

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MAUNDENE PRIMARY**

Chatham

LEA area: Medway

Unique reference number: 118525

Headteacher: Mr N Cutting

Lead inspector: S Tweddell

Dates of inspection: 9–12 February 2004

Inspection number: 256871

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school:              | Primary  |
| School category:             | Community                                      |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4–11 years                                     |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed  |
| Number on roll:              | 423  |
| School address:              | Swallow Rise<br>Walderslade<br>Chatham<br>Kent |
| Postcode:                    | ME5 7QB  |
| Telephone number:            | 01634 864721                                   |
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| Appropriate authority:       | Governing Body                                 |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mrs C Wadey                                    |
| Date of previous inspection: | March 1998                                     |

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Maundene Primary is a larger than average school, which has 423 pupils on roll. Children enter the school in September and January and there are 58 children in the Reception classes. The majority of pupils come from a white – UK heritage and there are a few from a range of other heritages. Pupils come from the area around the school, which has a wide mix of housing, and far fewer of their parents have attended higher education than is found nationally. All the pupils speak English proficiently. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The school has an about average number of pupils with special educational needs but the number with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is below average. The special educational needs include moderate learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Attainment on entry to the school is below average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |                  |                | Subject responsibilities   |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| 1709                           | Sandra Tweddell  | Lead inspector | History<br>Modern foreign languages<br>Foundation Stage<br>English as an additional language                           |
| 19436                          | Michael O'Malley | Lay inspector  |  |
| 15141                          | Paul Burlingham  | Team inspector | Mathematics<br>Design and technology<br>Geography<br>Physical education<br>Religious education                         |
| 28071                          | Andrew Williams  | Team inspector | English<br>Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Art and design<br>Music<br>Special educational needs |

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Maudene is a good school**, in which effective teaching leads to pupils achieving well by the end of Year 6 to reach above average standards in a number of subjects. This is because the leadership is good overall and the leadership of the headteacher is very strong. The drive for high standards is supported by effective systems of management. Value for money is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good leadership, focused on high standards of work and behaviour, enables all staff to work to a common purpose.
- Pupils are very well behaved and most have positive attitudes towards their work.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good.
- The encouragement for pupils to be independent supports their good learning.
- As staff have recognised and are tackling, a small number of boys have poor skills of concentration and motivation and so do not do as well as they should.
- Much effort is put into tracking the progress that pupils make; however, there is a lack of clarity about what pupils are expected to achieve at the end of Years 2 and 6.

The issues raised in the last inspection have been tackled well. Provision for religious education is now very good and much effort has gone into developing pupils' skills of investigation and use of mathematics. Assessment is now manageable and is used well. There are many more opportunities for pupils to work independently.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | All schools |      |      | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
|   | 2001        | 2002 | 2003 | 2003            |
| English   | A           | B    | C    | E               |
| Mathematics   | B           | C    | C    | E               |
| Science   | A           | A    | A    | C               |

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Pupils achieve well across the school** and have done for a number of years. After a fall in pupils' performance against their prior attainment in 2003 because of the nature of the year group and staffing changes, teachers extensively analysed the reasons and have changed teaching styles. Standards have risen again as a result: in English and mathematics they are above average at the end of Year 6 and have remained well above average in science. At the end of Year 2, standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), history and art and design are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and in religious education are average at the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Children in the Reception classes achieve well in all the areas of learning and many reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the year, although attainment overall is still below average, except in personal development where it is average. Higher attaining pupils are challenged by their work and achieve well, as do pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good. Although boys do better than boys nationally, a small group of average and lower-attaining boys do not achieve as they should when they are not motivated. Teachers have recognised this problem and are working hard to remedy it.

**The personal development of pupils is good** so they behave very well and most have positive attitudes towards learning. **The provision for spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good overall and is very good for moral and social development.** Attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**This is good overall. The quality of teaching and learning is good.** There is a good consistency of teaching and strengths are in the variety of methods that are used to promote learning and the encouragement of pupils to seek information and develop independence in learning. Effective use of assessment has led teachers to successfully introduce new approaches to motivate boys and to improve their achievement.

The curriculum is rich and the range of extra-curricular activities is good. Staff do their best to involve parents in the education of their children and are aware that more needs to be done.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good, overall.** Leadership and management are good and governance is satisfactory. Very good leadership by the headteacher enables staff and governors to share a common purpose of raising standards. Governors know the school well because of their good systems and they support it successfully, although there are areas where their work does not fully meet legal requirements. The headteacher and key staff have a wide range of expertise and very effective delegation employs this to the best advantage.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are pleased with the progress their children make and feel their children enjoy school. They think that teaching is good and that children are expected to work hard. They say that the school is well managed and they would be comfortable to approach staff if they had a concern. Children are treated fairly and settle in well. The inspection agrees that these views are justified. A few parents have concerns about behaviour, information about the progress that their child makes, and the amount of homework. The team found that these views are not justified. A significant number feels that their views are not taken into account. Much has been done about this and the headteacher is aware that more needs to be done on this aspect. Pupils are very positive about the school and most enjoy their work; they like their teachers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Continue with the methods to motivate boys, including working with parents, so that all achieve as well as they should.
- Sharpen the targets that pupils are given and review the methods that are used to work out what pupils are likely to achieve at the ends of Years 2 and 6.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Governors should satisfy themselves that regular health and safety checks are carried out.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well across the school and standards are above average at the end of Year 6. A small number of boys do not achieve as well as they should.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because leaders focus on high attainment.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in almost all the areas of learning as planning ensures that ground is covered well.
- Standards in many subjects are above average by the end of Year 6 and are well above average in religious education.
- Standards in mathematics are rising quickly.
- Much work has gone into raising the motivation of boys so that they achieve well in some classes, but this needs to be consolidated.

#### Commentary

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003*

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading       | 16.6 (17.0)    | 15.7 (15.8)      |
| writing       | 14.5 (14.9)    | 14.6 (14.4)      |
| mathematics   | 16.7 (17.1)    | 16.3 (16.5)      |

*There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003*

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English       | 27.2 (28.4)    | 26.8 (27.0)      |
| mathematics   | 26.7 (27.6)    | 26.8 (26.7)      |
| science       | 30.1 (30.3)    | 28.6 (28.3)      |

*There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. The above tables show how pupils performed in national tests in comparison with pupils all schools in England in 2003. Standards have been consistently high at the end of Year 6 until last year, when performance fell, most notably when measured against their performance at the age of seven. This was due to a number of factors. A large number of pupils are reported to have given up after the examination for selection as they saw no point in working hard. Many staff changes meant the teachers did not know the groups as well and a small, but significant, number of pupils had poor patterns of behaviour and attitudes that affected their work.
2. Following the dip in performance, teachers analysed the reasons why, including extensively analysing the test papers. The information was used to re-think the teaching of English, mathematics and science, which is one reason why standards have improved this year. Pupils are now building well on the levels that they reached at the end of Year 2. Standards of

English are now back to the high standards of previous years and standards of mathematics have risen and are equally good. Standards in science remain high. Standards in ICT are still above average, due to good teaching and provision.

3. Pupils enter school with below average attainment but when they leave school, standards are above average. This is because of leadership that is focused on pupils doing well and management systems that support good achievement. One example of this is mentioned above. Another is that the progress that pupils make is rigorously tracked and when they start to fall behind, they are supported through grouping arrangements, additional classes and work designed to get them back on track. An analysis of data, comparing the standards that boys achieve against standards in all schools, shows that boys in Maundene are doing better than boys do nationally. However, senior managers have tracked the progress of boys and found that they do less well than girls in the school, a view confirmed by the inspection. A significant number of average and lower-attaining boys have poor skills of concentration and are poorly motivated. This affects the standards they reach. Staff are working to raise boys' motivation through a pilot project that involves boys in Tai Chi and martial arts. Early evaluation suggests that this has successfully improved motivation. A local football club is involved with the school, the players acting as good role models for the boys. Alongside these approaches, staff have looked at different ways of teaching and are using a much wider range of methods than previously. In classes where these approaches are used, boys are highly motivated and eager to learn, and they achieve well as a result.
4. Higher-attaining pupils do well because the work is challenging and they are interested in it; also, grouping arrangements for mathematics and English support the progress of these pupils. Similarly, in mathematics and English, the provision is very good for pupils with special educational needs, who are taught as a small group by skilled teachers. One boy demonstrated how to use a spreadsheet to total a column; he was fascinated by the program. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, all of whom are fluent in English, achieve as well or better than their peers. This is because they are treated as individuals and their cultures are valued by staff.
5. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and almost all reach the goals expected in personal and social development and many, but not all, of the goals of other areas of learning. A few begin to work within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Standards overall by the end of the Reception Year are below average. The Reception staff concentrate heavily on literacy, numeracy and social development but also ensure that all the six areas of learning are covered. At this early stage, it is apparent that many boys have poor skills of attention and are easily distracted or lose interest if sessions go on for too long, which affects their learning.
6. Standards of mathematics are rising quickly because this has been a focus for development. Mathematics has been a weaker subject than English and science and the new leaders have introduced changes to the curriculum, including more emphasis on using and applying mathematics. In conjunction with this, most teachers have attended refresher courses in the teaching of mathematics. These approaches, along with developing a greater range of methods to take account of the fact that all pupils learn in different ways, are improving standards in mathematics.
7. Outstanding leadership is a reason for the big improvement in religious education since the last inspection. Pupils achieve very well to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6. The very good resources that are used very effectively to arouse interest, the depth of coverage of topics, and a wide range of teaching approaches, combine to make the subject hugely enjoyable so that pupils learn very well.
8. Strong leadership by the headteacher and other key staff, focused on high attainment has led to good achievement throughout the school.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes are good and their behaviour is very good. Their moral and social development is very good and their spiritual and cultural development is good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils show good interest both in lessons and other school activities.
- Pupils know what is expected and behave very well.
- There are very good relationships and pupils respect each other.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They are self-assured and keen to take responsibility.

### **Commentary**

9. The high standards noted at the last inspection have been maintained and improved. Pupils like school. The vast majority of pupils work consistently hard in lessons and many take part in the good range of activities outside class. They want to learn and they are confident to tackle problems on their own. A small number of boys fail to concentrate in some lessons when they are not motivated.
10. Behaviour is very good. The pupils know what is expected and the teachers work consistently to maintain these high standards. Pupils' relationships with each other and the teachers are very good. Bullying and racism are rare, and incidents are quickly and effectively tackled.
11. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are good because teachers and teaching assistants know them well and help them to learn and behave well. The school makes every effort to ensure these pupils take a full part in all school activities and they have opportunities to take responsibility.
12. The provision for spiritual development has been audited and improved. Assemblies are planned well and include themes such as "dreams and imagination" and "doing the right thing". They include story, symbols, prayer and reflection and help pupils consider values and beliefs. The school is very effective at promoting mutual respect and concern for others. Pupils readily accept differences and they make sure no one is left out. Pupils can distinguish clearly between right and wrong, and they are encouraged to think through the consequences of their actions. The work completed by pupils during *Inclusion Week* shows high levels of moral understanding on such issues as friendship, discrimination and the rights of others.
13. Pupils' social development is very good. The School Council and teaching in personal, social and health education lessons make a very good contribution to pupils' social development. There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and they carry out their duties well. Pupils are confident to work independently with research and investigation, and they collaborate well when working in groups. The school is extremely effective at building pupils' self-esteem so they are self-assured. Lessons in Tai Chi and karate help many pupils to develop remarkable levels of motivation, self-discipline, confidence and concentration.
14. Children in the Reception classes make good progress with their personal and social development. During the inspection there was an outstanding example of this. In front of the whole school assembly every child in the Reception class took part in their presentation of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. They knew their contributions were appreciated by everybody and therefore these very young pupils were self-assured and confident to "have a go". Their presentation was exceptional. The older pupils were enthralled by the entertainment and encouraged the little ones with much genuine applause. When the assembly was over and all the "fans" had gone, the Reception class teachers made sure that the pupils both reflected on their great achievement and congratulated each other.

15. A good range of extra-curricular clubs promotes pupils' cultural development. The choir takes part in local music festivals. Pupils visit the zoo, the local farm, museums, galleries, and other places of interest. Visitors such as musicians, dancers and acrobats enrich the curriculum. There is a dedicated week for art. Pupils learn about their own and other cultural traditions through assemblies and their studies in literacy, art, music, geography, and history. Studies in religious education are enriched with high quality visits to places of worship, and the school is particularly successful at helping pupils to understand and respect a wide range of different religious beliefs and values.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

| Authorised absence |     | Unauthorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data        | 5.5 | School data          | 0.1 |
| National data      | 5.4 | National data        | 0.4 |

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British                             | 399                  | 5                                 | 0                              |

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

16. Attendance is satisfactory. All unexplained absence is followed up. Poor attendance (less than 80 per cent) is followed up with good support from the education welfare service. Too many pupils take holidays during term time and the school is working with the education authority to tackle this. Good attendance is rewarded with certificates. Punctuality is very good and lessons start promptly. Pupils who attend for less than 90 per cent of the time, however, are not always followed up to improve their attendance. The exclusions last year were appropriate in the circumstances and were the first for many years.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good and is enriched well by a range of activities. Pupils are cared for well and links with parents are satisfactory with, some good features.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is effective and so learning is good. The use of assessment is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage behaviour very well, which supports the good learning environment.
- There is a good range of resources that are used well to motivate pupils.
- Teachers use a wide range of methods to motivate all pupils, although some are more skilled than others.
- Careful questions encourage thought and therefore good learning.

- Teachers encourage pupils to seek solutions for themselves, which extends and consolidates their learning.
- Teachers use assessment well to track the progress pupils make but the targets that come from this are often woolly.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons*

| Excellent | Very good | Good     | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2 (5%)    | 7 (15%)   | 29 (66%) | 6 (14%)      | 0              | 0    | 0         |

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

- Teaching across the school is good and there is little difference between teachers of different age groups of pupils. Staff are focusing on how to motivate boys through a range of initiatives and in most cases are successful, although there are occasions when boys lose interest and so do not learn. All groups of pupils are taught equally well. Higher-attaining pupils are usually challenged by their work that often includes additional activities. Pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented are starting to be given an enriched curriculum that extends their learning appropriately, although this is at an early stage. Most teachers are skilled at drawing on the experience of pupils who come from different cultures, which makes the pupils feel they are valued and contributes to their learning. In one assembly, two such pupils spoke of objects they had brought from their cultures that were special to them. They did so with pride.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and receive good levels of support from their teachers and skilled teaching assistants, who adapt and interpret well teachers' plans. This allows pupils to receive work closely matched to their needs and, as a result, they make good progress and achieve well. Additionally, in Years 4 to 6, pupils are placed in groups according to their ability for English and mathematics and in Year 6, they are grouped similarly for science. Where there are smaller groupings, the confidence of pupils with special educational needs is raised so they try even harder and as a result, make good progress.
- Since the last inspection, teachers have sought ways to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their learning and this is now a strength of the teaching and learning. This comes about through activities that are carefully planned to involve pupils in planning, in discussion of their ideas in groups and in presenting work in ways that they think is most appropriate. In order to do this, pupils are taught the skills to enable them to make these decisions. Teachers are skilled at asking questions that probe and extend pupils' understanding. Literacy is taught well through other subjects and supports this independence. Discussion in pairs and groups is often a precursor to seeking information; research using books, artefacts and ICT increases skills of reading, and choice of how to present their ideas from research extends skills of writing. In one lesson, after pupils had watched a teacher 'mummify' a body; they presented their observations in the form of posters, brochures and, in one case, an amusing play. They appreciated the choice they were given and their enjoyment shone through in their writing, which was of a high quality.
- The school has a wide range of resources that staff use well to stimulate interest and to raise questions, and which support good learning. Information and communication technology is starting to be used well to engage pupils' attention, particularly that of boys. One of the reasons for the improvement in religious education and mathematics is the range of interesting resources that are used well.

21. As part of a focus on helping pupils with different ways of learning to learn well, teachers have introduced a wide range of different approaches to their classrooms. The group and paired discussion is one of these approaches. Drama is used effectively by some teachers, which helps pupils to remember. Mind maps, putting information down in diagrammatic form, helps those who learn through visual systems and handling resources helps those who learn through their sense of touch. Pupils write down the aim of their work on every piece, which helps to focus their attention on what they are doing. These methods are used across the school.
22. Assessment and its use are good and many aspects are very good. Teachers assess the progress of pupils very well and track their progress regularly. The information gained from this is used to place pupils into groups according to their needs, and to set work that is appropriately challenging. Every teacher can say at any point in the year exactly how an individual pupil is doing using the excellent records. When marking work, many teachers, although not all, comment on how pupils can improve their work. As teachers know how pupils are doing, they pitch questions at the right level for each pupil. These features are very good. There are two areas within assessment that the headteacher knows need improvement. One is setting individual targets for pupils to move their learning forward, which currently lack focus for many pupils. For example, a target *improve handwriting* does not state clearly how this is to be achieved. The other area is to clarify what pupils can be expected to attain at the end of Years 2 and 6. Although the information is in the school, it is not in an easily understandable form, even though teachers know exactly how pupils are performing at a given stage in the term.
23. Teaching has improved since the last inspection because of the determination of leaders to do the best for their pupils.

#### **Example of outstanding practice**

##### **This example of teaching of religious education brings together a number of exemplary features**

Pupils had been asked to research a Christian organisation and were invited to present their findings to the class. This led into a discussion in pairs, discussing the text that Christians believe we should treat others as we would want to be treated. Pupils chose from a wide range of bibles to inform their discussion. This led to a lively discussion involving the whole class about their understanding of the idea. The teacher widened the debate by asking groups of pupils to apply their understanding to a range of situations they might encounter in their lives, from bullying to being the odd one out. The discussion was helped by the teacher moving round and questioning groups and also by the use of deadlines, which focused the pupils' minds. Excellent relationships in the class helped the pupils to explore these complex ideas with confidence. The learning was further extended by the teacher adding other factors to the one they had been given. The whole class relished the work and every boy and girl, whatever their ability, rose to the challenge. Higher attaining pupils reached a thoughtful compromise to their problem, a pupil for whom English is an additional language led her group well, and a pupil with special educational needs was eager to put forward a point of view, supported gently by the teaching assistant. Achievement in this class was very high because the learning was excellent due to the wide range of methods and range of resources.

#### **The curriculum**

The curriculum for pupils across the school, and opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation and learning resources are good.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils of all ages.
- The increasing use of ICT across the curriculum is beginning to have a positive effect on standards.
- Pupils work well independently and make good use of the wide variety of resources available.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities provided for them to use their basic skills in other subjects when the whole day is set aside for a special project.

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils learn very well during educational visits.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and they learn how to become good citizens.
- Assemblies are used very well to promote pupils' learning and development.

### **Commentary**

24. The school provides a good and varied curriculum for pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs, which fully meets national requirements. Pupils make good progress because lessons are well matched to their needs. The school's strategy for teaching literacy and numeracy has been successfully implemented across the school and pupils use their skills well to record and present what they learn in different subjects. French is taught to all classes and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities, which many staff are involved in providing.
25. Pupils enjoy their learning because the school provides a varied range of activities and many stimulating resources. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use computer aided white boards, to handle materials and objects and to listen to and respond to music in different ways.
26. Pupils have good equal access to the curriculum. Several pupils benefit from a most worthwhile range of musical instrument lessons. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs takes account of pupils' needs and is well planned. Teaching assistants are deployed well. Most of the support takes place in the classroom, which means all pupils have equal access to the lesson and do not miss out on parts of the lesson by being withdrawn. In Years 4 to 6, pupils are grouped by ability for English, mathematics and also in Year 6 for science. Through the use of catch up groups in Years 4 and 5, and smaller groups in Year 6, pupils with special educational needs have the optimum support.
27. On certain days, the routine timetable is set aside and pupils learn about a theme, which includes several subjects. Pupils respond very well to this thematic approach. They concentrate, make very good progress and use their literacy, numeracy and social skills very well. The school provides a good range of educational visits. Pupils learn very well through these because they are very well planned and closely linked to learning carried out in the classroom.
28. Religious education has improved greatly since the last inspection. It is now a major strength of the school. Pupils learn about different beliefs and how these influence the way people live their lives. They then relate this knowledge to themselves by thinking about how they want to live their own lives. This encourages pupils to be thoughtful, considerate and kind citizens of the school. As a result, pupils have good relationships with each other and this helps the school to be the calm and friendly place that it is.
29. Resources for ICT have also improved since the last inspection. The school is aware that boys respond well to active approaches to learning, including the use of computer-aided white boards. They are not yet fully used in some classes where they have been installed very recently. However, teachers of these classes plan to use the new equipment when they have become familiar with it.
30. Pupils share their work with other classes through assemblies, which are very well used to promote learning and development. Children listen with rapt attention to the work of other classes and respond well, showing their appreciation and support with a round of applause and by joining in well with singing.

## Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The provision for support and guidance is good. Pupils' views are sought, valued and acted on well.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes good care of pupils and takes good account of their views.
- Pupils' achievements are monitored well and they are given good support to help their progress.
- There are very good induction arrangements for new pupils.

### Commentary

31. The school has maintained the high standards noted at the last inspection. The teachers know the pupils very well. They understand and meet pupils' needs well so that pupils are secure and confident to get on with their learning.
32. The School Council successfully involves pupils in decisions which affect their lives at school, such as arrangements for play at lunchtime. Older pupils develop their social skills during lunchtimes by taking part in the Playground Squad, which is on hand to help others.
33. There are satisfactory arrangements for health and safety. Staff make sure that pupils learn and play safely. There is good first aid coverage and staff know about pupils with medical conditions. Hazards are identified and improvements made where necessary, but the premises are not inspected systematically and health and safety procedures are not regularly audited. There are effective procedures for child protection. The school is working towards accreditation for healthy and safe living. Pupils are confident there is someone to turn to if they have problems, and the school takes good account of their views and concerns through the School Council, circle time and, more recently, a pupil survey.
34. Teachers develop and modify the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and write Individual Education Plans, which are monitored by the subject leader.
35. Pupils' achievements are monitored effectively and extra support is given through additional programmes in literacy and mathematics. Pupils have targets in literacy and numeracy but sometimes these are too general and so do not move their learning forward as quickly as possible.
36. There are very good arrangements to help pupils settle into the school. The teachers visit the pre-schools and the children visit the Reception class twice before they start. Parents are kept very well informed through visits to the school, meetings and booklets. The school seeks parents' views about their children's development and parents come into school to help their children settle in.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school maintains a satisfactory partnership with parents so that they can support their children's education. There are good links with the community and satisfactory links with other schools.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The information provided for parents about the school and their children's progress is satisfactory.
- The school works closely with parents and responds to their concerns.
- Parents are involved and give good support to the school's work.
- The school makes good use of community links.

## Commentary

37. The school has satisfactory links with parents, and they are pleased with its work. Parents are kept effectively informed about what is going on in school through regular newsletters and meetings. The prospectus and governors annual report are informative and well written. There are satisfactory arrangements for keeping parents informed on their children's progress, including end of year reports.
38. The school works closely with parents and tries to satisfy their concerns. There are very good arrangements for introducing parents and their children to the school. Parents are kept informed about what their children are learning, and how they can help. They are encouraged to keep the teachers well informed about their children, and the school is quick to involve them when there are problems. The school has sought parents' views through a questionnaire and acted on them, and plans to do this more regularly.
39. Staff work well with parents of pupils with special educational needs and they have good opportunities to meet with teachers or the subject leader. Parents are informed at an early stage if the school has any concerns, which are then closely monitored. On a termly basis, parents are involved in the target setting in their child's individual action plan and may meet with either the class teacher or subject leader for special educational needs to discuss issues as they arise. Parents are always invited to review meetings for pupils with Statements of Special Needs.
40. Parents are involved with, and give good support to, the school's work. There are good arrangements for homework, including a reading record and contact book. Many parents encourage their children to take part in after school activities, and they support them at events such as school productions and the annual picnic. Many parents help with activities like collecting tokens and making costumes for school performances. A good number of parents help in school. *The Friends of Maundene* organise social events and raise funds.
41. The school makes good use of community links. A wide range of well-prepared visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. Pupils take part in music festivals and the local community supports the summer fayre. The Medway Education Business Partnership supports voluntary help with reading and the Young Eco Engineers project. Trainee coaches from Gillingham Football Clubs provide support for literacy and numeracy and the local martial arts clubs provides high standards of coaching for karate and Tai Chi. Outside groups use the school facilities and extend the range of after school clubs. There is a breakfast and after school club on the school site, and pupils attend the Medway Summer Schools.
42. There are satisfactory links with other schools. There is a developing partnership with pre-school providers, and teachers liaise with other schools to share best practice. There are satisfactory procedures to help pupils to transfer to a large number of secondary schools, but few joint ventures with other schools.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are good. Leadership and management are good. Governors have a strategic view of the school and meet statutory requirements, except for the breach related to systematic inspections of the premises reported earlier. Governance is satisfactory overall because of this breach.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher gives very good leadership.
- Leaders focus on high attainment and have systems to support this and so pupils do well.
- Governors know the school well through their twinning with subjects.
- Governors and senior managers seek best value from their spending.

- Professional development is used effectively to support high quality teaching.
- Performance data are used well to identify where the school needs to improve.
- The school improvement plan focuses on the appropriate priorities.

### Commentary

43. As can be seen from the report so far, pupils achieve well and have done so for a number of years. The main reason for this is very effective leadership from the headteacher. He has a strong presence around the school and knows exactly what is going on. His skills of delegation are strong, recognising and drawing on expertise of staff and preparing those who are ready to take leadership roles beyond the school. As a result, staff work to the common purpose of doing their best to ensure that each child does as well as he or she can. The management systems to support this are good and sometimes very good. Regular tracking of progress that pupils make and systems to support those who fall behind, for example, contribute to the good achievement across the school. Subject leaders regularly review the quality of provision in their subjects; each term a schedule of review is prepared, another example of an effective management system. Some leaders observe their colleagues' quality of teaching but before they do this, they themselves are observed. The good practice that each teacher has is, therefore, drawn upon to raise the quality of teaching across the school. The improvements in mathematics and religious education come from these approaches.

### Financial information

#### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

| Income and expenditure (£) |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income               | 977,703 |
| Total expenditure          | 979,755 |
| Expenditure per pupil      | 2,350   |

| Balances (£)                        |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year          | 77,000 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 74,948 |

44. Governors know the school well through their twinning with subjects. Each governor is linked to a subject leader and has responsibility for reporting on their subject to all governors. Last year, this system extended into a meeting between staff and most governors to discuss the school improvement plan. Enjoyable and informative discussion took place so that governors gained a good picture of the school and some insight into how teachers work. A few governors are skilled at asking the headteacher key questions about the operation of the school, provoking thought about its work. A considerable strength of the governors is the *best value statement*, against which they measure their spending, so ensuring that they use the budget wisely. A relatively large carry forward accrued last year because of unforeseen savings from staffing, combined with savings to purchase more ICT equipment. The best value statement came into play to deal with this. Next year, the carry forward is reduced to a small contingency amount.
45. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and is well managed. The subject leader is knowledgeable with a clear understanding of pupils' needs and works in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. She liaises well with external agencies such as the speech therapy department, Learning Support Service and educational psychologists. She attends relevant training and keeps colleagues well informed of developments.

46. Performance management is used well as part of the school's drive for improvement. Another strength is the use of professional development to refresh ideas about teaching. Almost all staff have attended courses to support their work. The improvement in mathematics is partly due to most teachers attending refresher courses in the subject.
47. The priorities of the school improvement plan are firmly based upon an analysis of the school's performance. One example is the work being done to raise the motivation of boys, which came about because assessment and tracking procedures clearly showed that groups of boys were falling behind. The plan is for one year but for ICT it is for four years.
48. This is an effective school because of the high quality of the leadership, which has led to a commitment by all staff to the common purpose of high standards.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

49. The provision in the Reception classes is good and children achieve well from a lower than usual point of entry, so that many, but not all, attain the goals they are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1. A small number of children work at the lower stages of the National Curriculum. The work is challenging, so that higher-attaining children do well as they are keen to respond to the challenge. Children with special educational needs also do well as their progress is closely monitored and provision adapted for them. Children for whom English is an additional language, all of whom are proficient in speaking English, do well as they are treated equally by the adults. Some boys have poor skills of listening and concentration and quickly lose interest.
50. Teaching and learning are good because the good planning ensures that all areas of learning are covered well. The teachers are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to move children's learning forward. Assessment is regular and used well; staff are coming to grips with the new Foundation Stage Profile that they are using to record the progress of children. This is causing them to think again about how they transfer information to the teachers of Year 1 and so this area is currently being developed. It has led to even better links with parents as parents are invited in individually to discuss their children before they enter the school and an extra day has been set aside to talk through each child's profile with the parents. Links with parents are very strong as a result. Leadership and management are strong and staff plan well together as a team.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well and attainment is average by the end of the Reception Year.
- The area is a very strong focus of the provision and is taught well so that most activities are designed to promote personal development.
- Good relationships between staff and children support this area well.
- Occasionally children are directed too much and so do not have chance to explore their own ideas.
- Sometimes, there are insufficient adults to develop the skills of children who need more support.

#### **Commentary**

51. Most of the activities in the Reception classes are planned with children's social development in mind. They are encouraged to be independent about putting on coats and aprons when they do art or other such activities. They are also encouraged to take responsibility for tidying up after they have finished working with materials. Teachers take every opportunity to encourage them to share, to think of others and to behave well. As a result, all make good progress and the majority achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year.
52. Adults who work in the Reception classes work well together and their relationships provide good role models for the children. Sometimes, a very small number of children become bored with an activity and wander aimlessly around and there are insufficient adults to encourage them to find another activity. This is more true of boys and the youngest children. On a small number of occasions, children have to wait for all to decide on an activity before they can begin their chosen one, which holds back their learning.

53. The assembly led by the Reception class was testimony to the good provision in this area. Children had worked on the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and prepared a play. Four children confidently took on the roles in front of the whole school. Every child walked to the microphone and spoke a line from the story, some needing more support than others but almost all having the confidence to speak. Nearly every pupil who watched encouraged them with smiles and laughter when it was expected. The youngest children in the school play a role as part of the school community, which supports their personal, social and emotional development.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well because of the strong focus on this area and effective teaching.
- There are good opportunities to develop a love of books.
- Sometimes the sessions are too long for some children.

### **Commentary**

54. Many children attain the goals they are expected to reach in this area of learning, but a significant number do not because their skills on entry are poor. Attainment is therefore still below average by the end of the Reception Year. All make good progress as this area is given much time in the Reception Year.
55. Children are encouraged to listen to stories and to instructions and to talk about their work. Adults extend children's language well through discussion. Older children chatter to one another sociably, sometimes planning together when using small construction equipment.
56. A strong emphasis is placed on reading with the children and activities are often based on the theme of a story such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Adults' questions encourage children to focus on text and to talk about the pictures. Teachers place much emphasis on the teaching of phonics through practising sounds and recognising letters. One boy quickly pointed out that a sound was like his name. Three girls read a book together, thoroughly enjoying telling the story from the pictures. One class wrote the story of Goldilocks as a big book for all to share and a boy was eager to read the book aloud, using his knowledge of the story and the pictures to help him tell the story accurately. When he came to key phrases of the story, such as 'that one's too big, this one's too small', he read them expressively and with great enjoyment.
57. The teaching of letters is complemented by children tracing shapes of letters, in the air and in dance sessions with ribbons. Children are encouraged to match shapes and pictures and to write their names. Sometimes, the sessions are too long for those with poor spans of concentration and they lose interest, wandering off to find an alternative activity.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well as the teaching is good.
- There are many opportunities to count and to learn about number.

## **Commentary**

58. Children achieve well in this area and many reach the goals that are expected of children by the end of their year in the Reception class. A few are working on the early stages of the National Curriculum. Standards at the end of the year are near to average.
59. Staff lay great emphasis on this area of learning and provide many opportunities to develop understanding about number through a range of activities and resources, such as role-play and ICT. Children learn to add on and take away by using their fingers and many can count up to 10 and some up to 20. A few count backwards from 10.
60. Children gain an understanding of shape through their work with a range of different shaped boxes and equipment based on triangles. They make patterns and pictures, fitting shapes together, and learn about the language of position through instructions and their work in the outdoor play area when they go through, over and under equipment. There are many good opportunities to measure through role-play and through cutting shapes, such as hearts for their Valentine's Day cards.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

61. This area was sampled and what was observed was good. Children are invited to investigate an object when they enter the room first thing in the morning. On one day, the object was a magnifying glass and the children enjoyed looking through it. This stimulated their curiosity about the world and helped them to appreciate the magic of it. In the ICT suite, children learn to use computers; in one session, they learned how to use a paint program to create pictures of Goldilocks and the three bears. Many girls created a picture with good attention to detail, such as the length of Goldilocks' hair, and with careful use of the mouse to join colours together without gaps. Some children painted brown blobs to represent the bears. All were proud of their efforts and spellbound when the pictures magically emerged through the printer!

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The range of equipment to promote this area is used well.
- Planning ensures that this area is covered well.

## **Commentary**

62. Children achieve well in this area of learning because of effective teaching and many, but not all, reach the goals expected of children by the time they enter Year 1. Standards are broadly in line with what is expected of children by the end of their year in the Reception class. The Reception classes are well equipped for this area, although there are still no large climbing frames, which was suggested in the last report. Staff plan to purchase these when the School Council has decided on playground equipment for the school, as they wish the children in the Reception classes to have something different. Children have good opportunities to use the physical education equipment of the school. In their work outside, they are given opportunities to develop skills through using bikes, cars and other small apparatus. A few children are aware of others and move carefully; others have not yet developed an awareness of space but the support from the adults ensures that all movements are safe. A group of children enjoyed the challenge of going through an obstacle course, balancing on the equipment and weaving over and under obstacles. Many needed the guidance of the assistant to help as they lacked skills of co-ordination. More confident children used much concentration to balance carefully. Staff encourage children to think about healthy living and a few children are aware that fruit is a healthy food.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities to develop creativity through a range of activities.
- Dance helps both physical and creative development.
- Sometimes, children are not able to explore their own ideas to the full.

### Commentary

63. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area and some, but not all, reach the goals expected of them by the time they leave the Reception class. Standards are still below average. Teaching is satisfactory. Children have good opportunities to use role-play and they enjoy working together in this area. Teachers change activities every few days so that children can explore different media; for example, the activity for the week was making Valentine's Day cards, which involved physical development with a small element of creativity. On another day, paint was available. A good feature of working with painting materials is that children are encouraged to choose the colours they want and to set up the painting table according to their ideas. They carefully poured paint into the dishes and selected brushes, ready to start work using their own ideas.
64. Children are given opportunities to make music using the good range of equipment that is available. They are directed as to how to use the instruments. In one lesson, children worked in groups, taking it in turns to follow a conductor, who chose when to play and when to stop. Apart from this, there was little chance to explore the different sounds of the instruments and to compose a piece. Two groups of boys, eleven in all, became bored and the instruments were taken from them until it was their turn to perform. They sat quietly but did not have the skills of concentration or listening to learn much from the lesson.
65. Dance is taught formally as part of physical education. Children are given some opportunities to develop their own dance, using the ideas given to them by the teachers to build up a sequence of movements. Resources are used well for this.
66. The provision in this area is satisfactory with good elements. The provision could be further improved by giving children more time to explore their own ideas and to weave their ideas into their own work to create something new.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

#### English

Provision in English is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well, except for some lower-attaining boys.
- Standards in handwriting are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and as a result, pupils present their work well.
- Most teaching is good.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Pupils' targets are not specific and the time-scale to achieve them is too long.

## Commentary

67. Standards have been maintained from the time of the last inspection and are above average for pupils by the end of Year 6 and average by the end of Year 2. This means pupils throughout the school make good progress and achieve well because children enter the school with attainment that is below average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support they receive from teaching assistants and the arrangements in Years 4 to 6, where pupils are taught in groups according to their abilities. Lower-attaining boys do not always achieve well. The school has identified this and uses methods such as using texts that appeal to boys and the involvement of trainee coaches from Gillingham Football Club in lessons to act as role models.
68. Teaching of handwriting is good and, as a result, standards in handwriting are above average for all pupils. This allows pupils to present their work well and take a pride in the appearance of their work. Most eleven-year-olds use a range of punctuation and organise their work into paragraphs. All pupils have studied a range of different writing. Most seven-year-olds write in clear sentences, with higher-attaining pupils choosing vivid and well chosen details in their writing.
69. Standards of reading are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practise reading through well guided reading sessions in addition to the Literacy Hour. Teachers act as good models in reading for emphasis and encourage pupils to read with expression. Pupils are enthusiastic readers because of the efforts the school has made to find interesting texts and some are avid readers who enjoy a range of authors. Many lower-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational need are also enthusiastic readers because they are given good support and experience a wide range of good books and other reading material. Younger pupils use books from a range of reading schemes, which support the development of their reading skills.
70. Most teaching is good. Lessons are well planned. At the beginning of lessons, teachers tell pupils what they are to learn and this helps pupils to focus well on the lesson. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is good, with teachers of older pupils writing helpful comments about how to make the work better. Teachers of younger pupils tell pupils how their work can be improved. Teachers also indicate if pupils have achieved the aim of the lesson, often with a mark in pupils' workbooks. The grouping arrangements for pupils in Years 4-6 allows these teachers to more closely match the work to pupils' needs and abilities and smaller groupings allow more individual support to be given. In lessons where small numbers of pupils who need extra support to reach their targets are grouped together, most pupils achieve well, concentrate hard and behave well. In a good Year 6 lesson pupils worked well with each other when they learned to produce a balanced report on pupils and mobile telephones. In a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher used a novel approach of a *corridor conscience* activity, where one pupil walked between a corridor of pupils, each pupil suggesting a particular way to deal with a situation arising in the poem they were studying. Pupils showed good respect for each other when they listened well to each other's contributions and this made a good contribution to their social development.
71. All pupils are given opportunities to practise their speaking skills and become more confident through assemblies and school performances. Teachers give opportunities for discussion in a number of lessons, for instance when teachers routinely ask pupils to work in small groups or to evaluate their work, such as during a Year 3 music lesson. Teaching assistants help less able pupils by working with small groups and encouraging them to talk and to listen to each other. As a result, eleven-year-old pupils listen thoughtfully and explain their opinions clearly. Seven-year-old pupils are encouraged to express their ideas and listen to the opinions of others and they respond well to this.
72. The leadership of the subject is good. The leaders work well with each other; they have identified the weakness of underachieving boys and have put in place effective strategies to

deal with the issue. A good range of out of school activities supports the raising of standards of older pupils, such as booster classes, lunchtime clubs and Saturday morning clubs. There are good systems in place to track pupils' performance but targets set for pupils to improve are not sufficiently specific and the time scale to achieve them is too long. Resources in the school are good, although, because of lack of space, one of the libraries is used as a teaching area. There are few books showing the range of diverse cultures to prepare pupils to live in modern day Britain.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

73. These skills are taught well across the curriculum and good planning gives pupils opportunities to apply them. For instance, they make good use of their extended writing skills when composing reports, detailing results in history and geography and recording the results of their science investigations. They use word processing skills in ICT to support their work.

### **French**

74. All children learn French in short sessions across the week. Children in the Reception classes sometimes answer the register in French and pupils in Year 6 have a formal weekly session. It was not possible to gain a picture of the subject, as it is not taught to a regular pattern.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils make good progress because lessons are well planned and teachers explain new ideas clearly.
- Computer-aided white boards are increasingly well used.
- A small group of boys underachieve.
- In the best lessons a variety of practical tasks is provided to enable pupils to learn in different ways.
- Lessons always have precise aims, but opportunities for pupils to review their own progress are not routinely provided in all classes.

### **Commentary**

75. Most pupils enter the school with below average mathematical understanding. Inspection evidence found that attainment in the current Year 2 is at least in line with national averages and attainment in the current Year 6 is above average. Overall, pupils achieve well and make good progress against prior levels of learning. In the best lessons pupils learned at a very good pace. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. Where support staff are confident in the use of computer-aided white boards, they help pupils to make good progress by using this equipment with them.
76. More able pupils are well provided for. In Year 2 able pupils are given challenges, such as making up a task for their partner, then carrying out a task made up by their partner. Arrangements for grouping pupils by ability in Years 4 to 6 ensure that higher-attaining pupils make good progress.
77. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, they achieve as well as their peers in mainstream classes. Pupils of different ethnic backgrounds make similar progress.
78. The school is aware that there is some underachievement among a small group of boys. To tackle this teachers have attended refresher courses and are now using a variety of activities to enable pupils to learn in different ways, such as by looking, listening and handling practical

apparatus. Boys and girls achieve equally well in those lessons where expectations of them are high. They receive appropriate support and any lapse of concentration is promptly dealt with. The level of support and challenge for boys is inconsistent. Boys enjoy using computer aided white boards where they have to touch the screen as quickly as they can and activities are sometimes carried out against the clock. They respond well to this competition. In one lesson pupils were challenged to do as much work as they could before a timer rang. In another lesson pupils learned very well about angles through a lively card game involving identifying and sorting different kinds of angles. In these lessons boys used every minute of the lesson for learning.

79. The last inspection found that pupils were not given opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in practical situations. There has been good improvement since then. Pupils are good at using and applying their mathematical knowledge because they are regularly given opportunities to apply their skills in different ways. In the best lessons teachers use probing questions to encourage pupils to describe how they carry out calculations and why they choose their preferred method. In a very good lesson in Year 2 pupils listened intently to the sound of five pence coins dropping into a tin and used the sound to calculate the total amount of money in the tin. This gave them good practice at applying their mathematical knowledge to solve a problem.
80. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons always have precise aims; however, pupils do not always have opportunities to review their own progress. In lessons where they do, they are asked to let the teacher know whether they have understood their work. They willingly show their teacher, for example by signalling with their thumbs, whether they think they understand their work or need a little more practice. This enables boys and girls to feel involved in their own learning. It also helps teachers to assess pupils' confidence in new work. Marking includes guidance for pupils about how they can improve their attainment. Pupils also extend their learning through a variety of homework activities.
81. Good, committed leadership by subject leaders and all staff is helping to raise standards. Staff make good use of the refresher courses which most have attended.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

82. The basic skills of numeracy are satisfactorily taught in many lessons. In history lessons pupils calculate how long ago events occurred. In science pupils draw line graphs to show the distances balls roll when launched at different angles.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6, though boys do not perform as well as girls.
- Most teaching is good and skills of investigation are taught well.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons, want to learn and achieve well.
- Subject leadership is very good.

## Commentary

83. Above average standards of attainment have been maintained from the time of the last inspection, and pupils achieve well throughout the school. Results in national tests for eleven-year-olds have been consistently well above average compared with all schools, and work by current pupils in Year 6 shows these standards are being maintained. Pupils have a good knowledge across all areas of science and have a good understanding of how to carry out an investigation to ensure that it is a fair test. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good teaching and support they are given in class. The school has correctly identified underachievement of boys and has good strategies in place to overcome this.
84. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average. Pupils show a good understanding, for instance, about exercise and a healthy diet. They predict what might happen in an investigation and pupils in Year 1 develop their understanding of the concept of a fair test during their investigations into waterproof materials.
85. Most teaching is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well. Lessons are well planned and interesting and have a good emphasis on investigative work and, as a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and want to learn. In a good Year 6 lesson the teacher made very good links with pupils' work on ancient Egyptians and used ICT well to introduce the lesson on investigating the best material to use to preserve an Egyptian mummy. Throughout the lesson the teacher referenced the work to other aspects of science such as functions and names of body parts, and at the end of the lesson used ICT well to revise aspects of pupils' work. Pupils in Year 4 develop their recording skills well when they tabulate the results of their investigation and Year 3 and Year 4 pupils are able to write up their investigations well because the teachers give them good models from which to work. All work is well presented.
86. Very good subject leadership has maintained high standards over the years. The subject leader has a good understanding of the subject and, with colleagues, works hard to maintain standards. There has been effective staff training and there are good levels of resources. Pupils are placed in groups according to their ability in Year 6 and this allows for teaching to be more focused on the needs of pupils in the class.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Well designed lessons interest pupils and cover a range of skills.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Resources are good.
- ICT is used well across the curriculum.

## Commentary

87. The school has maintained above average standards since the time of the last inspection, and pupils continue to achieve well throughout the school. Teaching and learning are good and the subject is well led. Pupils take part in interesting, well-planned lessons that begin with the teacher using the computer-aided white board to inform pupils what they will learn during the lesson in the ICT suite. For example, Year 6 pupils use graphics packages to present their work and in a good lesson made good use of spreadsheets to solve a mathematical investigation about owning a theme park. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 use PowerPoint presentations, the Year 5 pupils linking well with their work on the Tudors. Pupils in Year 2

use well a CD-ROM to search for information, for example, about Kenya, and some higher-attaining pupils were able to use this and at the same time open another program, so enabling them to record their work directly into the computer.

88. The good range of activities is supported by good levels of resources, which include a computer suite and a computer-aided white board in every classroom, and good support from the subject leaders, who are confident in their teaching. A full time technician is available to support the work and overcome any technical problems that may occur. The training teachers have received, the confidence shown by the leaders and the good resources have improved teachers' skills, which lead to high standards.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

89. There is good use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum. It is routinely used in mathematics, English, science, art and design, history and geography. Pupils often see their teachers using ICT to teach innovatively, to see the links with other subjects. As a result, pupils develop good skills with ICT.

### **HUMANITIES**

90. **Geography** was sampled as it is taught in a block of time and so was not being taught during the inspection. Evidence from pupils' work indicates that standards throughout the school are broadly average. Pupils begin to learn mapping skills in Year 1, when they find their routes to school on a street map. In Year 2 they draw their route to school and describe it. In Year 3 their study of maps develops as they find out about the street layout in nearby Rochester.
91. Pupils in Year 5 use their skills to identify a problem in the school site and develop solutions. They develop ideas and draw a sketch plan to show how the environmental pond area within the school might be improved. Pupils in Year 6 become aware of environmental issues on a larger scale. They considered the impact of widening the M2 and designed a questionnaire to seek views about this.
92. Pupils in Year 6 extend their knowledge by studying a contrasting area. In a study of Egypt they learn about how the river Nile affects the locality and the lives of those who live there. They debate the building of the Aswan Dam and give reasons for their views as to whether the dam is a good thing for Egypt.

### **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well across the school and standards are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Many lessons are interesting, so that pupils want to learn.
- Resources, including visits, are used well to extend learning.
- Pupils use skills of literacy well to research and present their work.

### **Commentary**

93. Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well. This is because planning is good and topics are taught in depth. More able pupils are usually challenged well by the tasks they are asked to do and so they achieve well. The focus on motivating boys leads to many lessons that are interesting and so boys are eager to take part and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support that encourages them to listen and contribute and most lower-attaining pupils achieve well, although in some

classes they do not finish the work as it takes them longer to complete than other pupils. The pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers as they are treated equally and their views are valued. Pupils in Year 2 spoke enthusiastically about their work in history. All could talk at length about Florence Nightingale, helped by performing her story as a play in an assembly. They are developing a good understanding of time and explained how timelines represent different periods. A girl was keen to work out that 1902 was 'a century and one — mm—no, two years ago', using her skills of numeracy very well indeed.

94. Teaching and learning are good and many lessons are highly motivating. Pupils are very clear about the aims of lessons, writing them at the top of their work as a reminder. This focuses their attention on what they are doing, so that they learn well. Historical skills are taught well especially by effective questions that challenge pupils to work out solutions to problems about the past. In a Year 5 lesson, as part of work on the Tudors, the teacher wanted the class to work out the difference between *the deserving poor* and *sturdy rogues*. She kept up a gentle pressure on the class, who were working in groups, to use their materials, photographs, articles and information books to find the answer. Every pupil in the class was absorbed in the work; each boy and girl persevered and when one worked out the answer, every one listened with great interest. This was excellent teaching leading to very high achievement.
95. Pupils use their skills of literacy well to research and to present their work. They are asked to present information in a wide range of formats and sometimes are allowed to choose the best one for themselves. Pupils in Year 2, who presented their findings about old and new toys and equipment in a brochure about *Maundene Museum*, remembered much information as a result. Pupils in Year 6 are very knowledgeable about aspects of Ancient Egypt as they have researched it well, using ICT as another resource. After one lesson in which a teacher demonstrated how to mummify a body, they were given a choice about which form of writing they wished to use to present the new information they had been given. This resulted in a wide range of writing that was of a high quality.
96. History is led well and taught in an exciting way that enthuses pupils so that they learn and achieve well.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education plays a very significant part in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Standards in religious education are very high by the end of Year 6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are outstanding.
- Pupils make very good use of the rich variety of resources, well-planned lessons and educational visits.
- Lessons include very good opportunities for pupils to learn independently.

### Commentary

97. Religious education makes a very positive impact on the life and development of all pupils. This is because the outstanding leadership by the subject leader has been very well supported by senior managers, governors and staff. Lessons are vibrant, absorbing and memorable, because they are based on a very good scheme of work and supported by a very rich and varied range of resources, including many beautiful religious objects.
98. Teaching is very good overall and ranges from good to outstanding. Pupils learn very well about the effects of religious belief on a person's life. However teachers go beyond this and

challenge pupils to think deeply about how they want to live their own lives. As a result, achievement is very good.

99. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. Year 2 pupils look at the Torah and remember what they know about the laws of Judaism. Then each pupil reflects on his or her personal strengths and areas for improvement and makes a decorative scroll, featuring a self-improvement target. Pupils think honestly about themselves, work independently, take pride in the presentation of their scrolls and discuss their personal target with their teacher.
100. Pupils develop very good knowledge and understanding of stories from the Bible. In Year 4 they handle a selection of the school's sparkling and vibrant range of resources and identify how different objects feature in the story they read. In this way pupils satisfy their curiosity about the objects and make good use of their literacy skills. As they carry out their research, by reading different versions of the same story, they begin to notice differences between information obtained from different sources. Pupils co-operate and concentrate well when working independently in small groups.
101. In Year 6 pupils visit Rochester Cathedral, look closely at the altar and find out more about Holy Communion. Their next lesson begins with slides of the awe-inspiring cathedral and a recording of the tranquil sound of the cathedral choir, which they heard singing during their visit. Pupils sit calmly as they relive the experience of being in the cathedral. Altars of different kinds are set up around the room. Pupils compare them, take careful notes and talk confidently about the symbolic significance of the objects on the altars. One of the altars is a Passover altar and this is used to help pupils to understand the link between Judaism and Christianity. Pupils show great respect for the religious objects. Later in the lesson they taste the communion food from different cultures. More able pupils are very well challenged and make good use of ICT as they give a computer-aided presentation of an interview, which they carried out at the cathedral.
102. Annual visits, which are funded by the governing body, enable pupils to find out, at first hand, about Christianity and other religions. Pupils learn a lot from visits because they are very well prepared and followed up. Before visiting a gurdwara and experiencing a Sikh hospitality meal, pupils prepare a hospitality meal in school and invite another class to it. This gives them very good understanding about being a host. These pupils are therefore appreciative guests when they visit the gurdwara.
103. The school has made very good progress in improving religious education since the last inspection, when religious education was an area in need of improvement.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

104. Work was sampled in **art and design**, **design and technology** and **music**, and there was too little evidence to make overall judgements about provision.
105. From looking at displays, photographic evidence, pupils' work and teachers' planning, standards in **art and design** are judged to be above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils enjoy their work in art and design, and show a good range of techniques such as using clay in Year 2 and modelling with wire and clay in Year 6 to represent "Moving Bodies". Pupils in Year 2 developed well their design techniques by first studying an African mask, then drawing an initial design followed by further development using ICT. From these design stages, they made the mask in paper and then finally in clay. Good quality displays around the school promote well the profile of art and design and show good links with other subjects such as literacy and history. Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development when, for instance, Year 5 pupils study the Chinese New Year and their art work to their Arabic writing. Pupils study famous painters such as Monet and Kandinski and study portraits during a visit to the National Portrait Gallery and then use these stimuli for paintings and

collages of their own. A good feature of pupils' sketch books is the way that pupils evaluate their own work and then act on suggestions for improving it. In the two lessons seen, teachers planned their work and used resources well and pupils were given good opportunities to evaluate and develop their work, which allowed them to make good progress.

106. In **music**, there are good opportunities for all pupils to sing, for instance in assembly when pupils sing with obvious delight. Year 6 performed a song about Africa and the uniqueness of its animals during an assembly about "Special Places". Many pupils sing in the school choir and they regularly practise after school. A few pupils receive tuition from visiting teachers to learn to play instruments such as drums, oboe and clarinet, for which parents must pay, but all pupils have an opportunity to learn to play the recorder. In the one lesson seen, pupils listened satisfactorily to music and then composed and performed their own interpretation of parts of the music. The subject makes good contributions to pupils' cultural development by introducing them to songs and music from around the world and to their social development when they learn to listen to each other making music. The choir singing, "What a wonderful world," allows pupils to reflect on natural beauty and, with pupils recognising their own achievements, makes a good contribution to their spiritual development.
107. **Design and technology** was sampled and it was possible to observe an occasion where teaching was very good. The Year 1 lesson took place within a study that lasted all day, on the theme of houses. Pupils used their science, mathematics and literacy skills well to design a house and write instructions about how to make it. Boys and girls made very good progress because the teacher asked pupils searching questions about how they could improve their work. This encouraged them to evaluate their work throughout the lesson. Pupils learnt about folding and joining and applied their skills well. After five hours every pupil continued to concentrate and work hard.
108. Limited evidence from pupils' work indicates that progress throughout the school is broadly average. Pupils design mechanisms, such as hinges and winding mechanisms, use their knowledge of electricity to design a light, design and make puppets and plan a meal, which they make for other pupils. Insufficient evidence was seen to make a judgement about the contribution made by ICT to design and technology.
109. An extra-curricular project to design and make an eco-car, which is being undertaken by a group of Year 6 pupils, extends pupils' experience very well.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are provided with a good range of planned activities which develop their social skills well.
- Girls and boys are fully involved in all aspects of physical education, including dance and competitive games.
- Physical education is well linked to work done in other subjects.
- Extra-curricular activities are good.

### **Commentary**

110. The quality of teaching and learning in these lessons is good and some lessons are very good. The standards of work at the end of Year 2 are broadly average and in some aspects of physical education are above average at the end of Year 6. Teaching is well structured and pupils steadily increase their basic skills and achieve well. Boys and girls are fully involved in a varied programme of physical education which includes competitive games and dance.
111. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were challenged to throw a ball with increasing accuracy, because hoops were used in different ways in a variety of bouncing activities. Footwork skills were

introduced as pupils had to sidestep to pass the ball to each other through two hoops, placed side by side. Later in the lesson pupils had good opportunities to work independently; however, opportunities to share and evaluate their work are limited.

112. In a Year 5 lesson pupils made very good progress as they used Tudor dance steps they had been taught to develop their own Tudor dance in groups, using period music. The teacher had good knowledge of the subject and ensured that boys and girls received encouragement and support for their learning. Pupils have very good opportunities to evaluate one another's performances in a positive and helpful way.
113. Physical education is very well linked to other subjects. The Tudor dance work is part of an exciting cross-curricular theme on the Tudors. Pupils have visited the National Portrait Gallery. They have looked at Tudor portraits and have painted portraits in the Tudor style. They plan to visit Penshurst Place later in the year. Pupils will perform their Tudor dances in the great hall during their visit. Parents will be asked to help by making costumes and will be invited into school to see the pupils' work, including the dance, at a special assembly. This project, which is a feature of the curriculum in Year 5, contributes well to the good curriculum provision.
114. Physical education is taught with due regard to the importance of health and safety. Year 4 pupils swim during the summer term. Provision for swimming is satisfactory. Many staff are involved in providing extra-curricular sporting activities and the provision of these is good.

#### **Personal, social, health education and citizenship**

115. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. A programme for citizenship is being developed. This includes very good opportunities for pupils to understand the feelings of others and recognise the right of all people to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness. Provision for sex education is satisfactory. All pupils are made aware of the dangers of drugs.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i>  | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| <b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>                       | <b>3</b>     |
| How inclusive the school is  | 3            |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3            |
| Value for money provided by the school                               | 3            |
| <b>Overall standards achieved</b>                                    | <b>3</b>     |
| Pupils' achievement  | 3            |
| <b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>        | <b>3</b>     |
| Attendance   | 4            |
| Attitudes  | 3            |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions                        | 2            |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development            | 3            |
| <b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>               | <b>3</b>     |
| The quality of teaching  | 3            |
| How well pupils learn  | 3            |
| The quality of assessment  | 3            |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs                           | 3            |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities     | 3            |
| Accommodation and resources  | 3            |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety                             | 3            |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils                              | 3            |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views                  | 3            |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents                 | 4            |
| The quality of the school's links with the community                 | 3            |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges                   | 4            |
| <b>The leadership and management of the school</b>                   | <b>3</b>     |
| The governance of the school   | 4            |
| The leadership of the headteacher                                    | 2            |
| The leadership of other key staff                                    | 3            |
| The effectiveness of management                                      | 3            |

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*