

INSPECTION REPORT

SMEETH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Smeeth, Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118381

Headteacher: Mr P Dawson

Lead inspector: Mr S Hill

Dates of inspection: 9th - 12th February 2004

Inspection number: 257493

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	129
School address:	Caroland Close Smeeth Ashford Kent
Postcode:	TN25 6RX
Telephone number:	01303 813128
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G W Fortescue
Date of previous inspection:	8 th – 10 th December 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small primary school in the village of Smeeth, which provides full-time education for pupils aged from four to 11, in five classes. Apart from reception, all classes have pupils from two different age groups. Most pupils come from Smeeth and other nearby villages, but about 40 per cent come from the nearby town of Ashford. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, but overall their social circumstances are better than average. Pupils' attainment on entry is average overall, but varies from year to year. The school has an above-average number of pupils with special educational needs. A significant number of these have substantial emotional and behavioural difficulties, while most of the rest have moderate learning difficulties. No pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Five pupils are looked after by the local authority. The vast majority of pupils are of white, British origin, and all are fluent English speakers. The mobility of pupils (the number of pupils who start or finish at the school other than at the usual times) is average.

The school was recently awarded the Gold Activemark because of its very good provision for physical education.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21277	Mr S Hill	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Art and design Music
9542	Mr B Jones	Lay inspector	
3751	Mrs T Cotton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Special Educational Needs History Geography Religious Education Citizenship

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school** that provides **good value for money**. Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well, and they generally attain good standards by the time they leave. Strong leadership and management ensure good teamwork from staff, who provide well for all their pupils both socially and academically.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good because of good teaching, so that standards are above average in most subjects by the end of the school.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher has established a strong team of staff who work together very effectively.
- Children get a good start to their education in the reception class.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, behave well and have very good relationships with each other and with staff.
- The school is very good at providing for all its pupils, whatever their needs or abilities, although sometimes the written work of more able pupils does not always reflect their good understanding.
- Provision for physical education, particularly sport, is very good.
- Links with the community and with parents are strong.
- More systematic procedures are needed to give subject leaders a clearer view of standards and teaching in other classes.

Since the last inspection, the improvement in the school's effectiveness has been **good**. Teaching and achievement have improved, as have pupils' behaviour and attitudes. The key issues for improvement identified then have been dealt with well.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is **good** overall. Attainment on entry to the school is average. Pupils in the Foundation Stage (the reception class) achieve well, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, and in their communication, language and literacy skills. Most attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception (the early learning goals), and many of the current class will exceed this level.

Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and currently standards in Year 2 are average overall. Standards in reading, and in speaking and listening, are above average. Standards in writing and in mathematics are average. The results of tests at Year 2 over several years have been average in mathematics and above average in reading and writing. Standards and results vary from year to year at both key stages because of the different ability levels of the small groups involved each year, and their different levels of special needs.

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	C
Mathematics	A	B	C	C
Science	B	D	C	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

A* means standards were in the top 5 per cent nationally.

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

The table above confirms that standards in most years are above average in Year 6. In 2003, standards were average. Similar schools grades suggest that pupils had made satisfactory progress. Detailed results from the school show that pupils who were at the school throughout Years 3 to 6 did better than this, and their standards were better than expected in the light of their results in tests in Year 2. Inspection evidence shows that achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good and standards are good by the end of Year 6. Current standards for the oldest pupils are above average in English, mathematics, science, physical education, religious education and information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils' personal qualities, including the provision for their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**, are **good**. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, and their behaviour is good. They have very good relationships with each other and with staff, work well collaboratively, and are confident in tackling new or difficult work. Their self-esteem is good because they are encouraged to have faith in themselves and their capabilities. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Examples of good teaching were observed in every class and from every teacher. Teaching is good in reception and satisfactory, with some strengths, in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers and teaching assistants throughout the school have very good relationships with pupils, and are good at catering for their particular needs, enabling all pupils to be included in all aspects of school life. As a result, learning is at least satisfactory, and is good in most lessons. Good assessment procedures contribute effectively to this, as does the skilled help that pupils receive from learning support staff. The curriculum is wide and interesting with very good provision for sport. The enrichment of the whole curriculum through extra-curricular activities is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher gives very good leadership to the school and has established an effective team, where key staff give good leadership to colleagues in their areas of responsibility. Management is good, particularly in systems for assessing the school's strengths and weaknesses, and for analysing and acting on assessment data. However, there is a need for more precision in checking up on teaching and standards in different classes, so that subject leaders can target their help where it is most needed. Governance is good. The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and provides good support to developments. The governing body's compliance with statutory requirements is only satisfactory, because of a minor omission in the school's prospectus.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are positive about the work of the school and particularly appreciate the quality of teaching, and the staff's high expectations of work and behaviour. They feel very comfortable about approaching the school if they have concerns. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and get on very well with staff. They take part in school life with enthusiasm, both in the classroom and outside.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Introduce more systematic ways for subject leaders to keep track of teaching, learning and standards in their areas of responsibility.
- Ensure that brighter pupils have opportunities to tackle written work that reflects their good understanding in mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2, and in religious education through the school.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the school's admission arrangements are included in the prospectus.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well and standards by the end of the school are above average. Achievement is good in the reception class and in Years 3 to 6. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Standards are good in speaking and listening, in reading and in physical education throughout the school. Achievement and standards have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good in English, mathematics and science by the end of the school.
- Good standards of reading, speaking and listening support pupils' achievement in subjects across the curriculum.
- Children in reception achieve well, and about half of the current class are likely to exceed the expected standards by the end of the year.
- Pupils develop good skills in ICT and use them confidently.
- Pupils do particularly well in physical education because of the wide-ranging provision for different sports.
- Standards in religious education are good by the end of the school, although this is not reflected in pupils' written work.
- Written work, in mathematics and science in Year 2, does not adequately represent the attainment of the higher attaining pupils.

Commentary

1. Results of tests at the ages of seven and 11 have varied considerably from year to year, mostly because of the small numbers and the different abilities of the pupils involved, and their different levels of special educational needs.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.5 (18.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.5 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.7 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 12 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	26.7 (27.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.3 (27.9)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.6 (27.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Over several years, results at age seven have been above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. The weak results last year were because of relatively high numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Comparison of their scores with how they were doing

when they were in reception shows their achievement to have been satisfactory in the light of their low starting points. Standards in the current cohort are broadly average because, although there are a number of pupils who will find it difficult to achieve the expected standards, there are others who are in line to exceed them.

3. At the age of 11, results have usually been above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Last year, in a group who had substantial numbers of pupils with special educational needs, results were average in all three subjects, with science having “caught up” with the other subjects. Analysis of the results obtained by individual pupils show that, over the time since they were in Year 2, those who had been in the school throughout this time did better than might be expected, particularly in mathematics. Inspection evidence suggests that the improvement in science has been sustained, and standards in the current Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science.
4. Standards in reading, speaking and listening are good throughout the school. Pupils are confident readers, and use their skills well to access information from a variety of sources in other subjects. They listen carefully to their teachers, so they always know what is expected of them and waste little time. They listen equally well to their classmates as they get older, and this stands them in good stead when they work collaboratively. Their speaking skills are good, because of the many structured situations in which they get to practise them. This develops their confidence well, and contributes to their being able to organise their ideas and to work together in pairs or in groups.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. All school groups have access to the whole curriculum, including a high proportion of pupils with social and emotional difficulties, some of whom receive joint school and residential provision. Teachers know pupils’ needs well, are quick to celebrate success and have clear procedures for managing behaviour. This positive approach is helping pupils to achieve well.
6. Consistently good teaching in the reception class is enabling children to achieve well. They have a good start to their schooling and make good progress in lessons, particularly in their communication, language, and literacy skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. These are a particular focus of work in the class, and are taught very well. Children in the current class are in line to meet the nationally expected standards in all areas of learning by the end of the year, and a substantial number should exceed them.
7. Pupils develop good skills in ICT because they are taught very effectively how to do things with the help of interactive whiteboards in their classes. They get good opportunities to practise what they have learnt in the suite and, as a result, are very confident in using a range of programs. In physical education, a wide curriculum and the consistent allocation of sufficient time lead to good skills overall, and particularly in games. In religious education, by the end of the school, pupils have a good understanding of religious themes, both in Christianity and in other faiths. They have a good realisation of why religion is important to people in their everyday lives. However, this good understanding is not reflected in their writing in the subject, which is only satisfactory.
8. Pupils’ good understanding in some subjects is not always reflected in their written work. In mathematics in Year 2, much of the recorded work is in workbooks. This often does not give brighter pupils the opportunities to practise their skills at a challenging level, although much oral and practical work in class does present them with suitable challenges. Similarly, in science, there is very little written evidence in pupils’ books of tasks that go beyond the expected Level 2.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ **attitudes** towards school are **very good** and their behaviour is **good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall. Levels of attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and are keen learners.
- Pupils' self-esteem is high and they have faith in themselves and their capabilities.
- Relationships are very good and pupils co-operate well together.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Very good procedures to support pupils with severe difficulties enable them to improve their attendance dramatically.

Commentary

9. Pupils' attitudes towards school and their behaviour have improved greatly since the previous inspection, when they were unsatisfactory overall. The school has a positive climate for learning, which encourages and values pupils' contributions. This in turn develops confidence and self-esteem and paves the way for success.
10. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work. They are proud of the school and are keen to come. They look forward to their work in lessons and find them interesting. Older pupils speak with enthusiasm about the books they are reading, and have a mature approach to their independent study. Pupils with social and behavioural difficulties learn how to keep more consistently on task, achieve well, and so are keen to do even better. Younger children in the reception class make choices about their learning and follow new ideas through. For instance, creating individual masks of *The Three Little Pigs* by themselves takes a lot of concentration and effort.
11. Behaviour is good, both in class and around the school. Work is more challenging than at the time of the previous inspection, and pupils work purposefully together in mixed-age classes. They are aware of the needs of others and this enables adults to focus on small groups, while the class work independently. Older junior pupils act in a mature way. They take on responsibility, and keep an eye on younger pupils at play-time. There are very few incidences of bullying or acts of unkindness. The pupils' good behaviour is rewarded in 'Golden Time' and this, in particular, is encouraging pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties to improve their behaviour. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
12. Relationships across the school are very good. Teachers provide very good role models and a sense of 'fair play'. This in turn is helping pupils to understand right from wrong. Pupils appreciate the way teachers make lessons fun and take time to do things with them, such as sledging when it snowed. Pupils listen to each other and their views are taken into account through the school council. Older pupils ask younger ones their opinions and value their contributions. Parents like the way the school helps younger children to settle in and make friendships.
13. The school makes good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In junior classes pupils are keen to learn about other faiths' and beliefs, and talk about 'stepping into someone else's shoes'. The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond positively to this. Pupils work well with others in mixed-age groups, take turns and listen to other points of view. The school celebrates the pupils' own cultural heritage, but also provides opportunities to explore a wider, diverse multicultural perspective.

Attendance

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.8
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.0
National data:	0.4

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

14. Attendance is good, although the 2002/3 figure is the same as the national average. Current registers show that attendance is on track to meet or exceed 95 per cent this year. A dip last year resulted from poor attendance by a few pupils with particular medical or social difficulties. The school's sensitive support for these pupils has achieved spectacular success. A pupil absent for eight weeks in spring 2003 has only missed one day, through sickness, in spring 2004. She is now fully included in learning in school. Pupils arrive punctually each morning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is wide and interesting and is enriched very well by a wide range of clubs. Provision for the care, welfare and guidance of pupils is good, and health and safety procedures are very good. There is a good partnership with parents, and very good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory with some good features in Years 1 and 2. Systems of assessment are good and are used well to provide work at the right level for different pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Positive relationships and high expectations of behaviour ensure good management of pupils.
- Teachers are good at enthusing pupils about their work, so they try hard and enjoy learning.
- Assessment data is used effectively to match work to pupils' needs.
- Good use is made of learning support assistants to help pupils learn.
- Teachers make good use of ICT to support pupils' learning in different subjects.
- In a few lessons, particularly in younger classes, the way the activities are organised does not give the best support to pupils' progress.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (16%)	19 (61%)	7 (23%)	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.

15. Teachers' expectations of behaviour are high and are made clear to pupils. Good systems to promote good behaviour are used consistently, for example, the weekly event of 'Golden Time'. Teachers get on well with pupils. They treat them kindly and value their views and, consequently, pupils like their teachers and are keen to please them. The end result of all this is good behaviour from almost all pupils. Even those who find conforming difficult behave in an acceptable way for the vast majority of the school day. Teachers make good use of practical work and draw on a range of resources and ideas to help make lessons more interesting. Pupils often have the chance to discuss ideas with each other and with the teacher. Pupils respond well to this. They are interested in what they are doing, keen to contribute, and work hard. The intrinsic interest of the work also supports the good standards of behaviour.
16. A significant strength is the way in which assessment is used to ensure that work is set at a suitably challenging level. Overall assessment is used to set work initially, but teachers also check carefully how pupils are getting on, and are quick to provide work that is easier or harder, or to provide individual help, when this is needed. As a result, both high fliers and those

who struggle with their work generally make good progress in lessons. However, in mathematics and science in Year 2, brighter pupils do not have enough opportunities to produce written work that reflects their good knowledge and understanding.

17. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers help prepare clear individual plans for learning, with specific targets set to meet the pupils' needs. Guidance from the special needs co-ordinator and outside specialists adds to their good quality. Pupils' involvement in their own self-assessment is being developed well. Another strength of teaching, but particularly for pupils with special educational needs, is the effective help given by learning support staff to individuals and groups. Extra support often helps pupils who are struggling to cope with their work and to do well at their own level.
18. Teachers make very good use of the interactive whiteboards to make work more interesting for pupils, and to show them the capabilities of ICT. They also provide pupils with good hands-on opportunities to practise their ICT skills in a range of subjects, making good use of the computer suite, and often of the skilled help from the learning support staff, which is available.
19. In the lessons that were satisfactory rather than good, it was often aspects of classroom organisation that had not been thought through in enough detail, so pupils did not progress as fast as they might. For example, in a mathematics lesson, some pupils did not have enough practical opportunities to use weights and scales, to help them understand what they were doing. In a science lesson, trying to make waterproof boats from plasticine or foil, pupils did not have the chance to test them in water and to assess how they were getting on as they went along.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. The school has maintained a wide and interesting curriculum while focussing on high standards in English, mathematics and science. Provision for enrichment through visits, visitors and a variety of clubs is **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall. There is good provision of learning support staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is based firmly on a range of interesting stimuli, including relevant practical experiences that help pupils to learn effectively.
- There is very good provision of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport.
- Good use is made of ICT to help pupils learn.
- Provision for pupils with learning or social difficulties, or with particular talents, is good.
- Very good provision is made for physical education.

Commentary

20. Good opportunities are taken to make lessons as interesting as possible. Practical work is used effectively and teachers use a wide and interesting range of resources to stimulate pupils and gain their enthusiasm. Pupils have good opportunities to talk about their work, to use computers, to tackle problems and to work collaboratively. Good use is made of events such as a "Victorian Day", visits out and of visitors to school to generate interest in different topics. The use of interactive whiteboards as an integral part of many lessons has also been successful in stimulating pupils' interest. Pupils in the school council cited this as one of the most exciting things about the school, which really helped them to learn. They also get a good understanding of the possibilities of ICT from these lessons, and start to use it effectively themselves, for example, in researching information from the Internet, or in making their own multi-media presentations.
21. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities including music, sewing, chess, arts and dance that take place at various times of the year. The range of sporting clubs is wide, including the usual football and netball, but also such sports as badminton, hockey and short

tennis take place. The very good provision for sport is also a feature of the main curriculum, with a wider range of sports and skills being learned than is usual. Pupils also have good opportunities to learn to swim, and to tackle outdoor and adventurous activities as well as the usual activities of dance, team games and gymnastics.

22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is focused within the classroom and is related well to the learning going on in lessons. In general, in literacy and numeracy lessons, work is planned at different levels and individual needs are met effectively. In other subjects of the curriculum, work is not planned so specifically for different groups, but intervention by teachers and other adults helps pupils to cope and make good progress. The good provision of learning support staff helps this to be successful. Activities provided in 'Golden Time', as a reward for good behaviour, motivate pupils with social and behavioural difficulties to work more consistently on task. The school accurately identifies gifted and talented pupils and there is enhanced provision in a number of subjects, including music, drama and physical education. The school monitors their achievement over time, and this indicates that pupils maintain their high achievement and interest into the secondary stage and beyond.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares **well** for pupils. Staff provide **good** guidance and support for pupils' academic and personal development. The school has **good** procedures to take account of their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- 'Golden rules' and 'Golden Time' encourage pupils to work and behave well.
- Improved health and safety procedures have produced a better environment for learning.
- Pupils play a big part in gathering opinions for the school council, and the school responds to their views.
- The school is very good at helping pupils to settle in.

Commentary

23. Pupils respond well to the school's golden rules. Pupils particularly value "Golden Time". This is a half-hour session each week where pupils have free choice of a range of activities. Pupils whose behaviour has cost them some golden minutes are motivated not to lose time in future. Personal monitoring and support are good. Teachers and assistants have a good understanding of pupils' needs and capabilities. Pupils are confident that they can talk to a sympathetic adult at school if they need to. Bullying is rare and parents say that teachers deal with it sensibly and effectively.
24. Good leadership and management have improved the quality of care. It is now good. The previous inspection found that procedures for health and safety were unsatisfactory. They are now very good. Governors check health and safety every term. The caretaker corrects most minor issues immediately and reports to the headteacher each week. The school has resolved the concerns described in the previous report. It has carried out repairs and extensive redecoration. It does a risk assessment for every visit out of school. The improved environment enhances the quality of pupils' learning. There is good care for children in the Foundation Stage. The deputy head is the designated teacher for child protection. She works with local agencies and keeps staff updated with the requirements. All teachers and assistants have received recent training in first aid for children.
25. The school council plays an active part in the life of the school. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 represent their own classes. Year 6 pupils canvass opinions from younger pupils, including the reception class. Pupils independently choose which charity the school will support. The school encourages pupils to show initiative. Last year, a Year 6 boy suggested, publicised and ran a school chess club.

26. The previous inspection noted the gentle way the school helped its pupils to settle in. This continues to be a strength. Reception children have four taster sessions in summer before they come to school. They arrive at different times, so that they can receive individual attention. The school provides similarly sensitive help for older pupils. It welcomes pupils from a nearby residential school. It helps them take part in mainstream schooling, in some instances for the first time ever. The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs. It helps them achieve the targets in their individual education plans successfully.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with the community and other schools. It has **good** links with parents. These partnerships benefit the quality of pupils' learning and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a central role in village life and community links play an important part in pupils' learning.
- Very good links with other schools enable this small school to share resources and expertise, and enhance the quality of education it provides.
- Parents give the school good support with activities in and out of school.
- The school has improved information to parents, but there is still scope for further improvement in reports on pupils.

Commentary

27. The school is at the heart of the village. Pupils benefit from its close involvement with a wide range of village activities. Local clubs and groups use the school hall and kitchen. Parents run the village pantomime, with a high proportion of former pupils front and back stage. Year 6 pupils take harvest gifts to senior citizens. Visitors from the community and trips out give pupils a wider view of the world. Recently, these have included a theatre group, a fireman and a deep-sea diver. Local visits include a children's farm, Rochester Cathedral and Dover Museum.
28. There are very good links with other schools. Smeeth belongs to a rural primary schools' association. This enables it to get more and better training for its staff, and to share expertise. There is particularly close co-operation with the nearest primary school. Links with local playgroups are good and help children settle when they start at the school. Similarly, good links with local secondary schools help pupils to move to their next schools with confidence. Smeeth staff meet secondary staff to provide academic and personal information. Smeeth works very closely with a nearby residential school for vulnerable children. Pupils at Smeeth gain from working and playing with children from diverse circumstances.
29. The school has a good partnership with parents who like its positive ethos and contribute eagerly to learning at school. They volunteer their help in lessons and on visits. Parents support homework well. The Parents' and Friends' Association's active programme of events raises significant funds to improve facilities at school. These events enhance pupils' maturity and social skills. For example, the school council runs its own stalls at the Christmas Bazaar and the May Fair. The school has forged good links with parents of children with special educational needs, who share targets set for learning in their individual education plans. They follow the progress their children make, and are supportive of work undertaken at home.
30. Information for parents is good overall. Formal and informal meetings with staff take place throughout the year. The school issues a termly programme sheet showing what the children will be learning. This is in response to a request by parents. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents were enthusiastic about the annual reports on their children. These are of good quality, although not all last year's reports included targets to help pupils improve. The prospectus is well presented. However, it omits statutory information about the admissions policy. The

school has undertaken to correct this omission, which has not adversely affected pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Leadership is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and that of key staff is good. Both **management and governance** of the school are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher gives a very strong steer and has established and encouraged a very effective team.
- The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Management is good and information from assessment is used well to track progress and improve standards
- Subject leaders lack the opportunity to make precise checks on provision, to ensure their help is targeted where it is most needed

Commentary

31. The headteacher gives very clear educational direction to the work of the school. Together with the expertise and commitment of a successful school team, this has contributed to significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school's strategic planning builds well on self-evaluation and sets challenging, but achievable targets. The headteacher has enhanced the ethos of the school, by implementing strategies to improve pupils' behaviour. A key to this is the very good inclusion of all school groups, who feel valued and so achieve well. The headteacher and staff inspire the trust and confidence of parents.
32. The management of the school is good. There are systems in place to monitor all aspects of the school's work and to identify strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan now focuses on a few clear priorities and pays more attention to developing and improving learning. Good analysis of information from assessment has helped improve standards. This includes tracking the performance of individual pupils in the mixed-age classes, and tackling any dips in their progress straight away. Teachers and support staff are well trained and have their targets in place.
33. Subject leaders have expertise in their particular areas of responsibility and the skills to plan the way forward. They share best practice, but have little opportunity to work alongside colleagues in other year groups. There is a need to undertake more precise checks on teaching and standards across the mixed-age groups, so that subject leaders can best target their help. This has worked well in the upper junior classes, and has helped to drive up standards in writing.
34. There is good leadership of special educational needs provision, whereby the needs of pupils are quickly met. This is particularly well managed for pupils with social and behavioural difficulties. The management of provision for gifted and talented pupils ensures their achievement is tracked and that they make the best of their talents.
35. The governance of the school is good and governors now have sound systems to gain information and are fully involved with monitoring the curriculum and finances. They have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and this helps them to support the headteacher and staff in achieving targets on the school development plan. Governors work hard to do their best for the school, and meet their statutory duties well, apart from a minor omission in the school's prospectus.
36. Day-to-day financial management and administration are good. Routine procedures run smoothly and the school administrator gives good support to staff and pupils. Financial

management is good and finances are carefully monitored by the governing body. The principles of 'best value' are used well. The rather high contingency of 10 per cent shown on the table below is due to prudent spending and savings on refurbishment and resources. It is earmarked for specific spending on information and communication technology resources. The school gives good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	338,012
Total expenditure	333,211
Expenditure per pupil	2,327

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	29,724
Balance carried forward to the next	34,525

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

37. The Foundation Stage consists of a reception class, which offers full-time provision. Children are drawn from a wide range of pre-school settings, and their attainment at the start of the reception class is average. Because cohorts are so small, attainment on entry varies significantly from year to year.
38. Children make good progress and achieve well, particularly with their personal, social and emotional development, and with their communication language and literacy skills. By the end of reception they are in line to achieve the early learning goals (The standards that children are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1) in all areas of learning. About a half are likely to exceed this. Parents praise the high level of care in the reception class, and are pleased to see their children happy and well settled. This positive start is fostering a good partnership between home and school. Good provision and standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection, through good leadership and management.
39. Teaching and learning are good. Adults and children enjoy each other's company and this makes learning fun. Teachers have a clear understanding of how young children grow and learn, and use this expertise to identify any specific needs. Experiences where children get direct support from adults, focused on language, literacy and mathematics, successfully develop children's knowledge and understanding. For instance, children are helped to make links between the spoken and written word, by writing letters to pen-friends in another school. Activities are well planned with the areas of learning clearly in mind. There is a good balance of activities directed by the teacher, and experiences children choose themselves. Children are encouraged to make choices, and to try out new activities, and so quickly gain in confidence. Planning is good overall. Planning for activities that children choose for themselves, however, does not always build firmly enough on what children already know and can do.
40. Classroom space is tight, but a focus on improving outside experiences has worked well. Resources generally meet the children's learning needs effectively, but the range of large, outdoor toys is somewhat narrow.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make very good progress and are expected to exceed the early learning goals.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good.
- The children are happy and well settled.
- Experiences encourage interest and a positive start to school.

Commentary

41. Achievement is very good because teaching and learning are very good. The reception class builds upon the learning started at home and children are positive about their contribution, are happy, and settle in well. A strength is the quality of relationships between adults and children, which enables children to 'have a go' with their learning, try out new ideas and gain in independence. For instance, children find their own name and indicate whether they are staying dinners or having a sandwich lunch at the start of each day. They make decisions about which experiences they are to try, take turns, and share equipment with others. They are

proud of their achievement, such as writing their own name, and pleased when others do well. The children's behaviour is very good. Teaching is good. Teachers know children's capabilities and needs well and quickly spot and address any difficulties. They make sure less confident children join in and provide good models of fair play, so the children develop a clear sense of right and wrong.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons where children are directed by the teacher are very good.
- There is a clear focus on developing the children's communication skills.

Commentary

42. Children achieve well and are in line to achieve the early learning goals, with about a half likely to exceed them. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' good questioning skills and the provision of exciting experiences motivate the children to join in activities, talk about their learning, and ask questions. Teachers make good use of exploring stories and sharing poems and rhymes to develop skills in speaking and reading. The children communicate confidently in role-play activities. For example, they negotiate plans for a performance of *The Three Little Pigs* and speak clearly so others may hear. There are effective links between the spoken and written word in guided literacy lessons. This is evident when the children write to another school and receive digital photographs from their pen-friends. The children organise their own sentences and write independently. They have good pencil control and link letters with their sounds. Most can write their own name. Progress with reading is good. The children turn readily to books when they have completed activities and are often found reading quietly or to each other. A good number are beginning to read everyday words by sight, recognise initial letters and more capable readers read simple stories with understanding.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of opportunities during the day to practise and reinforce mathematical ideas.
- Specific teaching of mathematical ideas is clearly planned.

Commentary

43. Children achieve well because of good teaching and learning. They are in line to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception class, and many may well exceed them. Incidental opportunities for learning are used well to develop mathematical understanding. Children count how many are present at the start of day, the number choosing each activity and can suggest if there are more boys than girls. When constructing the 'three pigs' house', they counted the bricks to ten and beyond, and understood that adding on increased the total number. Children recognise and use basic shapes and alternating patterns in work in art and with construction toys. Teaching is good in directed experiences, enabling children to develop new knowledge about weight, and to understand the concept of heavier or lighter. The children learn how to form their numbers correctly and to count and order to ten and beyond.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of ICT skills to enhance learning.
- Learning about children's different cultural backgrounds is good.

Commentary

44. Children achieve well and are on line to meet the early learning goals by the end of reception. Teaching and learning are good. Learning in lessons is enhanced by the teacher's use of the interactive white board. For example, by using digital photographs of children from a multi-cultural school, the children learn about other cultures and the diversity of the wider community. Their learning about religious education is appropriately based on the locally agreed syllabus. They build and construct using a range of materials and techniques, for instance when making a house for the *Three Little Pigs*. In a study of the local environment, children achieve well and gain new knowledge and understanding about living things. They identify that frogs and newts live in a nearby pond and that some start life as eggs. The children's own skills with the computer and digital camera move on well, and most have good mouse control.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision is made for dance and movement.
- Learning in the outside environment does not always build on what the children already know and can do.

Commentary

45. Children achieve well and are on line to reach the early learning goals by the end of reception. The reception day provides a good balance between indoor and outdoor experiences. The children learn how to move in larger spaces, are aware of working with others and pedal and guide wheeled toys with increasing precision. In dance, they create imaginatively to music and stories. They travel in a variety of ways, refine their movements and develop new skills, such as galloping and leaping. Teaching and learning are good in these lessons. Planning for skills development in outdoor experiences does not build as securely on the children's starting points, and so skills are not moved on so well. Presently, there is a limited range of large outdoor toys, and boys tend to dominate the wheeled toys. The children are confident when handling small apparatus, and gain in dexterity with cutting, gluing and joining skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links are made between creative aspects and other experiences.
- Resources are not always accessible for children to create through a range of different art media each day.

Commentary

46. Children are on target to meet the early learning goals by the end of reception, and about half are likely to exceed them. The children enjoy creating imaginatively in role-play, and with this in mind they make original character masks for their play. They make choices of materials and develop new skills and techniques with cutting and gluing tissue paper. Much of the focus for the artwork observed during the inspection centred on constructing houses for animals in a favourite story. Whilst there was a chance to paint, cut and glue material in this activity, every-day experiences with paint and modelling are less accessible. No music making was observed during the time of the inspection, but the children sang their favourite songs tunefully when asked.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good speaking and listening skills support their learning in English and in other subjects.
- Teachers successfully plan different levels of work to meet pupils' different needs.
- The subject manager is not given enough time to monitor across the school in order to identify gaps in learning.
- A clear focus on improving writing is driving up standards, particularly by Years 5 and 6.
- Standards in reading are above average although in infant classes, average and above average readers could read more challenging books.
- Pupils have a good grasp of the basic skills in English.

Commentary

47. Overall achievement is good and standards are above expectations by the end of Year 6. Achievement has improved since the last inspection, and good standards at the end of the school have been maintained. The profile of each year group varies greatly from year to year, and this is reflected in the uneven results in national tests. A number of classes have either a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, or more higher-attaining pupils than usual. In most cases, teachers plan effectively to meet the different levels of ability found in their classes, and so pupils' achievement in English is at least satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the juniors. Inspection evidence shows that standards in speaking and listening are good throughout the school. By Year 2, reading is just above average and standards in writing broadly average. By Year 6, attainment in both reading and writing is above average. In all year groups, the majority of pupils have a good grasp of spelling and the basic skills.
48. The school is a welcoming and inclusive community. Pupils with social and behavioural difficulties make good progress with their learning, because of carefully targeted work and access to adult support in lessons. Boys and girls co-operate in a mature way, and work in a similar range of ability groups in lessons. In Years 1 and 2, some reading scheme books fail to challenge higher and average-attaining pupils, and this can set a ceiling to their achievement.
49. Standards in speaking and listening are good and support learning in English and in other subjects. For instance, they help pupils to explore stories and to read with greater depth of meaning. Teachers ensure that younger and less confident speakers in mixed-age classes ask and answer questions, and are not left out in discussions. Pupils use standard English successfully in their spoken and written work, and are confident to speak and create imaginatively in poetry lessons. Listening skills are good. Pupils give others a chance to talk, and listen to what they have to say. For instance, this was evident when pupils in Year 2 and 3 collaborated well in groups, and negotiated rules for changing verbs into the past tense.

50. Standards in reading are just above average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. In Year 2, pupils read accurately and with understanding. They enjoy reading and see themselves as ‘good’ readers, who recall ‘practising’ their reading targets and improving their skills. Although pupils read a range of books, one or two thought they could be harder. Some average, and more capable readers, read books that fail to provide a suitable level of challenge. By Year 6, the majority of pupils read with deeper understanding, and in a mature, expressive way. Pupils’ good reading skills enable them to scan information quickly, and to research in greater depth in other subjects, such as history. Many pupils buy books for pleasure
51. A whole school focus on writing is helping to improve standards. By Year 2, attainment is broadly average. The majority of pupils begin to join ideas together and successfully structure stories and non-fictional writing. Work is neat and tidy and spelling and punctuation is developed well. However, a significant minority still struggle with their independent writing, and benefit from extra adult support in lessons. The subject leader has successfully used information from assessment of pupils’ writing to guide future work. Portfolios of written work, from Years 5 and 6, show provision for a range of purposeful writing, which builds on and strengthens the pupils’ writing skills. This enables pupils in junior classes to achieve well, and for higher-attaining pupils to attain above-average standards. For instance, the poems of older pupils used highly effectively language, describing the sun as ‘a *dragon’s ball caught in a web*’. Less capable writers work in small groups in literacy lessons and have modified work to meet their needs. However, one or two still need to widen their strategies for spelling unknown words.
52. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good aspects. In Years 3 to 6 it is good. Teachers plan and manage lessons in mixed-age classes well. Together, teachers and learning support assistants successfully provide for the wide range of needs. Work is regularly marked, and provides guidance for improvement. Older pupils understand their own individual learning targets and expect to achieve well. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
53. The subject is led and managed well. The subject leader has organised in-service training in order to improve expertise in English within the school and has provided a clear focus for improving standards. However, she has few opportunities to systematically evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. As a result, there is not always consistency in practice in the mixed-age classes.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Good use is made of pupils’ skills across the curriculum. The pupils’ good speaking skills are of benefit in all subject areas, as are their generally good reading skills. These help with research in history lessons and with understanding technical vocabulary in science and geography, for example. In the older classes, in particular, pupils write for a range of different purposes, for instance, reports in geography and accounts of important events in history. In younger classes, worksheets sometimes limit the scope and content of writing in other subjects. By Years 5 and 6, pupils use their ICT skills well to gather information and produce finished pieces of writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop a good feel for number and apply this confidently to investigative work.
- Teachers’ positive and enthusiastic approach to the subject helps pupils to enjoy mathematics.
- The subject is led well, but there is need for more precision in monitoring teaching and learning in different classes.

- Brighter pupils in Year 2 do too little written work of a challenging nature.
- There is a need for upgrading and improving some equipment.

Commentary

55. Pupils achieve well overall and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Achievement and standards are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was unsatisfactory. Good standards by Year 6 have been maintained. A substantial number of pupils in Year 2 have a good quick recall of number bonds to ten, for example, and are good at doubling numbers, in some cases up to 100. However, there is a large minority of pupils, many with special educational needs, who still struggle with their work, and have a weak understanding of weight, for example. Very little of the recorded work done by pupils in Year 2 reflects the good skills shown by some of them in lessons. This is to some extent because much of this work is done in workbooks. Steadily filling in each page does not enable higher fliers to shoot ahead, in the way they can in practical or oral sessions. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6, and standards are above average by the time pupils are in the oldest class. For example, almost all Year 6 pupils, and a good number of those in Year 5, cope well with co-ordinates in all four quadrants, handling negative numbers with confidence.
56. Teaching and learning are good overall, and are consistently good in the older classes. Teachers have high expectations and an enthusiastic approach, which they convey well to their pupils. They are good at teaching pupils specific strategies for tackling problems, and make good use of investigative work to interest and intrigue pupils. A good understanding of number is developed well through quick-fire mental arithmetic sessions, where pupils are fully involved and keen to contribute. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards to demonstrate ideas and to enthuse pupils. Pupils are confident in tackling problems, and use their number skills fluently to help them. They are encouraged to share ideas with partners and with the class, and do so effectively, challenging each other to do well. They enjoy mathematics, tackle any difficulties with patience, and are proud of their success. Pupils are managed well, through clear expectations backed up by very positive relationships. As a result, they are well behaved and concentrate well on their work.
57. The subject leader gives a clear lead to colleagues and has helped them to improve teaching since the last inspection. Results of national tests are analysed, and any weaknesses are addressed. There is some review of pupils' work but the checking up on teaching and learning is not precise enough to enable the subject leader to fine-tune the help he gives to individual teachers and classes. Equipment is satisfactory, but some is old and getting tatty. There is not a good range of good quality balances for pupils to use in weighing, for example. This sometimes restricts the progress pupils can make.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Pupils make good use of their mathematical skills across the curriculum. They have a good understanding of graphs in science work, and use their knowledge of handling data when they investigate spreadsheets in ICT. This helps learning in the other subjects, as well as showing pupils how their mathematical skills can be applied in practical situations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school, teachers make good use of practical work to help pupils learn.
- By the end of the school, pupils are confident in tackling investigations because they are beginning to think like scientists.

- Pupils have a good understanding of a range of scientific knowledge.
- There is a need for more systematic ways of checking up on provision and standards in different classes.

Commentary

59. Standards in science are in line with expectations by Year 2 and ahead of national expectations by Year 6. Achievement is good overall and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 have a secure knowledge of the different concepts they study, such as healthy eating, and perform practical tasks sensibly but enthusiastically. The work recorded in their books shows a secure understanding of work at the expected Level 2, but little that goes beyond this. Year 6 pupils have a very good understanding of a fair test, and are able to plan and carry out investigations, drawing on their previous scientific knowledge. In discussion, they listened to each other carefully, shared ideas, and were imaginative in planning how to perform a particular investigation. They apply mathematics well to their understanding, and could interpret a cooling curve, for example. They have a good understanding of the recent work they have done, including different states of matter, and the suitability of animals to particular habitats.
60. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teachers give clear explanations and have high expectations of work and behaviour. A key factor in pupils' good achievement is the consistent use of practical work. This ensures that pupils' understanding of specific knowledge is secure, maintains their interest and gives them a good grasp of how scientists carry out investigations. For younger pupils, there is not enough emphasis given to brighter pupils' recording their knowledge and understanding. Where teaching is only satisfactory, this is because sometimes opportunities are missed to develop pupils' understanding further, such as by discussing the reasons why different liquids might or might not freeze in the fridge, when pupils were asked to make predictions on this.
61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject is well organised and the subject leader gives a clear lead to her colleagues in this. The coverage of work in mixed-aged classes is systematic, and was modified effectively when the school changed back to five classes from four. Procedures for checking on how effective teaching and learning are in different classes are relatively informal, and no records of work sampling or class observations are kept. This means the subject leader lacks specific information to help her support her colleagues more precisely.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very confident users of computers and have good skills by the time they leave.
- The use of interactive whiteboards throughout the curriculum is helping pupils make good progress.
- Skilled help from support staff helps the oldest pupils make effective use of the computer suite.
- The subject leader has achieved a lot in a short time, but needs to establish more systematic ways of monitoring provision and targeting his support to colleagues.

Commentary

62. Achievement is good. Standards are satisfactory at Year 2 and good by Year 6. Good provision and standards have been maintained, despite the increased demands of the new national

curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils develop good skills because they have good opportunities to practise using computers, both in the suite and in the classroom. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 have a satisfactory understanding of how to give instructions to a programmable toy, and do so with confidence. Pupils in Year 6 are very confident in using computers. They use the features of a range of programs capably and quickly. For example, they were able to load and use a new clip-art program efficiently with a minimum of help from the teacher. They have a good understanding of the possibilities of what computers can do, and their advantages and disadvantages.

63. Teaching and learning are good, and the use in the last year of interactive whiteboards in every class has helped accelerate learning. Teachers are now able to show pupils clearly how to do things and pupils can try things themselves in class lessons. Combined with good opportunities to practise what they learn in the computer suite, this gives pupils good knowledge and skills by the time they leave.
64. The help from the learning support assistant, who works with groups from the older classes in the suite, strongly promotes their learning. She has good subject knowledge, and provides well-judged help to pupils, challenging them to improve and refine their work, and giving them clear instructions about particular features of programs.
65. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator gives a very clear lead and has good subject knowledge. He has overseen major improvements in provision in a short time. Colleagues appreciate the advice and help he is able to provide, and he has been particularly effective in helping establish the use of the interactive whiteboards. Through informal discussion with colleagues, he has a fair understanding of the range of work done across the school, and of problems that colleagues have encountered. He has had little opportunity to monitor standards and teaching in a systematic way, and is not able to target his help more precisely where it is most needed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum, not only as a teaching aid by way of the interactive whiteboards, but also through pupils using ICT themselves in a range of subjects, such as in writing and illustrating poems in English, or processing data and drawing graphs in mathematics. These lessons promote pupils' ICT skills well, and contribute effectively to their learning in different subjects.

HUMANITIES

67. Except in religious education, work was only sampled in these subjects. Consequently, it was not possible to make a secure overall judgement about provision in either history or geography. Inspectors looked at examples of work in history and geography and held discussions with pupils. Two lessons were observed in history, but no lessons were observed in geography. Recorded work in history and geography in Year 2 was of a similar standard to that found nationally. The standard of the samples of work seen in Year 6 was better than is usually found nationally, in both history and geography.
68. In **history**, the curriculum is planned on a rolling programme, and there is relevant coverage in the mixed-age classes over time. In the lesson observed in a Year 2 and 3 class, pupils showed a good sense of the passing of time. Their study of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, enables them to make successful comparisons between the past and the present. Apart from interesting accounts of the Great Fire of London, pupils' written work was disappointing and does not reflect the true extent of their learning. Year 6 pupils are enthusiastic about their study of the Ancient Egyptians and achieved well in the lesson observed. They sift fact from fiction in their research, and communicate their findings clearly to the class. Discussions indicate that pupils have a good grasp of events in British history, and that they are beginning to identify specific periods and dates with greater clarity.

69. In Year 1 and 2, pupils enjoy their work in **geography** related to Katie Morag and the island of Struay. They make comparisons between the island and their own environment in Smeeth. They have a sound understanding of the physical and human features of both places, and produce simple maps with keys. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 indicated a good understanding of the features of a river from source to mouth. Study of the local environment features strongly in the curriculum, with a focus on local issues, and land use. Pupils benefit from a residential visit to Seaford, and the opportunity this provides to study a coastal environment, and develop map-work skills.
70. Subject leaders monitor planning, but have few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. This limits the information they have about their subject when they are planning the way forward.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to find out about other faiths and beliefs.
- There is a good focus on the Christian faith.
- Pupils' written work does not always reflect the depth of their learning.

Commentary

71. Achievement and standards in religious education are satisfactory. Pupils' work meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of the school, pupils show a good understanding of the subject in discussion, but this is not fully reflected in their written work. Provision and standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection.
72. By Year 2, work in pupils' books tends to be worksheet based, and there are too few opportunities to write from a personal point of view, particularly for higher-attaining pupils. However, in discussions, pupils show a sound understanding of the relevance of major Christian celebrations, such as Christmas and Easter. Throughout the school, pupils are interested in finding out about other faiths and beliefs. Discussions with Year 6 pupils show they would like to know *'what it is like to be in other people's shoes'* - as a Jew or Muslim. Pupils suggest that learning about other faiths *'has lived lessons up'*, and that *'they are much more fun now'*. This positive approach has led to deeper reflection about their own values and beliefs. However, their written work, while satisfactory, does not fully reflect the good understanding they show in discussion. Pupils' written work shows respect for other points of view, and empathy towards people, such as Anne Frank, who were persecuted for their beliefs. There is evidence of learning through religious education. For instance, after studying Old Testament stories, pupils wrote prayers about kindness, and drew up their own commandments for living a better life.
73. Not enough teaching was observed to make a secure overall judgement about its quality. The one lesson observed in a mixed Year 1 and 2 class linked learning about Hinduism to first-hand experiences. Teaching was satisfactory. Pupils saw a visitor model a sari, experienced different spices and foods and began to make comparisons with their own life experiences.
74. The curriculum is based on a rolling programme of work that avoids gaps in coverage for the mixed-age classes in school. The management of the subject is satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. Only physical education was inspected in detail from these subjects. In the other subjects, it was therefore not possible to make secure overall judgements about provision.
76. In **art and design**, work on display was of the expected standard for pupils of this age, with some good quality examples such as the work in the style of Picasso in Years 5 and 6, and that based on Warhol in Years 4 and 5. A strength of the work, seen throughout the school, was the good use of a range of artists from different times and places to promote pupils' understanding of different techniques and styles. Only one lesson was seen, and teaching and learning were good. In this lesson, pupils in Years 4 and 5 used different materials with confidence and imagination, when making a collage based on a work by Peter Blake. Similarly, only one lesson was seen in **design and technology**. Teaching was good in this lesson, and pupils achieved satisfactory standards in learning techniques of how to tie-dye materials. One very good lesson was observed in **music**, given by a specialist teacher. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed good singing skills in response to the teacher's high expectations and clear demonstration. They handled a range of percussion instruments effectively, keeping a simple pattern going and maintaining a steady pulse.

Physical education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in games are particularly good throughout the school.
- The range of activities available to pupils is very wide, both in lessons and through clubs.
- Good provision is made to extend pupils with particular talents.
- Good use is made of support from parents and from external coaches to extend provision.

Commentary

77. Achievement is good. Provision and standards have improved since the last inspection. Standards are good in all age groups, and are well ahead of expectations in games by Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, move well in response to the rhythm of music, and convey ideas and images effectively through their movements. Older pupils have good games skills. They control netballs and basketballs very effectively, for example, and have a good understanding of the rules and tactics of different games. Teaching and learning are good, and staff have benefited from a wide range of training. Specific skills are taught clearly, and teachers intervene effectively with individuals and groups to show them how to improve. A brisk pace, and the involvement of all pupils ensure interest and enthusiasm from pupils.
78. The wide range of sports that pupils are able to take part in, both in class and in clubs, contributes very effectively to their good skills. Good use is made of expertise from coaches and parents to support both lessons and clubs, and to generate interest. The school has been awarded a Gold Activemark in recognition of the breadth and effectiveness of its provision. Good links with local sports clubs are particularly beneficial in providing challenging work for pupils who have particular talents. The school maintains a list of how past and present pupils are involved in a wide variety of sporting activities outside school, which confirms the effectiveness of its provision. The provision is led and managed well by the headteacher, who provides a good role model for staff and pupils, in both his teaching and his enthusiasm.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

79. This area of learning was sampled, and not enough evidence was obtained to give an overall judgement about provision. These elements are not taught as specific subjects in the school, but are generally promoted well through a range of activities. Positive approaches to each other are constantly emphasised in lessons. The use of 'Golden Time' helps pupils learn to take responsibility for the effects of their own behaviour. Good use is made of opportunities in

science to learn about healthy eating and lifestyles. In physical education lessons, pupils learn about the effects of exercise on their health, as well as putting the knowledge into practice. Taking part in a wide variety of team games develops their social skills and their sense of fair play. Teachers successfully encourage good relationships between all pupils, so they co-operate happily and work collaboratively effectively when required in subjects across the curriculum.

80. Pupils are successfully encouraged to take more responsibilities as they get older. They show a concern for younger children and help them to settle into school. The school council strengthens pupils' understanding of citizenship by showing them they can have an effect on their community. By getting them to consult with younger pupils, Year 6 pupils gain an understanding of the role of representatives in a democracy. The school's many contacts with the local community also help pupils to an understanding of this, and enables them to take part in a variety of events.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
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	2
Accommodation and resources	4
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
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).