end of the lesson were able to clearly explain the names of the material they had used, such as chalk and charcoal, and where these materials come from.

23. The teaching of investigative skills in mathematics and science has improved a great deal since the last inspection and pupils now have many opportunities for first hand investigations, which promote their knowledge well. Teachers across all classes have benefited from good quality in-service training given by their colleagues. The teaching of physical education is consistently good and on occasions very good. This enhances pupils' knowledge of skills and understanding because of teachers' own expertise in this subject. The teaching of all other subjects is at least satisfactory and often good. Pupils with musical talents are encouraged by having the opportunity to participate in three performances a year.
24. There are many examples of learning at home making a good contribution to the pupils' achievements, particularly in pupils practising their reading skills at home. This shows good parental links between home and school.
25. The school caters for pupils with special educational needs very well and they are fully included in lessons. The good progress pupils with special educational needs make is the result of good planning for them by a combined force comprising the SENCO, classroom teachers and the learning support assistants. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language also learn well and are fully integrated into all lessons. In order to plan effectively for pupils with special educational needs, the SENCO and classroom teachers produce detailed IEPs. These set out the ways in which the curriculum is to be adapted to meet individual needs for those pupils of lower ability. Teachers and learning support assistants have monthly meetings with the SENCO to consider and evaluate how well targets are achieved, and to have training in learning new skills. Pupils who are correctly identified by the school as being gifted and talented are well catered for by teachers in everyday lessons. There are occasions when lessons are specifically planned for these pupils, for example, in a Year 2 numeracy lesson, where pupils were reinforcing their number additions by throwing dice and adding up the numbers they threw. One pupil, who is particularly gifted and talented in numeracy whilst doing the same work as his peers, was given a dice with the numbers 9 -14 on it so that his particular numeracy skills were challenged.
26. The teachers have good knowledge and awareness of teaching pupils with special educational needs. They are well qualified and trained and use programmes such as the Early Literacy Strategy for identified children and work closely with the SENCO to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. A particular strength is the use made by teachers of the skilled and trained learning support assistants who can be seen in every classroom supervising pupils in group or individual work. They work closely together to plan lessons and ensure that targets are being met and match targets in pupils' group or IEPs. As there is such a close focus on individual needs, pupils with special educational needs are able to make good progress in their learning.
27. Learning support assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' progress. They are highly experienced and very well trained in dealing with pupils with special educational needs and are very capable. They know pupils well and foster the trust that provides good conditions for learning. Their expert help really supports teachers and pupils' learning.
28. The headteacher, along with the senior management team and subject coordinators, regularly monitors the quality of teaching and this monitoring has had a positive impact upon raising standards in the quality of teaching pupils receive.



29. Pupils acquire new knowledge and skills well. Their ideas and understanding develop well due to the consistently good teaching which they receive. They work hard and show interest in their work, sustaining concentration, and are starting to think and learn for themselves.

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

30. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered to pupils throughout the school are good and they reflect the inclusive ethos of the school. The opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good in all the six areas of learning. This is because teachers plan the activities in an interesting way to capture the interests and imaginations of young children and they use the assessment and observation information effectively to meet pupils' specific needs. This gives them a good start to their education and they become confident learners by the time they enter Year 1.
31. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 meets the statutory requirements and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is sufficiently broad, balanced and appropriate to give pupils opportunities to learn well in most subjects. However, a lack of resources in ICT is having a negative impact on the opportunities pupils have to learn and apply the skills. This slows down the progress pupils make throughout Key Stage 1. The school has identified improving the ICT provision as a priority for development. Plans are in hand to ensure that the full range of the curriculum is taught once the equipment has been installed and the training has been completed. A strong emphasis is given to developing English and literacy skills as many pupils enter the nursery and reception classes with communication, language and literacy skills well below those expected of their age developmentally. The planning for literacy is good. Since the last inspection the school has improved the opportunities pupils have to learn about different aspects of writing. The strategies in developing handwriting skills are very good and, by the age of seven, pupils' writing is legible, mostly joined up, and of a very high standard when compared to national expectations. Scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences are taught effectively through literacy lessons as well as through other subjects such as geography and history. Planning for numeracy is good and the strategies used in developing mathematical knowledge and number operations have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning and they make good progress.
32. All members of staff are involved in curriculum planning and development. The subject coordinators of all the subjects worked hard in producing schemes of work and assessment materials for the subjects they lead. There is a clearly focused document which gives staff useful hints and suggestions on how skills and knowledge can be taught and assessed. Staff make good use of these through using them to support their planning and this results in effective teaching and learning. The policies are reviewed systematically and presented to the governing body for approval. The weekly and daily planning take into account the specific needs of pupils and they are evaluated regularly.
33. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The educational plans are clearly focused on pupils' academic as well as their personal, social and emotional needs. They are implemented effectively in lessons by the teachers and the learning support assistants. Pupils make very good progress towards their targets; this is partly due to the very good support they receive from the support staff

who are very clear about the needs of individual pupils. Great care is taken to ensure that children and pupils have full access to the National Curriculum and play a full part in lessons. No pupils are disapplied. The curriculum is carefully adapted to meet individual needs, but pupils still follow the same curriculum as the rest of their class. The majority of work is supervised in class by the learning support assistants, with the teacher having an overview. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn for specialist support, such as speech therapy, but do not miss key parts of the lesson. The 'Fizzy Club' runs before school so that no curriculum time is lost. Staff know the requirements of IEPs and statements and there is an accessible file in each class. The principles of inclusion are fully met with regard to the curriculum.

34. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. They pay particular attention to those pupils who are 'looked after children'. Each class has specific time identified for 'circle times' when pupils are given the opportunity to learn about how to express their feelings and have regard for others. Fergus, the class bear, is used very effectively in the nursery in giving children the confidence and reassurance to want to come to the nursery. The 'fizzy' programme and the social skills group further enhance pupils' personal and social development. The school was involved in the healthy schools programme. Every year the school has a special week where all classes concentrate on one specific subject or aspect. Last year the school had a 'health week' where parents, pupils and local community were all involved in learning about all aspects of healthy living. The school has a clearly defined sex education policy which is approved by the governing body and reviewed regularly. A skilled counselling session is offered to those pupils who need it in full consultation with their parents and carers.
35. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities offered to pupils are satisfactory overall. The school runs a breakfast club every morning, which is very popular, and also organises extra-curricular activities during lunch breaks, such as a tennis club and music club.
36. The links established with both the community and partner institutions contribute much to the pupils' learning and they are good. All the teaching staff are involved in the 'improving together' scheme which meets regularly to share good practices. The school works closely with the Canterbury Christchurch University College in initial teacher training and there are two trained mentors in school. Effective links are established with local feeder schools and the business communities. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. Pupils visit the local area to study aspects of geography. As part of their study they have visited Quex Park. The nursery and reception teachers make home visits to gather information from parents and carers about their children as well as to get to know the children before they start school. This makes the transition from home to school more enjoyable and less traumatic.
37. The school has a fully inclusive curriculum and the strategies used to offer equality of access are good. It caters for the needs of all pupils, including those who are learning English as an additional language, those who are looked after by the authority and those who are gifted and talented. As a result, all pupils achieve their full potential. The school celebrates pupils' effort through special assemblies. There is greater emphasis on catering for pupils' individual needs rather than what they cannot do. This enables them to learn about and respect differences.

38. Pupils' spiritual development is good. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and has a strong impact on their personal development. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
39. The provision for spiritual development is good. School and class assemblies aid and build on pupils' understanding of values, morals and beliefs and how these inter-relate and affect others. Music contributes a strong spiritual element, as does the lighting of a candle during reflection. An air of tranquillity is achieved as music is played when pupils enter and leave the hall and when the headteacher quietly plays the guitar, and when pupils sing with enjoyment. Pupils' who participate or blow out the candle, do so with a sense of occasion and respect. In religious education there are clear links between pupils' own experiences and understanding and Christian stories such as 'Feeding the Five Thousand' that relate to the current theme of 'Harvest'. Pupils often show a sense of wonder when exposed to new experiences; in the reception class children squeal with delight as they do hand-printing using paint, mixing two colours by rubbing their palms together, and seeing the new colour print on paper. In Year 2, pupils were amazed to see flour and water turn into dough. The school comes together as a supportive community to share difficult experiences. The life of a young pupil who died is celebrated and remembered by a special plaque and the planting of an almond tree. A pupil commented '*As the tree grows, that is us remembering him*'.
40. Moral and social provision is very good. The school promotes a strong set of values based on trust, respect and honesty. These are embedded in the schools' ethos, aims and policies. Pupils are treated equally and know they are valued. They have a strong sense of justice and know right from wrong. Pupils understand how to behave and respond well to the care and guidance available. The staff promote positive attributes. This ensures that the school community is a happy and harmonious place in which to learn. Circle time provides good opportunity for pupils to listen to others and express their own opinions and views. Pupils relate very well to each other. The Breakfast Club, run by learning support assistants, promotes very good social relationships and the pupils really appreciate this relaxed and happy start to the day, chattering to their friends and to the adults as they enjoy a healthy breakfast. Through the school's 'Charity Policy', pupils are encouraged to contribute to those who are in need. Each year a different charity is selected; currently the 'Demelza House Children's Hospice' is being supported. Other charities, such as the national 'Poppy Day Appeal', regularly receive donations. Pupils enjoy visiting the local community, perhaps to sing or perform to local senior citizens in their residential home, or at Christmas when they sing Carols at a local superstore.
41. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are starting to understand their own culture through, for example, religious education, art and music. The school is aware that very few pupils from other minority ethnic groups, cultures or countries attend the school and that, as a result, pupils' first hand experiences of multicultural life are limited. It is working to provide the pupils with an idea of other cultures, mainly through religious education. Pupils are learning about Judaism and are preparing to celebrate by building a 'Sukkoth' in the Hall, and are discovering similarities with the Christian Harvest Festival. There are very few visitors from other faiths, cultures or ethnic groups to enhance pupil understanding. Even though the local environment is used effectively to support learning by, for example, visiting the beach and harbour, there are limited opportunities to introduce pupils to their own heritage through arts, music and sciences or to celebrate the richness of global cultural and ethnic heritages. Resources to promote cultural provision are underdeveloped and ICT is not used to access and enhance pupils' cultural and multicultural awareness.



## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The quality of personal support and educational guidance offered to pupils by the staff is very good. Procedures for assessing and monitoring attainment and academic progress, together with the use of assessment to meet pupils' individual needs, is very good. This is a very significant improvement since the last inspection. The monitoring of behaviour and the prevention of bullying and racism are very good. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good. Attendance monitoring, procedures related to health and safety and to child protection are satisfactory. The provision made for pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Need is good.
43. The procedures and practices related to assessment and academic monitoring are very good, and the successful use of this in teachers' planning enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Assessment is now very well established across the whole school. Practice is regularly reviewed and refined so that the system remains manageable for staff and relevant to pupils' learning. For example, assessments will now take place once National Curriculum work units are completed, so that there is a full overview. Teachers and the learning support assistants, who are skilled and well qualified, are all involved in assessment.
44. Baseline assessment is thorough and precise. Records are shared and passed onto the next teacher with explanatory notes, and meetings are held so that teachers know and can plan for their new class in advance. The system for analysis of pupils' progress is very clear and identifies individual progress over time against National Curriculum levels. Any pupils who are struggling, those who are doing much better than expected or pupils with a special educational need are quickly highlighted and relevant additional support provided. Tests are analysed and any areas for development identified and targeted for improvement. The performance of boys and girls is analysed and that of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Although there are a considerable number of summer-born children in the school, their performance has not been analysed. The staff are confident in assessing the level of pupils work because they have received training from the assessment co-ordinator and have also held meetings where the level of pupils' work is agreed.
45. The marking of pupils' work is very good, with much instant verbal guidance backed up by supportive written comment. Pupils are provided with targets that are regularly reviewed; in some classes individual pupil targets are displayed on their tables.
46. The assessment, monitoring and target setting for pupils with special educational needs are exemplars of good practice. The learning support assistants who are all trained to support special educational needs pupils, keep precise progress records that are closely linked to targets in IEPs. These targets are broken into small steps and progress is reviewed on an almost daily basis, so that as pupils achieve a 'small step' academic or personal target another achievable 'step' is set. This very successfully motivates the pupils and builds their self-esteem and confidence.
47. Teachers and learning support assistants meet and plan together regularly, using assessment information to ensure that pupils of all abilities and needs receive work that is challenging and encourages good progress.
48. The monitoring of behaviour and the prevention of bullying and racism are very good. All required policies are in place and used by staff. Parents are expected to sign the equal opportunities policy to signify their support on racial issues. No harassment of

any kind, including bullying, is tolerated; a racist incident record is kept. Parents and pupils feel that any incidents are dealt with promptly. The staff provide much informal guidance in class and to individual pupils. There is emphasis on positive aspects including praise and reward. A significant minority of pupils have difficulty in managing their behaviour and feelings with sufficient maturity. The staff are very sensitive to their needs and monitor their progress, keeping records and, if necessary, drawing up behaviour plans with parental involvement. When difficulties are not resolved or are complex, then the pupil may have a special need and require school action (support by the school alone) or school action + so that the pupil can gain access to the support of external agencies, including behaviour support or counselling services. The school is very good at securing the right support to bring about pupil improvement. A measure of its success is the way that staff work inclusively to support pupils so that there is no need to use exclusion.

49. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good. Adults in the school know the pupils very well. They provide much informal advice and guidance to build pupils' self-esteem. Pupils who lack confidence or basic skills, such as being able to listen, or who find relationships a challenge, are provided with targets to help them improve and these usually work well. However, beyond the good circle time discussions, there is less focus on planned opportunities to provide pupils with real responsibility and the independence to begin to make decisions for themselves without direct adult involvement.
50. Attendance monitoring is satisfactory. There is an appropriate policy and parents are aware of the school's expectations. A minority of parents keep their children at home for an odd day or two, without genuine reason; others are already requesting holidays during term-time for next year. The educational welfare officer (EWO) is involved when there are attendance concerns. Pupils mostly arrive on time. A late book is kept, but reasons for lateness are not always recorded. Registers are marked promptly and meet requirements.
51. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. The designated person is trained and all members of staff attended training on child protection issues. There are a small number of pupils who are 'looked after' or on the 'at risk' register. The school follows the required procedure for these children. However, the school's child protection policy, now due for review, does not reflect the schools own good practice and procedure.
52. Staff are very committed to pupils' health and development. There are several qualified first aiders and minor accidents are dealt with caringly. There are significant delays in obtaining access to occupational therapists. The learning support staff requested training in basic exercises to help the pupils. The 'Fizzy' Club' is extremely popular with the pupils who use it. Pupils are starting to improve their coordination and recognise this, taking a real pride in their own and others' successes.
53. Health and safety related matters are satisfactory. Required test and checks are carried out. The school needs to ensure that required records are complete, dated and meet the requirements stated in school policy.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. The school has a good partnership with its parents and carers, which is similar to judgements made at the time of the last inspection. Parents are actively involved in supporting the school. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning. Parental views of the school are good, overall.
55. The good partnership ensures that every family receives a home visit before children start school. This enables staff, parents and carers to begin to build good relationships and helps children and pupils feel less nervous about being 'new'. Parents are made welcome when they visit the school. Staff are accessible and prepared to see parents if there is need; it is not always possible without a mutually agreed appointment, but no parent is turned away. A number of parents help in class or can be seen listening to pupils read. Requests for parental help on visits get a good response.
56. The parent teacher association (PTA) works well. It is not a formal group, because parents prefer the informality. Social and fundraising events are arranged throughout the year, with the Christmas Fair being the biggest event. Sports day is also popular and well attended. Pupils benefit from the extra resources made available through fundraising. The school is continually exploring new ways to involve parents. The sponsored 'Sportathon', during the Health Week in June, was exhaustively enjoyed and greatly appreciated by parents. The children tried out different sporting activities such as 'Boxercise' (skipping) a Healthathon Circuit or tested their circus skills, receiving a certificate at the end, as well as raising an impressive £2,000. A positive spin-off was that the annual governors' meeting for parents, held the same day, was very well attended.
57. The quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory, overall. Useful monthly newsletters include diary dates. The prospectus and annual governors' report do not comply because several required items are not included. As examples, the prospectus does not include the school aims or information about Statements of Special Educational Need; the annual governors' report does not provide information on school security; it does now contain information about special needs provision. Parents have good access to staff to discuss their children's progress through regular formal meetings, including opportunity to discuss baseline assessment for Foundation Stage children. The arrangements and quality of information available to parents of children with special educational needs are a most significant strength. For example, when the school identifies the need for school action or school action +, parents are always told personally to minimize any stress or worry, and so that they can ask questions face-to-face. They also receive full written details. Parents are involved at all stages and can contribute to their child's IEPs; they attend termly and annual reviews and are offered guidance on how best to help their child achieve the agreed targets. Parental comments in IEPs often express delight about the progress their children make. Pupil annual reports meet requirements to report on all subjects, provide test results in Year 2 and record attendance. Targets are included and are generally more explicit for personal development than for academic aspects that are often not specific enough.
58. Parents make a good contribution and are interested in their children's learning. There is an appropriate home activities policy that sets out school expectations, also reinforced well in the home-school agreement. Parents receive considerable guidance not only about the curriculum and what will be taught, but also booklets, for

instance on how to help their children to read. Parents of special educational needs pupils are often provided with a programme to follow at home, complimenting for example, work done in the 'Fizzy Club' or in speech therapy. The main focus of homework is on literacy and numeracy. Children and pupils from the nursery upwards are able to take books home very regularly and parents can comment in reading records. The provision of homework is good.

59. Parents' views of the school are generally good. However, a considerable number expressed concern at the system for dropping and collecting children. Some parents feel disadvantaged because they have to physically wait behind a fence in the parent car parking area and feel that communication suffers. Inspectors looked at this carefully and felt that given the number of pupils and the dangers of allowing pupils into a busy car park without ensuring they were individually handed over to a responsible person would infringe health and safety. However, inspectors also felt that the school should make their reasons for this system and the means of contacting and communicating with staff very clear to parents. Otherwise parents are happy with the education that their children receive.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

60. The headteacher's leadership and management of the school, including the delegation and contribution of staff with management responsibilities, are excellent. The headteacher and governing body have a clear vision of what is needed for the school to develop and to continue to improve. The headteacher's very good management has created a committed, enthusiastic and stable team that is mutually supportive and shares a very good capacity to succeed.
61. The role of the subject coordinators has strengthened since the last inspection. There are improved arrangements for coordinators to establish standards in their subjects and to identify strengths and weaknesses in teachers' planning. Teaching and learning are monitored in all subjects by the subject coordinators. All subject coordinators have half a day a term in which they have time to specifically monitor and watch their colleagues teach in their subject area. This is good practice and allows subject coordinators first hand experiences of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. The coordinators then act on their findings ensuring that the teaching pupils receive in each subject is relevant and supporting their learning. The headteacher also regularly monitors teaching in the school. The findings from this monitoring are included in the school improvement plan.
62. There is a nominated governor for special educational needs. She works hard with the SENCO to ensure the best possible provision for pupils with special educational needs. It is useful in that the special educational needs governor is also a learning support assistant working directly in the school, so that she has direct inside knowledge of what is happening in the school. The SENCO is very efficient and manages provision very well, ensuring that targeted and consistent support is available throughout the school to support pupils with learning and medical needs.
63. The school monitors its performance well. In addition to the coordinators, the headteacher monitors teaching and learning in each class each term. Governors are informed of the findings through the curriculum committee. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed. Assessment in the core subjects of English and mathematics is good and used appropriately when setting the curriculum.



64. Statutory requirements in relation to special educational needs are fully met. Individual education plans are in place and the requirements of statements are fulfilled well. Specialist support is made available and staff, including learning support assistants, undertake regular training and professional development. The provision made for special educational needs, including assessment and monitoring, has a significant impact on the progress pupils make. The SENCO has time to fulfil her duties and regularly meets the governor responsible for special educational needs, providing regular reports and information. Specific grants are used very effectively to ensure that pupils are supported, trained staff available and there is access to external specialists and resources. The funding and development of the school based and staffed occupational therapy 'Fizzy Club' and the training of learning support assistants in speech therapy, has had a particularly strong impact because waiting time for specialist attention is no longer a concern and pupils now have rapid access. However, the lack of designated space and time for the 'Fizzy Club' means that only a few pupils can access this very good facility.
65. The school improvement plan is an effective working document. All members of staff and the governors are involved in identifying areas which need development and a three year overview is established. The school has focused its development on the raising of standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics, and in their follow up work from the last inspection. The clear focus of the school improvement plan is starting to have a positive effect on raising standards. The school improvement plan is carefully and regularly reviewed.
66. The governing body has developed its role well to play an effective part in school development. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and actively contribute to the school improvement plan, which they monitor well. The chair of governors provides effective leadership of the governing body and her supportive professional relationship with the headteacher has established a good link between the work of the school and the governing body.
67. Very good procedures are in place to ensure that the principles of best value are applied. Results are carefully analysed and the school aims to increase pupils' performance as far as they are able. In the small number of pupils where progress is not as good, the school carefully ensures that appropriate provision is put in place to enhance these pupils' progress. Governors receive regular reports. All specific grants are used for their designated purposes. Satisfactory use is made of new technology to support management. There is a particularly large amount of money which the school is carrying forward. This has been designated for the new building works which have just been approved. This will give the school a new staff room, larger office, and a new entrance hall to the school.
68. The school has a large number of experienced and very stable teaching staff. This obviously has a significant effect and very positive impact on pupils' learning, as the teachers know the pupils well, and the pupils feel secure with them. The induction of teachers new to the school is very good and they are quickly made to feel welcome.
69. Accommodation is used well despite the lack of space. The recent additions of mobile classrooms have allowed the school to accommodate the growing number of pupils. From this autumn term there are now four classes in each year group in the school and a morning and afternoon nursery class. Both the internal and external grounds are very well maintained, and kept in good condition. Classrooms are well planned, making maximum use of limited space and enlivened with good displays and examples of pupils' work. The school has good quality playground facilities. Pupils

are fortunate to have access to a large playing field behind the school, which definitely supports pupils' physical development. Learning resources are satisfactory in most subjects.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to continue to raise standards, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- Raise standards in ICT by increasing the number of computers, through the building of an IT suite, giving more time to the subject so that all pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills across the curriculum within this subject. (paragraphs 9,30,103,110,135-138)

*(The development of ICT is included in the current school improvement plan.)*

Further issues, which the school must consider, are to ensure that all formal health and safety checks and 'risk assessments' are carried out and that the school policies and governors' annual report to parents contains all of the information required by law. (paragraph 53)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	21	35	21	3	0	0
Percentage	2	26	42	26	3	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 one percentage point.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	338
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	49

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*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	72	43	115

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	49	53	59
	Girls	33	36	37
	Total	82	89	96
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (85)	77 (84)	83 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	50	58	61
	Girls	35	36	39
	Total	85	94	100
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (85)	82 (87)	87 (89)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	321
Any other minority ethnic group	7

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9
Average class size	28.5

#### **Education support staff: YR –Y2**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	267

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	11.9
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
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

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	772,421
Total expenditure	694,322
Expenditure per pupil	1,990
Balance brought forward from previous year	105,062
Balance carried forward to next year	183,161

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	338
Number of questionnaires returned	78

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	22	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	77	22	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	29	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	62	32	5	1	0
The teaching is good.	86	13	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	29	3	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	23	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	34	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	68	28	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	21	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	24	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	22	13	1	19

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents are very positive in their views of the school and are very supportive of all that the school does. They believe that the school provides the best education it can for its pupils. The majority say that the school provides a really caring supportive environment in which their children can develop to the best of their ability.



### **Other issues raised by parents**

The inspection findings support the very positive views expressed by parents. At the time of the last inspection, and during this inspection, parents commented on their concerns about the way children are released from school at the end of the school day. The inspection team looked very closely at their concerns. Whilst sympathising with parental concerns at collecting young children at the school gate, the inspection supports the decision made by the school, to release children to their parents this way, in the interests of safety. The school itself is too small to cater for just fewer than 400 parents picking up their children and all entering the school at the same time.

## **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**

70. Children enter the nursery on a part-time basis from the age of three. They move into the reception classes in September, in the year in which they are five. More than 50 per cent of children attending the current reception year are from other nursery schools and playgroups. A significant number of them have not had any pre-school experiences. A large percentage of these children have their birthdays in the summer. The school has an induction time of four weeks in September for the children in the nursery and reception classes. Therefore, at the time of the inspection, there were about six to seven children attending the nursery at any one time and about 11 to 15 children attending either morning or afternoon sessions in each of the reception classes. This small group input into the start of their schooling helps children to settle in quickly to the general routines of the school and they are happy to come to school.
71. Many children enter nursery with very low level skills in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development. The very good teaching in the nursery enables children to make rapid progress in these skills. Children are assessed on entry to the reception classes. The results of these assessments last year, the teachers' observations so far and the lesson observations indicate a wide range of attainment, but overall, it is below the expected levels for children of this age range. The good teaching in the reception classes enables all children to make good progress and they are on course to attain standards in line with the national expectations of the early learning goals in most areas of learning. In personal, social and emotional development and in physical development they are well on their way to exceed the early learning goals. The progress in these areas is very good. Children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as additional language do equally well because the support offered to them is very good. The staff in nursery and reception classes work well together as a team to provide a happy, safe and secure environment where learning is made fun for these very young children.
72. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The school now has a secure outdoor play area for reception children and staff make good use of this in developing pupils' physical and social skills, as well as providing them with opportunities to follow their interests. The teaching and learning in physical development and personal, social and emotional development is very good throughout the Foundation Stage and, as a result, children are set to exceed the national expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception classes. The overall progress children make by the end of Foundation Stage is good. Children have the opportunities to learn about the purposes of literacy in everyday life, whether it is taking notes on the telephone messages in the home corner or making the shopping list or writing a thank you card to mum. However, this opportunity does vary from class to class in the reception year, and there is a need to develop this further by setting up more specific writing areas and by adults modelling writing for different purposes.
73. The following judgements are based on the evidence from the lesson observations of both morning and afternoon sessions, the scrutiny of children's work from the past and current years and on discussions which took place with children, parents and staff.

## **Personal, social and emotional development**

74. Children make very good progress in this area of development in both the nursery and reception classes. This is as a result of the very good teaching in this area throughout the Foundation Stage. Given the very low level of attainment with which children start the nursery, they rapidly gain in confidence in exploring the various activities set out for them and are happily settling into the general routines of the day. This is clearly evident as the parents come to collect their children. The children are so engrossed in what they are doing that they ignore their parents or they want to involve their parents in what they are doing. The use of 'Fergus the bear' as a friend to talk to and to take home works well as a link between home and school. In reception classes the children display high levels of concentration and involvement in their activities even at this very early stage in the school year. For example, children were fascinated by the movements of the volcano they were making in response to the music and some children carried this theme to their play in the sand by building a volcano. Through stories and role play they are beginning to learn about the importance of sharing and caring. The circle times and stories are used well to give children the opportunity to reflect on their feelings as well as those of others. They could talk about why Elmer the elephant was unhappy and reflect on their own experiences. They could suggest what they might do if their classmates are unhappy. Children in reception classes are well on their way, exceeding the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

75. The teaching in communication, language and literacy is good overall; it is very good in the nursery. Some very good teaching was also observed in the reception classes where the teachers used shared reading time effectively to show the children the direction of reading and developed their thinking by asking why Elmer was happy or sad. This encouraged the children to talk about feeling sad and happy by relating them to their own experiences. The good teaching in this area of learning is enabling children to make good progress and by the time they leave the reception year most children are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals. However, evidence from the scrutiny of children's work from last year suggests that a significant minority of the children are still working towards the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception year. This is because of the very low point they start in the nursery and the low level skills some children have when they start the reception classes in this school.
76. A number of children start the nursery with delayed speech and language development. The nursery teachers and the nursery nurse provide very good opportunities for children to develop their spoken language. There is a lot of emphasis on talk through play. In the sessions observed, staff develop children's spoken language by often repeating what they have said. They often talk about what they are doing and encourage children to do the same. For example, while playing with play-dough, the teacher explained that she is trying to make a cake and a number of children joined in to do the same. The teacher then asked the children what type of cakes they are making. This started them talking. Two of them said that they are making a birthday cake and went on to explain how it is different from other cakes by using words such as 'big', 'little' and 'round'. Teachers and learning support staff in reception classes build on the good start they made in the nursery by developing children's speaking and listening skills through carefully selected activities. Children in reception classes are beginning to show an awareness of the need to listen to others. They can talk about what they have experienced, such as what the fruits

tasted like and how they felt when they dipped their hands in the paint to make the hand prints.

77. Last year's children's work and photographs from the nursery show that through the characters of letter land children are beginning to recognise some of the letter sounds by the time they leave the nursery. The exciting role play areas and the selective guidance and support offered by staff in the nursery enable children to learn about the different purposes of writing and they ascribe meaning to the marks they make. Enjoyment in sharing and reading books are encouraged from a very early stage by taking library books home to share with parents. By the time they leave the nursery almost all the children can recognise their names and are attempting to copy them. Reception children enjoy stories and books. Teachers use the shared reading time very effectively to probe children's understanding of what was being read to them as well as to teach them meaning of new words. They use these sessions well to develop the children's imagination by asking questions such as, 'what do you think will happen next?' The higher attaining children in the current reception classes are beginning to read simple texts with confidence. They can talk about what might happen next in a story and state which part of the book they liked best. Most children are set to reach the expected levels of the early goals in reading by the time they leave the reception classes. However, a significant minority are at the very early stages of developing their reading skills.
78. A scrutiny of children's work from last year shows that the majority of children can write accounts of things they have experienced, like their trip to the farm, in simple sentences, using known words and making some attempt to write the unknown using their knowledge about initial sounds. Children's handwriting skills are taught in a systematic way and their handwriting is legible and clear by the time they leave the reception classes. This was clearly evident in children's work from last year. In the current reception classes, many children are using marks and some letters to ascribe meaning to what they write, for example, 'm' and marks when they are writing post cards to their mums. Opportunities for and the use of writing for different purposes through role play and other areas varies from class to class. Some good examples were seen in last year's work, for example, making a book about their visit and an invitation to their party. Good examples were also during current lesson observations, such as making a shopping list and taking notes in the doctor's surgery, but there were missed opportunities where the teachers could have used these areas more effectively by modelling writing and by giving a clear focus for the writing and mark making areas. By the end of the reception year a large proportion of children are set to attain the expected levels in writing, however, there are a significant minority who will attain below nationally expected levels, despite making progress, because they enter school with significantly low standards in this area of learning.

### **Mathematical development**

79. Children are provided with a range of activities to support their learning in this area. Although many children start the nursery with very low level skills in this area, the very good learning opportunities children have while they are in the nursery enable most to make very good progress. Nursery children are encouraged to learn about numbers through rhymes, games and role play activities. The staff develop children's mathematical vocabulary through carefully structured play in sand and water. For example, they were asked to think about whether a ladle or a spoon will hold more sand. They are encouraged to count the number of moves they make as they play the game about the spider in the web. Very few children at this stage could count or use mathematical vocabulary to compare size and shape. The scrutiny of children's

work from last year shows that they made rapid progress and by the time they left the nursery most of them can recognise numerals up to four and five and can make repeating patterns using two colours. They can match two-dimensional shapes and name some of them. Teachers in the reception classes build and extend these skills effectively and they make good progress. The scrutiny of children's work from last year indicates that their attainment is in line with that expected of the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Teaching of mathematical development is good in the reception classes. Teachers use the register time effectively to count how many children are in class at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. They choose the resources carefully to give children opportunities to learn about the names and properties of shapes. They encourage them to observe and talk about the corners and sides each shape has as they explore different shapes. Most children could recognise squares, circles, triangles and rectangles and they could recognise numbers up to six and sort objects using one criterion. Teachers use nursery rhymes and action songs well to develop children's understanding of ordering and counting numbers. Although there are some good examples of teachers using the outdoor area to extend their mathematical language, such as encouraging them to compare the game board with their heights, the possibilities of developing the mathematical concepts and vocabulary through outdoor play is not fully exploited.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

80. In the nursery, children are encouraged to use their senses to investigate and learn as they play with different material and toys. In one of the sessions observed, the nursery nurse phrased questions effectively to a group of children who were preparing for a day out to the seaside to enable them to talk and think about what they might need to take with them. Questions like, "How will we get there?" and, "What happens if it rains?" encouraged the children to think about how to solve these eventualities. One child decided they will take the car because it is far away and another one suggested they may need to take their coat in case it rains. They knew that people dress differently for different weather conditions. Opportunities such as these enabled the children to talk about their experiences. Children's work from last year shows that the nursery staff provide very good opportunities for children to learn about different aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world through different themes such as the 'underworld'. Staff use these opportunities well to develop their writing, speaking and listening skills. In the reception classes, teachers give children opportunities to learn about different cultures and beliefs through stories and festivals. Teachers use pictures and other artefacts effectively to teach children about how they are celebrated. Children know that Sukkoth is a harvest festival celebrated by Jewish people and they compare this with their own harvest festival. They can choose the right shapes and materials when building models and suggest changes as observed in a session where the children decided to build a bridge over the station and decided how to go about it. Teachers give children good opportunities to learn about different aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. However, there were missed opportunities where the teachers could have further enhanced these by offering children the opportunities to talk about and discuss what they were doing during the choosing activities at the end of the sessions. Teachers offer children good opportunities to learn about information and communication skills through programs like 'paint' where the children are showing a reasonable control of the mouse as they draw and make marks. These programs are used effectively to develop other skills such as their mathematical skills where children were making repeating patterns using a specific program. Scrutiny of children's work from last year indicates that by the time they leave the reception classes attainment is in line with that expected of the

Early Learning Goals for this age. They can name the different parts of the plants and record the lifecycle of a frog through pictures. Children can sort objects using the criterion 'new' and 'old'.

### **Physical development**

81. Most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception classes. The teaching in this area is very good throughout the Foundation Stage. The newly developed outdoor area is used effectively to develop children's physical skills. Children in the nursery are developing their skills in putting an apron on and fastening the buttons on their clothes. They are given opportunities to learn about and practice how to hold a brush and how to cut and paste materials to make their pictures in an uninterrupted way. This helps children to learn and correct their mistakes and learning is made fun. The children in reception classes can use wheeled toys with confidence. They show a good awareness of safety and space as they ride around the playground. They are beginning to show a reasonable control of their body as they make different shapes and movements of the volcano. Opportunities to develop their emergent writing and handwriting skills are very good.

### **Creative development**

82. Teaching in this area is very good in the nursery. Children are given the opportunity to experiment with different materials. The role play areas are used effectively to develop children's imagination. The staff are very knowledgeable about how young children develop a theme to their play and intervene only when necessary. Through their questioning they enable children to move their play forward. Scrutiny of children's work from last year shows that staff in the nursery encourage the children to use their senses to observe and develop an understanding of colours and patterns around their environment. The details in their painting of the shells show that the children have developed good observational skills by the time they leave the nursery. Children in reception classes paint freely and confidently using their imagination and experiences. They are beginning to learn about how to create new colours by mixing two primary colours. Teachers use these opportunities well to develop their literacy skills. They encourage children to talk about how it feels and describe the colours. Children are beginning to use the resources in role play areas as prompt and develop a theme to their play. Scrutiny of children's work from last year and the work seen so far indicate that they are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class.
83. The Foundation Stage is managed by two members of staff, a lower school manager and a teacher in charge of the nursery. Together, they provide very good leadership of the Foundation Stage. The guidance and support they offer for children, parents and staff are very good. The nursery nurse and learning support assistants make significant contribution to children's learning.

### **ENGLISH**

84. Results of national tests published in 2001 show that standards in reading and writing are below average compared to all schools but close to the average for similar schools in reading and below in writing. However, nearly 50 per cent of this group of pupils had special educational needs and therefore they achieved very well. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening are now average, which is similar to results at the time of the last inspection

report, and that teaching overall is good. The number of pupils achieving the higher standards (Level 3) is similar to other schools nationally. Pupils enter the school with standards of attainment below those expected nationally and therefore they achieve well as they progress through the school. This good achievement is due to the following factors:

- the excellent leadership of the English co-ordinator;
- good teaching;
- the way in which teachers work and plan lessons with each other;
- good assessment;
- detailed analysis of pupils' performance in national tests that impacts on what is taught;
- good questioning that encourages the pupils to reflect and explain their thinking;
- the very good support of the learning support assistants.

85. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are average. Teachers and learning support assistants are skilled at asking questions that encourage pupils to reflect and explain their answers. Therefore, over time, pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well and by the time they enter Year 1 many are beginning to speak confidently about their work and can explain what they have done and why. For example, in a Year 2 class, a pupil explains that, 'the word **wolf** is in bold print because the wolf speaks in a frightening voice'. Many of the older pupils are able to concentrate for long periods, listening well to explanations and instructions. Pupils listen intently to the story of Red Riding Hood, read very well by the class teacher. They put on masks and, with the learning support assistant joining in, speak confidently using a range of voices and actions to portray the different characters. Learning support assistants sit close to pupils who find it difficult to focus on what the teacher is saying or those who might not understand all that is said. They explain and clarify any aspects of the work that are unclear, and in this way these pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in the lesson and can play a full and active part in the activities that follow. Most pupils co-operate well and listen to each other when working on a joint project. For example, two classes in Year 2 each write part of the same story, one the beginning and the other the end. They then share what they have done; clapping spontaneously. Some pupils are still at the stage where they prefer to work independently and these are well supported in group work by the teacher, learning support assistant or a parent who encourages them to share equipment, listen to what others have to say and to respond positively to suggestions that might improve the standard of their work.
86. Scrutiny of work in books, displays around the school and observations of pupils at work show that pupils' handwriting skills are taught very well and by the time they enter Year 2 they achieve a very high standard. Using a cursive script, detailed in a computer program, they practice regularly, starting immediately they enter the school. All are expected to join their letters well before they leave to go to the junior school. All computer-generated work uses the same script and all teachers model the script very well when writing in pupils' books and writing on whiteboards. This has a very positive impact on writing overall and helps most pupils present their work well and spell common words and groups of letters accurately by the time they leave the school.
87. Standards in writing are average, overall, but some pupils achieve standards well above. They write for a variety of purposes and audiences and teachers often link different aspects of the curriculum together with displays reflecting this approach. In one class pupils had observed sunflowers very closely and written poems to

accompany their detailed drawings. One pupil writes 'Yellow-green stems, brown head wobbling, and bright yellow waving petals, beautiful.' They write play scripts for traditional tales, such as the Pied Piper of Hamelin, describe what they have made in design and technology and also complete sentences for a 'sports report.' They record personal writing, for example, when a pupil describes how he feels when something frightens him, 'I feel like my tummy moves and the rest of my body doesn't.' Most pupils use capital letters and full stops accurately before they leave the school and many can identify question marks and speech marks, although few use these punctuation marks in their writing unless directed by a teacher. During the inspection few pupils composed written work on the computer and those that tried were unsure of how to correct what they had written. Others were observed copying work onto the computer and, apart from familiarising themselves with the keyboard, they gained little from the exercise.

88. Reading is taught systematically and well and reading standards are average overall by the time pupils leave the school, with some pupils achieving very high standards. The school focuses appropriately on the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters and combinations of letters make when read) with daily lessons taking place for all pupils. The school has, through its very good assessment procedures, identified a large group of pupils that need additional support with all aspects of their English, particularly reading. Inspection evidence indicates that the focus on reading in lessons and the extra support given to small groups by learning support assistants has been effective in raising standards. Whilst the average and above average readers read well and with good expression, less fluent readers are beginning to use their phonic knowledge to build up words and are gaining in confidence as a result. Few pupils spoken to had formed preferences for particular authors but several said that they enjoyed poems that their teachers had read to them and all were familiar with the traditional tales and fairy stories used by teachers when working in the literacy hour.
89. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. Lessons are planned well to accommodate their needs and teachers are very well supported by well-qualified and efficient learning support assistants (LSAs) who often work with these pupils in small groups. They clarify tasks to be undertaken and seize upon every opportunity to praise and encourage these pupils, thereby boosting their self-esteem. For example, the pupil in Year 2 who spoke clearly and with considerable confidence to two classes about his work had been previously working with his LSA and, therefore, had been well prepared.
90. Pupils with English as a second language are well supported by teachers, LSAs and a visiting teacher that offers specialist support and also advice for staff. These pupils make good progress and, because of the extra support they receive and the good match of work in lessons, they make good progress.
91. Teaching is good overall. In the most successful lessons teachers plan well to meet the needs of all the pupils, taking note of what they had learned in previous lessons. These lessons proceed at a good pace, learning support assistants play a full and active part and teachers always ensure that they assess the learning that takes place by the end of the lesson. Teachers establish very good relationships with the pupils, are positive in their approach and this encourages the pupils to believe in their own abilities to succeed. In most lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work and this contributes significantly to the progress they make. In the only unsatisfactory lesson observed the pupils demanded too much of the teacher's attention and this caused the lesson to become disjointed, pupils became



bored and, failed to concentrate. This in turn meant that the learning objective was not achieved. All work in books scrutinised is marked, with most teachers' comments praising pupils' efforts. There are few comments that encourage pupils to reflect on what they have written and how to improve it still further.

92. The English co-ordinator provides excellent leadership. This is because she is a member of the senior management team monitoring the teaching of English regularly and giving teachers useful feedback that will help improve their teaching still further; In addition:
- she leads staff in the careful analysis of pupils' written work in national tests, identifying aspects of the curriculum where standards are still too low and ensuring that due emphasis is given to these areas of learning in lessons;
  - she organises training for staff and leads training sessions, for example on the teaching of spelling and early writing that impact positively on standards;
  - she has organised the focus on the teaching basic skills to about 20 per cent of the pupils in the school that has impacted positively in raising standards in reading and spelling. This has resulted in the school being awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark;
  - she initiated the development of 'story sacks' for use by the very young children.
93. The overall provision of resources is good. Every class has a good selection of both fiction and non-fiction books and these are supplemented by the school library that is soon to be expanded still further. Sets of group readers and plays are stored centrally. A small group of parents have made a large number of 'story sacks' that contain books, related games and models/puppets of the main characters. These are taken home by the youngest children in the school and help develop positive attitudes to books and reading.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. The majority of pupils enter the nursery with mathematical skills below those expected for their age. They make good progress so that by the end of the reception year the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals and are ready to tackle the National Curriculum in Year 1.
95. By the time pupils reach the age of seven, ready to leave the school, they have continued to make good progress. Their attainment, overall, is in line with what is expected for pupils of this age, however a small percentage are achieving above this standard in the 2002 end of key stage exams. This is a good improvement on the 2001 results, where they were assessed as being well below national expectations. Judgements are based on evidence found during the inspection, from lessons observed, interviews with pupils and from the scrutiny of pupils' work of the previous year and the current year to date.
96. Since the last inspection in 1998 standards in mathematics have improved over time. There is no significant difference between the attainment for boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and are ably supported by the learning support assistants who make sure that they have full access to the mathematical curriculum and support their learning thoroughly. Pupils achieve well considering that they start from standards which are below average. The school has identified those pupils who are particularly gifted and talented in mathematics. They are given appropriately challenging work. This was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson

where pupils were throwing dice and adding the numbers thrown to improve their addition skills. A particularly able child was given a dice with the numbers 9 - 14 on it so that the numbers he had to add were more challenging for his ability.

97. By the age of seven, pupils can recall their addition and subtraction facts to ten, can double single digit numbers and name two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. This is satisfactory attainment for pupils of this age. Most children are developing an understanding of place value and the meaning of vertical and horizontal. They increasingly understand a range of mathematical vocabulary, for example, they know that 'equals' means 'the same as'.
98. More able pupils can count on in sixes, sevens and eights; they can measure in centimetres and can recognise quarter and half turns. Most can identify right angles, can sort data into Carroll diagrams and can answer questions about a block graph. This is good attainment for pupils of this age.
99. The teaching of mathematics is good or very good in two thirds of lessons, with only two instances of unsatisfactory teaching. Where teaching is very good, teachers engage the pupils in real life situations, for example, in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were voting on which is their favourite cereals. Pupils made decisions, drew their choices, and the very good teaching allowed them to see for themselves how the early stages of collating scientific data develops. Pupils learn well in lessons where the teacher begins with a recap of the previous lesson and sets the context for learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the teacher goes over previous work about two-dimensional shapes before teaching the pupils about the properties of three-dimensional shapes. This reinforces pupils learning and helps them to make good progress. Good teaching is also seen in lessons where teachers use clear instructions which are easily understood by the pupils and where there are high expectations for the pace of pupils' individual work. Well-planned lessons ensure that there is a clear learning objective and that these are shared with pupils and referred to at the end of lessons. Effective learning methods using mental warm up activities develop a speedier recall of number, for all abilities of pupils. This was seen in a very good Year 2 lesson, where a 'munching monster' had been in the classroom when the pupils were out and eaten some of the numbers off the classroom number line. The pupils' attention was immediately transfixed as they worked out what numbers he had taken. They were quick to spot that the 'monster' had taken alternative numbers and left every other one. Teachers' subject knowledge of mathematics is good. Effective teaching is seen where teachers quickly spot mistakes. For example, a teacher noticed in a Year 1 lessons that when a pupil was counting along a number line and they *counted on* one, but they did not *move along* one she immediately corrected them. This ensures that the pupils learning is immediate and relevant. Very good assessment ensures that teachers are well aware of what areas in mathematics pupils need to develop. For example, an assessment task showed that several pupils in Year 2 were unable to accurately read a scale in centimetres. The maths coordinator correctly identified this as an area to develop and it was included in teachers' planning.
100. Learning is unsatisfactory when the individual work is not linked to the learning objective of the lesson and where clear instructions are not given. For example, in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were learning how to group tens and units so that ten units equals one ten this was not clearly explained to pupils and so they became confused about what they were supposed to be doing. Pupils do not learn as well in lessons where classroom management is not good or where they are expected to sit and listen for too long. This was seen in a lesson in Year 1 where pupils spent too

- long listening to the teacher and too little time was spent on the actual activity to support their learning.
101. However, pupils' behaviour and attitudes in mathematics lessons are generally good and are at their best when the work closely matches their ability. Most pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons, are positive about what they can do and enjoy the challenges that are part of learning.
  102. Mathematics contributes to other subjects in the school. For example, in geography, pupils use their knowledge and understanding of co-ordinates well, to support their work. Other subjects also contribute to mathematical understanding, for example, in art their knowledge of horizontal and vertical is reinforced through the study of the work of Pier Mandrian.
  103. Mathematics lessons are well planned to allow for the range of different abilities. Children with special educational needs are supported well by the Learning Support Assistants who work with them. Resources for these pupils are chosen carefully and they make good progress in lessons. Gifted and talented pupils are identified early in the term and, again, their learning needs are met. They are given appropriately challenging work which they enjoy and their learning moves forward well.
  104. The mathematics coordinator leads the subject well. This is an improvement since the last inspection, where one of the key issues was to ensure that there was an appropriate mathematics coordinator in place to support the work in the school. The quality of the curriculum has improved and the monitoring of teaching is now fully in place. A detailed assessment procedure has been produced which allows teachers to track pupils' progress from the end of reception through to the end of Year 2. Targets are set and an analysis of whether these are achieved or not (and why) is undertaken each year. This information is then used in teachers' planning to ensure that pupils receive an appropriate and well-matched lesson. All of this is having a positive impact upon pupils' learning and the standards which they achieve. The co-ordinator monitors lessons and a range of pupils' work. She identifies staff training needs and provides opportunities for these to be met. There is an appropriate range of mathematical resources which are well maintained. However, the lack of sufficient ICT provision does mean that some areas of mathematical skills teaching are not able to be taught so successfully, and the school is aware that this is a particular area for development.

## **SCIENCE**

105. Pupils start school with a lower than average knowledge and understanding of the world and make good progress during their time in school, so that by the age of seven, pupils attain standards in science which are in line with national expectations. This is similar to findings during the last inspection. Teachers' assessment of the standards attained by last year's Year 2 pupils show that this is an improvement from the previous year where results showed that pupils were well below national averages
106. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know which trees bear which fruit and which fruits bear which seeds. This was seen in work undertaken by pupils in Year 1 where they were looking at the names of different trees such as sycamore and oak trees, and they were able to identify the trees' individual leaves and seeds. Pupils in Year 1 can use a good range of adjectives to describe materials and they know that heating changes materials. For example, that bread changes into toast when heated! Able pupils can say which changes are reversible and which are not. Pupils can name shells which are found on the local beach; they know the life stages of a human and

can list sources of light and sound. They are aware of what animals need to stay alive and can set up an experiment to see what happens to a plant if it is put in a place without light. Pupils' knowledge about life processes and living things is stronger than the other areas of science. Pupils know their school grounds well and the plants and animals that live there. They also visit the local beach and can name different types of limpet. The emphasis the school gives to social and moral education is reinforced through science where children learn and write about how to care for creatures they find around the school.

107. More able pupils are starting to make predictions in their experiments and draw conclusions. For example, one pupil in Year 2 wrote 'I found out that everything metal made the bulb light up' in his work on electrical circuits. The majority of pupils in Year 2 can sort living things into groups. Pupils are occasionally given chances to find their own ways to record work but this opportunity is not always extensive enough. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, need to be given more chances to make predictions and develop their own lines of enquiry.
108. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in their science learning through careful planning by the teachers, so that their individual needs are met, and also by the support given by the learning support assistants in lessons.
109. The teaching of science is at least satisfactory in all lessons, with one third of lessons being good. In lessons where the teaching is good, activities are chosen which match the range of abilities. For example, in Year 1 pupils had to draw a healthy lunch box and explain why they have put in certain items, such as apples in their lunch boxes. Less able pupils were given appropriate pictures to cut out and to stick into their books. This shows that the needs of all pupils are catered for by the teacher and that all pupils are fully included in the lesson, and are given appropriate challenges according to their needs. Pupils learn well in lessons where they have first hand experiences. For example, in Year 1 when pupils tasted healthy snacks and in Year 2 where pupils touch fruit and seeds, to enhance their learning. Teachers hold pupils' interest by recapping previous learning and encouraging them to use all their senses. This was particularly noticeable in a good lesson in Year 2 where the teacher rapidly recalled pupils' previous knowledge through a good use of questioning.
110. Teachers make good links with science to learning in other subjects. For example, pupils use geographical skills to identify tree types and locate them on a map of the school. Work in science is also used to complement work in art. Pupils make detailed paintings to a very high standard of the fruit and seeds which they are learning about in science. There are some very good examples of artwork that link the study of seeds in science to water colour paintings of the insides of fruit and pencil studies of sunflowers.
111. Science could contribute further to mathematics by developing measuring skills in science lessons. Pupils use a scientific information program on the computer during their science lessons. However, there are missed opportunities because only two or four pupils are able to practice their skills on the computer at a time, and this hinders pupils' progress in the use of ICT to support their learning in science. Science contributes to pupils' language development through extending their descriptive words and phrases.
112. Science is well led by the experienced and knowledgeable coordinator. A new assessment system is in place which allows teachers to track pupils' progress annually from the end of reception through to the end of Year 2. The coordinator is

also developing an end of unit assessment system that enables teachers to be clear about the progress pupils have made at the end of each half term's topic. She has written a scheme of work for the school which ensures pupils learn each aspect of science in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. They also learn skills of scientific enquiry through each area they study.

113. Resources are well organised and sufficient for the school and there is a good selection of equipment for children to learn about life processes and living things. The coordinator monitors science lessons and is aware of teachers' needs, and plans staff meetings to support them.
114. Parents receive information booklets each half term about what the children will be learning in science and occasionally come into classrooms as volunteers to support science learning. This is good practice by the school as it allows parents to be involved in their own children's learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

115. The satisfactory standards found at the time of the last inspection have improved. Pupils achieve well and their attainment in art and design is above average.
116. An impressive portfolio of pupils' artwork collected over the key stage exemplifies the pupils' development of artistic skills, and shows the real progress which they make. These examples include works in the styles of Lowry and Van Gogh, and show very good progression. The pupils are able to explore ideas using a range of media including paints, charcoal, inks, pencils, clay, computer painting programs and a host of materials commonly found in the environment.
117. Through the year groups, art and design supports other curriculum areas very well, and shows very good quality work. For example, pupils in Year 2 are learning about fruit and vegetables in science and part of their work in art has been painting detailed pictures of the insides of these fruit and vegetables. They produce very good quality paintings.
118. Work on display indicates the high value that the school attaches to art and design. It also serves to reinforce the importance of its contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development, as well as their understanding of other subjects. Pupils in Year 2 were very motivated when making their own natural sculptures in the style of Andrew Galsworthy, and also when colour mixing. One very enthusiastic pupil was very excited when he discovered what was happening to the colour of his painting as he added more of one colour to it. He shouted out, "Miss, my paint's changing colour!"
119. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, work well in lessons, maintain a good level of concentration and think hard about what they are going to produce. They are happy to evaluate their work and appropriately seek and accept guidance from the teacher and other adult helpers. They listen well during the introduction to lessons and this helps them to work productively on their work. For example, one teacher used the Internet as an introduction for pupils in Year 2 as they learnt about the work of the sculptor Galsworthy. The pupils were very interested and then made their own sculptures from twigs and natural things found in the school grounds, in the style of Galsworthy.

120. The quality of teaching ranges from good to very good. The lessons seen were well planned and prepared. The teachers introduce the lessons clearly, building on work carried out so far. They show very good subject knowledge and encourage pupils as they work and guide them in using different techniques. Pupils are well motivated and learn successfully as a result of teachers' careful organisation, good relationships, high expectations and good use of prompting and praise.
121. The subject is well managed by an experienced subject leader who monitors work informally by display boards and through updating the school portfolio. She is well supported by other teachers and staff who also appreciate the role that art and design has in other subjects. The range of resources is good.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122. Scrutiny of work, photographs, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that standards in design and technology are above average, an outcome similar to that in the last inspection. The school has adapted the nationally recommended scheme of work, being careful to maintain the progression of skills that pupils develop as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are included well in lessons. Pupils in all lessons observed cooperate and work well with each other.
123. In Year 1, pupils design and make cereal boxes, a waterproof hat, a moving picture, a moving boat, a reflector, a tambourine, Christmas cards with a woven design and a helicopter. They also study the bird tables in the school grounds. They reflect on the needs of the birds and design their own bird tables using reclaimed materials and investigating different types of adhesives and joins. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the helicopters they have made, explaining carefully why they needed to increase the weight of the helicopter to make it work properly.
124. In Year 2, pupils design and make lampshades, fabric puppets, fruit bowls and land yachts. They draw and make bridges, investigate how pneumatics can make things move and learn about safe procedures for food safety and hygiene when they make bread. Fruit bowls were being made during the inspection and pupils explain that they needed to ensure that the finished bowls are going to be waterproof. One says 'if it doesn't work we change it'. Photographs show the excitement as pupils race their land yachts on the playground. Pupils record their work in books but also on sheets that ensure that a range of techniques associated with designing and making, including planning, evaluation and measurement, are used successfully.
125. Two lessons were observed in Year 1, both involving the making of bread. In both, the teachers successfully ensure that the importance of food safety and hygiene is emphasised. Pupils are excited at the prospect of making and tasting their own bread and listen intently as the teacher explains the process through skilfully asking questions and encouraging the pupils to reflect and think carefully about the process. The teacher asks, "How do we make flour from this ear of wheat?" After a few moments thought one pupil says, "We need to smash it up!" Later she asks, "How do I cook flour?". This in turn encouraged the pupils to reflect on the process involved and the materials that would be required.
126. The coordinator leads the subject well and has a secure overview of the curriculum. She maintains a satisfactory stock of resources and is aware that the use of

computers to further support pupils' learning in design and technology needs to develop further.

## GEOGRAPHY

127. A scrutiny of pupils' last year's work and the lessons observed during the inspection indicate that, at the age of seven, standards in geography are in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 1 observe and discuss features of the school ground. They can identify specific features of the seaside. They can draw simple maps of their school grounds and the street in which they live. By the age of seven, pupils are familiar with the concept of journeys. They can draw imaginary maps showing the landscapes they may see on their journey from one place to another and are beginning to use geographical vocabulary like across, over, through and in between, when giving directions. They can observe and record weather patterns using words and symbols. Quex Park shows that they are beginning to show an awareness of places beyond their own locality. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Opportunities for independent research, such as the use of information to find more about the places they are learning or why things happen, are limited.
128. Progress, overall, is satisfactory in most aspects of the subject. Pupils make rapid progress in route planning and map making. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and this is a direct result of the effective support they receive from the learning support staff.
129. The teaching of geography is satisfactory, overall. Only four lessons were observed during the inspection, two in each year group. All these lessons were on developing pupils' geographical language and on their mapping skills. The teaching of this aspect of the subject is good and pupils make good progress. Teachers use their questioning skills effectively to enable pupils to think about how they could give directions using the arrows and what features they need to include when making a map. There is a strong emphasis on developing the vocabulary needed to give and follow directions. This is very appropriate as many pupils start from a low level language base. The relationships between the pupils and staff are very good. Pupils are well managed in lessons. Pupils respond well to the practical work and they are enthusiastic about their learning. They are clear about what is expected of them and their behaviour is good. There is very little evidence of developing pupils' independent research skills in using the information to answer questions about why things happen.
130. In only two out of the four lessons observed is there any evidence of the use of ICT to enhance the learning in geography. This, and evidence from pupils' last year's work, indicate that opportunities for using ICT are not fully exploited in geography. Geography lessons provide good opportunities to develop and extend skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics, science, English, art and history.
131. The coordinator has developed a comprehensive scheme of work based on the QCA guidance and the needs of the school. It identifies a systematic development of skills and knowledge. The school is currently trialing a new system of assessment based on the work covered in each unit. This will further enhance the school's effort to improve standards. The coordinator is a geography expert and uses her expertise effectively to support and guide the staff. She monitors the planning and gets some non-contact time to observe and support teaching and learning. The information from these monitoring processes is used effectively to prioritise areas for further development. The resources are satisfactory and staff and pupils make effective use of them. The overall management of the subject is very good.



## **HISTORY**

132. History is taught in blocks each term. There were no history lessons taking place at the time of the inspection and, therefore, no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. The evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and the displays around school from the previous year, the medium term planning and scheme of work and discussion with a group of pupils, indicate that at the age of seven the standards in history are in line with those expected nationally for this age, and similar to those found at the last inspection.
133. The medium term planning shows that the required Programmes of Study are taught in half termly blocks each term. The skills and concepts are developed systematically through units of work. Through visits to Dover Castle and visits elsewhere, Year 2 pupils gain a better understanding of what life was like in the past. Visits to local areas, like the seaside and the local windmill, enable Year 1 pupils to compare the similarities and differences of the past and the present. Drama and role play, such as the one organised during the local Dickens festival, help pupils to create aspects of life in the past. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that teachers use the history sessions well to extend pupils' writing skills, such as taking notes, making lists and writing postcards and letters. However, there is very little evidence of the use of ICT to further enhance learning in history.
134. Pupils in Year 2 can describe what life was like in Victorian times. They can compare schools and lifestyle in those days with how it is now. They think that school life is much more fun now than then because teachers are kind and they don't hit pupils like they did during Victorian times. Last year's work shows that pupils in Year 1 can order events in a day through pictures and words. Pupils in Year 2 know who Florence Nightingale is and what she was famous for. They are beginning to show an understanding of why people behaved in a certain way through the study of the gunpowder plot. They are beginning to use pictures and artefacts to gather information about the past.
135. The management of the subject is very good, overall. The coordinator has a good knowledge about standards throughout the school. The effective use of artefacts is an area identified for further development. She has recently compiled assessment material for staff which is to be implemented this term. The coordinator monitors the planning and has some non-contact time to observe and support teaching and learning every term. The resources for history are good. Pupils and staff use these effectively. The school has maintained the standards and improved the assessment and recording procedures in history since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

136. Standards in ICT were above average at the time of the last inspection. Now, despite the teachers' best efforts, standards in ICT are below average. This is because the school, despite receiving additional computers immediately prior to the inspection, has insufficient resources to enable pupils, including those with special educational needs, to be taught basic skills effectively and too few opportunities to practice and consolidate the skills that they have when learning in other subjects across the curriculum. The school is also one of the last to benefit from staff training in the teaching of ICT and this is due to take place soon after the completion of the inspection. During the inspection the teaching of ICT was observed, but in some

classes opportunities to use the computer to support learning were either missed or too little time was allowed for the pupils to develop their work well. Sometimes the computer was not switched on at all.

137. In Year 2 pupils try and use the 'paint' program to draw a plant but one says 'I can't do it and does not have sufficient skills to complete the task successfully. In a religious education lesson in Year 1, the computer is switched on half way through the lesson but the two pupils chosen to work on it have insufficient time to achieve anything. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, four pupils begin to use the computer to reinforce the addition of two digit numbers. This was appropriate use but unfortunately they had only two minutes to complete the task before the end of the lesson. More time was provided in a parallel class and pairs of pupils used the computer well to reinforce the addition of single digit numbers and a system was in place to ensure that all pupils had equal access to the computer. In an English lesson in Year 2, two pupils copy work they had previously written onto the computer but when questioned and asked to correct some of the text they did not know what to do.
138. In most of the lessons observed the teaching of ICT skills was satisfactory overall. Each class is timetabled to teach ICT skills for 30 minutes each week. Using a useful but newly purchased scheme of work to support them, the teachers, in every session, gather the pupils around the computer and model the skills to be taught. In a lesson in Year 2, seven pupils know that work can be saved in a file but only one pupil out of 25 could identify a 'floppy disc'. Two lessons in Year 2 classes focus on the need for short file names but despite the best efforts of the teachers in modelling well and giving very clear explanations, lack of equipment means that the opportunities for pupils to practice and consolidate the skills taught are restricted.
139. Both the coordinator and senior management team acknowledge that ideally the pupils would benefit from a computer suite. It is also apparent that the staff need to adapt to the system of networked computers very recently installed and will benefit greatly from the training soon to be undertaken, not least in exploiting the many programs on the Internet that will support pupils' learning across the curriculum. The school is well aware that this area of the curriculum needs developing and has highlighted this in the school improvement plan.

## MUSIC

140. Pupils enjoy the range of music making activities provided and attain standards that are expected for their age, and is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are developing very positive attitudes to the subject and progress well. All teachers teach music and follow a scheme of work recently adapted from the national recommended scheme. Pupils sing with enthusiasm in assemblies, learning the words to the songs with the support of all staff present. During the 'singing assembly' a range of percussion instruments are used and pupils are praised for the way in which they maintain the beat – especially on the tambourines! Three productions, one for each age group, are organised annually and all feature music.
141. In Year 1, pupils are taught to recognise different sounds. When listening to Indian bells and triangles being played, they describe them as 'long' sounds. The teacher, using a CD player, plays extracts from Saint Saen's 'Carnival of the Animals' and

- pupils listen well. One pupil says of the passage representing the elephant that it 'sounds like the Beauty and the Beast music.'
142. In Year 2, pupils learn to control pulse and rhythm and also to respond to changes in pitch. In both lessons observed pupils are keen and focussed and enjoy singing popular songs in a high, medium and low pitch. Most demonstrate good listening skills as they play the 'stepping stone game' only moving when they identify the higher pitched note. At the end of the lesson, pupils follow the directions of the teacher, recorded in symbolic form, and hum a note varying both the tempo (faster and slower) and the structure (the different way sounds are organised).
  143. Teaching observed varied from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. In the best lesson the teachers' enthusiasm, management and use of ICT (a CD player) contribute to the development of the pupils' positive attitudes. Non-specialist teachers are helped by the way in which teachers plan and support each other.
  144. The coordinator maintains a good range of resources that includes a keyboard in every classroom. She encourages parents to collect vouchers that, last year, enabled the school to purchase an additional £1000 worth of instruments. Music will feature in an 'Arts Week' being organised for this school year. She acknowledges that composition using the computers is an area that needs to be developed further and also that there is a need for further training to ensure that teachers' knowledge and understanding are maintained.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

145. The standards in physical education are very good. Children are working well above the expected attainment for children of their age nationally. This marks a significant improvement for the school since the last inspection, where standards were judged to be satisfactory.
146. By the age of seven, pupils can throw and catch balls in a variety of ways. They show very good ball skills and are able to throw and catch to a very high standard. They can comment constructively on the work of their peers and improve their own performances by looking at others. They know about the importance of warming up before an activity and know why it is important to cool down slowly. Pupils demonstrate a high level of control, balance and poise in their dance movements. For example, in a Year 2 lesson they dance in movements similar to animals, such as foxes, sniffing their noses in the air and dancing out the movements of a fox. They show equal skills when working with a partner as swooping swallows; their movements were smooth and supple, using a variety of heights and movements. They achieved to a very high standard. Pupils are very aware of the need to be safe when handling equipment and have a good sense of spatial awareness.
147. All pupils have three half hour physical education lessons each week and very good use is made of the time. They change quickly, sometimes during registration time, so that no time from their lessons are wasted, and move sensibly to the hall, thus maximising the learning time allocated for their lesson.
148. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in physical education. Those pupils who need extra help are very well supported by learning support assistants within lessons. There is also the opportunity for some pupils with special educational needs to join the early morning 'Fizzy Club' which provides an extra physical learning opportunity in balance and control. Pupils attending this club

practise skills which then support them in physical education lessons. The 'Fizzy Club' is unique to Callis Grange. The school became aware that there were many pupils at Callis Grange who needed extra support in occupational therapy. Unfortunately, there is a very long waiting list in this particular area of Kent for this support. So the school has set up the 'Fizzy Club', trained the learning support assistants in how to support these pupils and is giving them the opportunity to have the support they need at an early stage in their development. This allows all pupils to have full access to the physical curriculum and shows the school's commitment to inclusivity.

149. Pupils' behaviour in their physical education lessons is very good and at times excellent. They enjoy their lessons and are able to talk about which aspects of PE they like the most. Physical education displays in the hall reinforce pupils' knowledge of the equipment. Sports Days for each separate age range are held in the summer to which parents are invited. These are very well attended and great fun is had by all.
150. Teaching in physical education is at least satisfactory and is very good in just under two thirds of lessons. In very good lessons teachers have high expectations of both behaviour and the quality of movement. Teachers choose children to demonstrate good movements and reinforce learning points. Children observing are encouraged to learn from their peers and they are then able to improve their own work. For example a child demonstrates a jump and the teacher asks the class to, "Listen to how quiet she is" Pupils then learn from this demonstration and perform their own jumps much more quietly, and with softer landings.
151. There are a good stock of resources which are of very good quality and are easily accessible to the pupils. Routines for collecting equipment, listening to instructions, and organising themselves into groups, lines or pairs are very well established.
152. The subject coordinator leads the subject very well. She has produced a scheme of work for the school and detailed plans for all the lessons. An assessment system has been developed for teachers to be able to track the skills of pupils. She has monitored lessons and provided feedback and has also drawn up suggested apparatus layouts for gymnastics lessons. The coordinator is very clear about the needs of the school and the direction of the subject.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

153. In religious education, pupils at the end of Year 2 are working at average levels in relation to the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to the findings in the last inspection report. Attainment is mainly satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but there are few examples on which to make judgements. This is mainly due to the fact that as it is the beginning of the new school year, most classes have only had one or two lessons of religious education at the time of the inspection, and a lot of the work covered has been done orally.
154. Standards of attainment are satisfactory in the very small amount of recorded work to be found. However, the older pupils for example, in Year 2, when learning about the Jewish religion, work hard and show that they remember a great deal from their first lesson from the week before. Most of the work covered is discussion based, and the good use of artefacts supports pupils' understanding and gives them positive images to enhance their learning.

155. The main world religions of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism are studied within the school. The school is well aware that there are few children of different faiths within the school, and therefore they work very hard to ensure that multi-faiths and cultures are represented and taught. This is a positive strategy by the school in order to prepare children for a multicultural society.
156. Teaching overall is good. Lessons are well planned and related to the locally agreed syllabus, backed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work. Good subject knowledge and a sensitive approach to the subject encourage pupils' learning. The good use of questioning seen in a Year 1 lesson encourages pupils to think carefully about their ideas and to give examples of what groups they 'belong to'. Most pupils replied that they belong to their family and to their school, but one girl said that she also belonged to her friendship group. This shows quite deep thinking for such a young child of only five years of age. Teachers give a particular emphasis on working together and collaboration during religious education lessons.
157. Arrangements for teaching religious education fully meet statutory requirements and time given to the subject is appropriate. There is an enthusiastic coordinator who has begun to build up resources and assessment techniques, although these are all still in the early stages of development.