

# INSPECTION REPORT

**East Wickham Infant School**

Welling

LEA area: Bexley

Unique Reference Number: 101406

Headteacher: Mrs C Harding

Reporting inspector: Ms G Tomes

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706576

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and nursery
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wickham Street Welling Kent DA16 3BP
Telephone number:	0181 8540698
Fax number:	0181 3165414
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Metcalfe
Inspection number	181602
Date of previous inspection:	6-9 November 1995

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Glynis Tomes, Registered inspector	English Religious education Art	Attainment and progress Teaching Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Efficiency of the school
Susan Cash, Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Partnership with parents and the community
Evelyn Holman, Team inspector	Information technology History Geography Music	Leadership and management Under fives
David Major, Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology	Curriculum and assessment Equal opportunities
Carolyn Childs, Team inspector	Physical education	Special educational needs, including the provision within the nursery assessment unit Support guidance and pupils' welfare

The inspection contractor was:

Qualitas Educational Consultants Ltd

Wickham Court

Layhams Road

West Wickham

Kent

BR4 9HH

01883 723257

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The Office for Standards in Education

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Provision in the nursery and in the nursery assessment unit is good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good.
- Individual teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, which enables them to make good progress
- All pupils are equally valued and given good support and guidance. There are very good procedures to ensure pupils are well looked after in school.
- Provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good and there are very good systems to promote pupils' social development.
- Parents give good support with pupils' reading, mathematics and spelling homework.
- Learning support assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Improvements to the building and grounds are imaginative and attractive.

### WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I. Current arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning do not identify how improvements can be made.
- II. Most subject co-ordinators are not using the evaluation from looking at pupils' work to set strategies for raising standards.
- III. Teachers do not always match work well enough to the needs of pupils in their class.
- IV. Teaching staff are not always used efficiently or in the most effective way to make maximum use of their expertise and skills.

**The school has more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan, setting out how weaknesses are to be tackled, will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

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

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school has continued to emphasise the importance of pupils' attendance to parents. Attendance rates have risen during the last four years but have recently declined again as more parents have taken pupils on holiday. Schemes of work have been written and implemented for all subjects. Some of these are currently being updated. Curriculum co-ordinators monitor teachers' plans and there has been some lesson observation. The school has yet to devise and implement an agreed system for identifying how improvements can be made. A marking policy has been introduced, which has helped raise standards in spelling. Assessment information is used to identify pupils' learning needs and analysis of national test results has led to specific strategies to raise standards, such as additional support for writing. The school reviewed the deployment of staff and it was agreed that because there is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the co-ordinator for special educational needs should not have class responsibility. This remains inefficient, however, because the co-ordinator's expertise and skills have insufficient impact on raising teachers' expertise in meeting special educational needs within the classroom. Instances of disruption in classrooms have been greatly reduced by more consistent application of the school's positive behaviour strategies.

Although standards have not risen significantly since the last inspection, the period has been used satisfactorily, laying the foundations for the future success of the literacy and numeracy strategies. The school has set appropriate targets for improvement and has sound capacity to meet these and continue to raise standards.

## STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
Reading	C	D	<i>well above average</i> A
Writing	C	C	<i>above average</i> B
Mathematics	C	C	<i>average</i> C
			<i>below average</i> D
			<i>well below average</i> E

This information shows, for example, that standards in reading, writing and mathematics in 1999 were average. Standards in reading in the 1999 tests show improvement from the previous year, with more pupils attaining the higher level 3, although reading standards are still below those in similar schools. At the start of the current Year 2, pupils are attaining average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in science and information technology are average and pupils reach the expected levels in religious education. In all other subjects, standards in the work seen were appropriate for the ages of the pupils. By five years of age, almost all children reach the expected Desirable Learning outcomes in the six areas of learning. Children in the nursery and assessment nursery unit make good progress.

## QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science		Satisfactory
Information Technology		Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Nearly nine in every ten lessons were satisfactory or better. In four out of ten lessons, teaching was good or very good but less than satisfactory in just over one in ten. The highest proportion of good teaching was for the under-fives, where the overall quality was good. There were good lessons in every year group.

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

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. Pupils are well behaved in most lessons, around the school and in the playground.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, with above average unauthorised absence. Too many parents take pupils out of school for holidays.
Ethos*	Purposeful. Pupils are keen and interested in their work. Relationships are good and there is a caring learning environment.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory. Good involvement and commitment of governors. The headteacher

	directs the work of the school effectively. Systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and the curriculum are too informal.
Curriculum	Broad and balanced. Sound planning to link subjects together effectively. Good provision for the under-fives.
Special educational needs	Pupils make good progress. Learning support assistants are well trained and give very effective help. Individual assessment and support is of good quality.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Spiritual development is satisfactory. Provision for moral and cultural development is good and for social development, very good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. Generous number of staff and learning support assistants. Resources are satisfactory with a good range of books. Induction arrangements for new staff are thorough. Attractive accommodation but limited space.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

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

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
V. Their children like school.	XI. Pupils are not being pushed to work hard enough.
VI. Parents are pleased with the positive attitudes and values promoted by the school.	XII. Teachers do not look at reading record books
VII. They are well informed about school events, through regular newsletters.	XIII. Parents would like all inset days to be co-
VIII. There were informative and helpful meetings to introduce the numeracy and literacy strategy.	XIV. The drainage problem in the playground.
IX. Teachers are very accessible which promotes lots of informal contact.	
X. The school is approachable if there are any problems.	

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. Pupils enjoy coming to school and there is a friendly, welcoming atmosphere. Information and diary dates in newsletters keep parents in touch with school events and the re-introduced curriculum letters from classteachers let parents know what is being taught. Teachers have good arrangements for meeting parents and the school promptly deals with problems. Pupils are not always pushed to work hard enough because teachers do not always match work to their needs. The school intends to do their utmost to synchronize inset days with the juniors and to give parents as much notice as possible. Teachers keep two sets of reading records and make their regular comments in the records held in school. A series of engineers have investigated the drainage problem and made several unsuccessful attempts to remedy this. Further work is on going.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

Improve teaching and learning, in order to raise standards by:

XV. Implementing an agreed system for senior and staff and co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and to provide evaluative feedback to teachers.

*Paragraphs 47-52*

XVI. Improving lesson planning to clearly show the learning objectives for each lesson and to ensure work is well matched and appropriately challenging to pupils' different needs and abilities.

*Paragraphs 21-28*

XVII. Ensure that all staff with a non-class based teaching role make maximum use of their expertise and skills, raising the confidence and competence of teachers and raising standards of pupils' work.

*Paragraphs 59-61*

**In addition to the key issues above, the following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan:**

XVIII. Ensure that the good standard of pupils' handwriting in handwriting lessons is evident in all their work. (paragraph 73)

XIX. Record the advice given to pupils about their work, so that it can be used to help them improve, and so that teachers can track the progress pupils are making. (paragraphs 25-28, 76)

XX. Improve the presentation and content of the school booklet so that it celebrates all the good attributes and successes of the school. (paragraphs 43-46)

XXI. Improve teachers' knowledge of skills to be taught in physical education. (paragraph 104)

XXII. Increase the amount of recorded work in science (paragraph 85-90)

XXIII. Establish formal management links between the school and the unit to include support and monitoring of the unit provision and staff appraisal. (paragraphs 105-112)

XXIV. Seek ways to further improve attendance (paragraphs 19-20)



- **INTRODUCTION**
- **Characteristics of the school**

1 East Wickham is bigger than most infant schools. The 270 pupils are currently organised into 8 classes and a further reception class will be opened in January. Pupils enter the school at the age of four or above in September or January, many from the attached part-time nursery which caters for 52 children. At the time of inspection there were 33 children under five in the reception classes. Admissions are arranged centrally by the local authority, according to their policy. There is also an assessment nursery unit on site for 10 children. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, with an average socio-economic mix. One fifth of the children admitted into the nursery are recommended for priority placement. Attainment, overall, on entry is average. About 15% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. The number of girls and boys is balanced overall, but there are some classes with uneven composition. A higher proportion than most schools, 6%, speak English as an additional language. There are 61 pupils on the register of special educational needs, which is above average.

2 The aims of the school, which are set out in the prospectus are to:

- Create a secure, safe, happy and caring environment conducive to pupils' educational, emotional and social development, fostering self-control and consideration for others and promoting self-esteem.
- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and begin preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- To develop good relationships with parents and the community; to encourage their help and co-operation in the education of their children thus creating a partnership striving for children's happiness and progress.
- To create an atmosphere which encourages self discipline and control
- To help children become aware of their role in the school and wider community.

1 The school development plan sets out priorities for this year in detail. They include:

- To introduce the numeracy hour and continue the implementation of the literacy hour.
- To complete schemes of work for art and physical education.
- To raise the performance of more able pupils and the attainment of boys.
- To achieve the Investors in People Charter Mark by extending the existing strategies for staff development, including the programme for initial teacher and nursery officer training.
- To further develop the internal and external environment of the school.

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4 **Key indicators****Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	44	46	90

4 <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	32	33	37
	Girls	41	40	41
	Total	73	73	78
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	81(74)	81(92)	87(95)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

4 <b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	33	36	40
	Girls	42	41	43
	Total	75	77	83
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	83(89)	86(95)	92(99)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

4 **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year: 1998/99

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.7
	National comparative data	5.4
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.6
	National comparative data	0.5

4

4 **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

4 **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	2%
Satisfactory or better	88%
Less than satisfactory	12%

#### 4 **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

#### 4 **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### 4 **Attainment and progress**

1 Overall attainment of the under fives on entry to the reception classes is average, although evidence from the baseline assessments shows a wide range. Compared with other schools within the borough, there is a higher proportion of pupils who attain below average results. One fifth of the children admitted into the nursery are recommended for priority placement by the educational psychology service. Currently in the small classes, children are making good progress. By the time they are of statutory school age, most will achieve the desirable learning outcomes.

2 The attainment of the under-fives in language and literacy is average. In the nursery, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and use their imagination effectively in the role-play area. In the reception classes, children speak to adults and to each other frequently during practical activities and whole class sessions. Children regularly look at books and take books home to read. They hear a daily story and make good progress learning to read by joining in familiar sentences and identifying letters and their sounds. Many begin to write their own name in the nursery and by the end of reception higher attaining pupils begin to write commonly used words from memory. Children make good progress in early mathematical development through activities to measure and weigh, to match shapes and patterns and when singing counting songs. In reception, they learn to count up to 10 accurately, sort coins into sets and write numbers correctly. They use mathematical language to describe position and use equipment well to support their learning. Their knowledge and understanding of the world develops well as they learn to use the computer and explore the properties of materials. They make good progress in physical skills when climbing and dancing and when practising cutting, gluing and sticking skills. Children's creative development is good, developed well through imaginative role-play areas, and regular opportunities for singing.

3 Pupils' results in the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national assessments were average for reading and for writing. Compared with similar schools, pupils' reading results were below average and for writing they were average. In the 1999 tests, scores for reading were better than 1998, with more pupils attaining the higher level 3. Test results in reading, over the previous three years were close to the national average. Results in writing, in 1999, were lower than the previous year. The 1999 test results in mathematics were average and about the same as similar schools. This reflects the average mathematics attainment of pupils currently at the start of Year 2. The 1999 teacher assessments of science show pupils' attainment was above average in all areas. Over the last three years the test results have fluctuated partly due to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, especially the proportion with statements. In 1999 there was an unusually high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, so although more pupils attained the higher level 3 in English and mathematics tests, a smaller proportion overall attained level 2.

4 Pupils presently at the beginning of Year 2 are working at average levels in reading, writing and mathematics and they are making satisfactory progress. They both enter and leave the school with attainment that is, on balance average. Pupils' progress during the year varies between classes, in relation to the quality of teaching. Progress was at least satisfactory in 88% of lessons seen and good or better in 38%. The most rapid progress was for children under five in the nursery and reception classes where progress was good or better in about two-thirds of lessons observed.

5 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. Many pupils with learning difficulties receive additional support in class lessons and in literacy withdrawal groups, which enables them to make good progress. Pupils with behaviour difficulties make good progress in achieving their

individual targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make sound overall progress. Girls perform better than boys in reading and writing and fewer boys attain the higher levels in tests. Higher attaining pupils made better progress during 1999, but there are lessons when work planned for them is not challenging enough.

6In English, progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils made good progress in nearly a third of lessons observed, with unsatisfactory progress in one lesson. Throughout the key stage pupils have satisfactory speaking and listening skills. These are promoted well during structured discussion and when pupils share their news. Attainment in reading is average by the end of the key stage and pupils make sound progress. Most pupils are learning to use a range of strategies, such as, initial sounds of letters, illustrations and reading ahead to work out unknown words. The recent focus on spelling patterns is helping pupils make better links between their reading and writing. Overall attainment in writing is average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils re-tell a familiar story in their own words, and invent their own ending. They write poetry, letters, recipes, greeting cards and newspaper articles, and interesting guidebooks as first attempts at their own non-fiction books.

7The school is addressing the identified need for more imaginative and creative use of vocabulary and extended writing with additional English lessons, but literacy skills are not consistently extended through other subjects. There are many opportunities for speaking and listening but insufficient focus on new vocabulary encountered in different subjects and too few opportunities for extending writing skills across a range of work. Spelling has improved recently as a result of an agreed policy. There is not enough use of word processing and interactive computer programs to reinforce literacy skills.

8Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and the work of pupils presently at the beginning of Year 2 is broadly average. Pupils' use and apply their mathematical knowledge soundly and appropriate emphasis is placed on mental mathematics. By the end of the key stage, pupils read, write and order numbers to 100 and they are developing understanding of larger numbers satisfactorily. They work confidently with coins and calculate change to be given from 50 pence. Mathematics skills are used when pupils measure in science investigations but opportunities are not usually taken in other subjects such as in geography. There is insufficient use of information technology for mathematical activities.

9In science, standards are broadly average at the end of the key stage and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils consider the ways in which science is relevant to their personal health and how to treat living things and the environment with care. They group living things according to their similarities and most pupils name parts of the human body accurately. Older pupils construct a simple electrical circuit and light a bulb correctly. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in investigations but insufficient emphasis is placed on developing recording skills to help draw their learning together.

10Attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations. Pupils store and retrieve their work, control a toy robot and create pictures and graphs. Pupils of all ages have good control of the mouse, click on commands and drag and place pictures and text. They make sound progress due to the effective class teaching of important skills. In religious education, pupils attain standards in line with the local Agreed Syllabus and make sound progress. They have a satisfactory knowledge of stories from the Bible and from other world religions. Pupils are beginning to recognise that special clothes, festivals and places are common to a range of religious traditions.

11Attainment is appropriate for pupils' ages in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Pupils work in a variety of media and build their art skills and techniques. They express feelings creatively through paintings and make careful three-dimensional animals. In design and technology, pupils are taught to use a range of equipment sensibly and to follow plans to make their models. For geography and history, practical experiences and visits make an important contribution to pupils' sound progress. Pupils sing tunefully and compose their own simple rhythms. Some skills are not

developed appropriately in physical education and games but dance is developed well.

## 15 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

12Pupils are happy to come to school and have a good attitude to their work. In nearly all lessons seen their response was at least satisfactory, in four fifths, it was good or very good. Most pupils listen attentively to teachers and concentrate well, sometimes becoming very engrossed in what they are doing. A group of Year 2 pupils concentrated really hard as they learnt to use specialist tools to cut and glue their moon buggies. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and keen to answer questions. Often, pupils display good learning skills and they are beginning to develop a capacity for personal study as they read at home or do their homework, although there are too few opportunities for them to use the school library. Pupils with special educational needs have a very positive attitude toward the additional learning support or guidance they are given. Throughout the school pupils are very tolerant of the needs and difficulties of others.

13All pupils behave very well around the school. They walk sensibly in the corridors, respond appropriately in assemblies and eat their lunch in a quiet, pleasant atmosphere, displaying good manners. Behaviour in the playground is very good. Pupils are very well supervised and helped to play co-operative games. There was no evidence of bullying or racial harassment, and parents and pupils expressed confidence that little occurs. If it does occur, it is quickly dealt with. There have been no exclusions for some time. In lessons, behaviour is also generally good, though it varies from class to class according to how well teachers match the work to pupils' needs and organise the lesson. Overall, pupils' behaviour is good and makes a good contribution to their progress.

14Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils relate well to one another and to adults, treating people with respect. They are invariably polite and courteous. Adults generally provide good role models. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to co-operate and they do so willingly, without fuss. Pupils are trusted to perform helpful tasks and respond well to this responsibility. Older pupils are expected to help look after the younger ones. The 'golden gang' looks out for those who have no one to play with and make sure no one is feeling lonely. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection, however, there are too few opportunities in lessons for pupils to show initiative and responsibility.

## 18 **Attendance**

15Levels of attendance have improved since the last inspection but are still unsatisfactory and below the national average. One factor is the number of holidays taken in term-time. Levels of unauthorised absence are above those found in most infant schools. Registers are marked promptly and carefully and the time is used well to support pupils' personal development and to reinforce number or literacy skills.

16Most pupils arrive punctually, though a significant number arrive in the few minutes after the bell has rung. A few are persistently late, despite the school's efforts to encourage them to arrive promptly. There was no evidence during this inspection of the late start and early finish of lessons mentioned in the last report, though the start of the day is not brisk. The nursery, however, routinely begin the morning session after the stated time of 9.00am. Overall, punctuality is satisfactory.

## 20 **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### 20 **Teaching**

17The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory or better in nearly nine in

every ten lessons observed and teaching was good or better in four out of every ten lessons. There was some very good teaching and a few unsatisfactory lessons. Teaching was most consistently good in the nursery with over eight out of ten lessons being good. Lessons observed for the under-fives in the reception classes were predominantly good, over half being good or better and one in ten being very good. Weaknesses identified in the last report, in Year 1, have been overcome and the overall quality of observed teaching was better than at the time of the last inspection. Teachers are planning different work for pupils' varying levels of attainment, although the work planned could be more challenging in most classes. This was the most common weakness, partly because teachers are not using daily assessment outcomes to plan the next steps in learning. In a few lessons, learning objectives were unclear for pupils because teachers do not explain or demonstrate the new skill in sufficient detail.

18The quality of teaching for children under five is good and this contributes significantly to children's good progress. A good balance is maintained between the direct teaching of skills and the opportunity for children to develop their understanding through practical activities. Teachers, nursery officers and support staff communicate well to ensure an appropriate level of support and provision of resources for all children. Adults are enthusiastic and this is conveyed to children so that they are motivated to learn and do their best. Lesson planning makes good links between the Desirable Learning Outcomes and the National Curriculum and activities are adapted appropriately for the different ages and stages of learning within each class. Children are managed well and routines are made clear which provides a secure and consistent environment. Regular observations of children's attainment are made and these together with baseline assessments provide a clear picture of each child's strengths and weaknesses.

19Teaching in Key Stage 1 is sound overall. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge of most subjects. The highest proportion of good lessons were observed for literacy, where the strategy documentation is supporting and extending teachers' subject knowledge well, although in one unsatisfactory literacy lesson, initial instruction to pupils was unclear. In good science and information technology lessons, teachers' expertise enabled pupils to learn and use a range of new vocabulary. In unsatisfactory lessons, teachers do not understand the curriculum well enough; for example, how to teach new skills for physical education or how to explain about electricity. As a result pupils made unsatisfactory progress in gaining new knowledge in these areas.

20In most lessons teachers expect their pupils to work hard at their tasks. Well-planned, activities in a good literacy lesson were explained carefully to pupils and well-focused questions enabled the teacher to check all pupils knew what to do. The work was challenging and required pupils of all levels of attainment to work hard. Where teaching was less successful, expectations were too low, as tasks were not sufficiently well matched to pupils' prior attainment. For example in a geography lesson, higher attaining pupils were asked to complete a very simple task of identifying vehicles to use on an island, and in music, pupils' first attempts were accepted and they were not asked how they might improve.

21In all lessons, daily plans indicate the activity and tasks pupils will do but do not always clearly identify the learning objectives and the knowledge and skills to be taught and learnt in each lesson. Overall pupils receive sound oral feedback about their work but advice from marking and assessment is not consistently recorded in pupils' books for pupils and teachers to assess progress. Classrooms are well organised and the grouping arrangements enable teachers and support staff to focus effectively on designated groups. Teachers provide an appropriate range of practical activities to help pupils understand difficult ideas but there are few agreed resources in every room to support pupils' developing independence, such as current topic vocabulary lists, ideas for beginning stories, number squares, time lines and maps.

22The many good lessons had effective introductions to engage pupils' interest and to help them make links with previous work. Teachers do not routinely set time limits or remind pupils of the time remaining for them to complete tasks. As a result, in a few lessons there was no sense of urgency or

requirement to finish the task during the lesson. Summary sessions are usually held at the end of lessons; in the best examples, pupils shared the difficulties and successes of their tasks and the teacher assessed the work. This helped plan the next lesson. In a few cases, pupils shared their work but it was not evaluated and they did not know how to improve. In most lessons, teachers manage pupils well, maintaining good relationships through a good balance between praise and constructive criticism. Teachers usually present good role models for pupils, which supports their progress. In the few unsatisfactory lessons teachers made negative comments to pupils which re-inforced pupils bad behaviour instead of promoting improvement.

23The teaching and guidance given to pupils with special educational needs by specialist teaching and learning support staff is good, making a significant contribution to their progress. Good use is made of formal and diagnostic testing to plan specialist teaching, which meets pupils needs effectively. However in class lessons, teachers do not always plan work appropriately, for the specific needs of all pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers are not involved sufficiently in formulating targets and strategies for individual education plans; consequently they do not take enough account of these in lesson planning. Although there is a climate of constant informal discussions between staff, there is insufficient structured exchange of information about pupils' needs. Class teaching, does not always use the same learning priorities as those used by the specialist staff in withdrawal lessons.

24Overall, speaking and listening skills are developed well across the curriculum but there is not a whole school approach to promoting pupils' reading and writing skills or mathematical skills in other subjects. Teachers set regular homework activities such as reading, spelling and mathematics and this supports pupils' progress in lessons. Parents have differing views regarding the amount of homework expected from pupils, none-the-less, most support their children and pupils enjoy these activities and complete them enthusiastically.

## 28      **The curriculum and assessment**

25The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and the new strategies for these subjects are being implemented soundly. Since the last inspection, the school has put in place schemes of work in each subject, making sound use of national guidelines. The school has maintained a topic-based approach to work in the foundation subjects which helps pupils to make relevant links across different subjects. The planned curriculum for children under five is good, successfully integrating the Desirable Learning Outcomes with the National Curriculum. There is appropriate emphasis on children's social development and they are well prepared for entry into statutory schooling. Structured play activities and many opportunities for speaking and listening effectively develop literacy and numeracy skills. Assessment procedures are sound and include both formal assessments conducted when children first enter school and informal assessments made throughout the day.

26The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. Health education and sex education are introduced in science lessons and through planned discussion. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted well. A range of visits to places of interest, linked to topic activities, enrich pupils' learning. Visiting musicians, theatre groups and people from the local community provide a stimulating range of experiences for pupils. A number of parents and other volunteers help in classes, sharing their skills and expertise. The school has reviewed the homework policy since the last inspection and now offers balanced and appropriate provision for children of this age.

27Pupils with special educational needs are given good support to enable them to benefit from the full curriculum. Although pupils in reception and Key Stage 1 may be withdrawn from main class lessons for group teaching, careful planning plus the vigilance of the class teachers ensures they do not miss any

aspects of the curriculum. However, formal liaison between the specialist literacy support staff and classteachers does not always include information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs in the nursery are given particularly good support to take part fully in all areas of learning and in all activities.

28 Teachers in each year group work closely together when planning the termly and weekly curriculum. All levels of planning are satisfactory and the co-operative systems adopted by the school ensure pupils have the same access to the full range of subjects. Teachers group pupils according to their ability in most lessons, and this has a positive impact on pupils progress. This arrangement has flexibility, depending on the subject and lesson aims.

29 Overall, procedures for the assessment of pupils' work are satisfactory. Baseline assessments are carried out during the first few weeks children are in school and a good series of formal assessments help to track pupils' progress. Each teacher records pupils' achievements and progress by ticking lists of appropriate knowledge and skills for each subject. Subject co-ordinators keep portfolios of pupils' recorded work, and teachers discuss these at regular points during the year. Assessment information is being used to analyse strengths and weaknesses in some areas of the curriculum, for example in reading, particularly the attainment of boys. Good use is made of summative and diagnostic tests to effectively target pupils with special educational needs and plan specialist teaching. Arrangements for the end of key stage assessments are sound and meet statutory requirements. Since the last inspection, the school has revised the marking policy and this has helped to improve pupils' spelling. Annual reports to parents give appropriate details of pupils' achievements.

### 33 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

30 The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development within a caring, secure environment. The aim to foster self-confidence and self-esteem is well met. Parents agree that the school's values have a positive effect on their children. This inspection finds very similar provision to that reported in the previous inspection.

31 Pupils' spiritual development is soundly fostered through moments of reflection during discussion. Pupils come into assemblies quietly and respectfully, though music is not routinely used to help create a special atmosphere. They hear and take part in a range of stories, which often deal with moral or social issues and sometimes sing a song. The daily act of collective worship consists of a prayer to God, so that all faiths can feel involved. Prayers are featured daily and pupils are sometimes given guidance as they learn to pray. The quality of the assemblies during the inspection was satisfactory, with a particularly moving moment when the school was united in observing two minutes silence on Remembrance Day. Successes in work and attitudes and special achievements are celebrated to reinforce community values and give a positive direction.

32 The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. Assembly themes often have a moral content; bullying is discussed, for example. There are two whole-school 'golden rules', which pupils know and understand. Classroom rules are discussed at the start of the year and displayed on walls, so pupils know what is expected of them. Several instances were observed of adults helping pupils to understand why their behaviour was inappropriate and what they should have done instead. Through collections for various charities, pupils are helped to become increasingly aware of the needs of others and of what they can do to help. Pupils personally deliver harvest gifts to elderly neighbours, which also supports their social development. They are also learning to take care of the environment through opportunities provided in the conservation area and the school grounds.

33 The very good provision made for pupils' social development starts in the nursery, where the children



are encouraged to play together, co-operate and helped to re-make broken friendships. Throughout the school, discussion time and personal, social and health education lessons give good support. For example in a Year 2 lesson, pupils thought about what they would do if they saw someone was lonely in the playground. In another class, pupils were encouraged to ask each other questions as they shared their news in pairs. Not only did this support their speaking and listening skills, it also helped them learn to hold an interesting and friendly conversation. Some older pupils have been given the responsibility of being members of the 'golden gang' who look out for pupils who have no-one to play with, waiting at the 'friendship stop'. Pupils and parents value this arrangement. A mid-day supervisor has the responsibility for teaching pupils co-operative and group games. This is a good provision. Good manners and politeness are encouraged, for example while eating lunch or when answering the register.

34 Provision for pupils' cultural education is good. Pupils hear stories from a wide range of cultures and a storyteller comes during book week to support this. Younger pupils in the nursery and reception classes learn traditional rhymes and fairy tales. Older pupils learn about other faiths, their traditions and festivals, in religious education lessons. Pupils had designed rangoli and mendhi patterns as part of their celebration of Diwali. Visiting theatre companies and other visitors, as well as visits out of school also contribute to the good provision for cultural development. Art and music lessons make a satisfactory contribution.

### **38 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

35 The school has good overall procedures for the support guidance and welfare of pupils and this has improved since the time of the last inspection. The commitment to, and the management of pupils' well being is now a strength of the school. Monitoring and support of pupils' progress across the curriculum is satisfactory. Results from diagnostic checks are used to plan additional staff support for learning. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to termly meetings to discuss targets in individual education plans and how these can be supported with homework activities. Annual pupil reports for parents are brief but satisfactory overall. The information used to support pupils' transfer from the nursery into reception is very good, and is satisfactory for other years.

36 Great care is taken to support pupils starting school. The flexible approach and the caring commitment of staff enable individual pupils to settle confidently and quickly. Pupils' personal development is very well supported throughout the life of the school. Very good systems exist which promote pupils' care for each other. Pupils' efforts and positive attitudes are recognised formally through the 'praising book' and informally throughout the school day. Pupils develop a good understanding of personal and social responsibility. They are clear and confident about how to gain help if they are upset, injured or in difficulties. There is a comprehensive policy and useful guidelines for supporting pupils' behaviour. They develop their own rules and are helped to understand the importance of these. Where individuals have difficulties in managing their behaviour they are given very effective support.

37 The school makes satisfactory arrangements to promote regular attendance. Clear information is included in school documents and it features regularly in publications for parents. The staff and governing body are committed to promoting good levels of attendance and take care in authorising absences. The awarding of 100% attendance certificates and the regular support of the attached education welfare officer is effective in supporting the improvement of attendance.

38 The school is very clean and well maintained, providing a safe and inviting environment. Safety checks are regular, very well organised and clear procedures efficiently followed. The school dealt with minor health and safety issues raised during the inspection. Child protection procedures are very well managed by all members of staff. First aid and overall care for pupils' welfare in lessons, in the playground, at lunchtime and on school visits are well planned and resourced. Parents are quickly and

effectively contacted if there are any concerns about health, well being or progress. The school makes very good use of professional support services such as the educational psychologist, area health, speech and language and social services. The quality and the extent of liaison between the school and these services directly benefit the pupils.

## 42 **Partnership with parents and the community**

39As at the time of the last inspection, the school continues to provide a helpful range of information for parents. Written communications are informative. Regular newsletters are detailed and the nursery provides a useful booklet about its work. Documents such as the prospectus and the starting school booklet contain much information but are not well presented and do not do the school justice. Annual reports provide parents with sound information about their child's progress. The best also give a clear picture of what the pupil can do, as well as commenting on attitudes. Some comments are very brief, although all now usefully include targets for improvement. The school has recently re-introduced half-termly curriculum information so that parents can support the work that is going on in school. This is good practice. Good consultation took place for the home/school agreement and the new homework policy and all parents have received a copy.

40Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed and are appropriately involved in discussions about individual education plans. They feel well supported. The school has a welcoming approach, which benefits pupils greatly. The special educational needs co-ordinator is readily available to meet parents and discuss their child's planned termly targets. There are good opportunities for parents to see their children's work and to meet the teachers. The school has organised well-attended sessions on the literacy and numeracy strategies and also arranged an evening to introduce the new mathematics homework scheme. The head teacher and staff are readily accessible if parents need to speak to them. Most parents expressed confidence that they felt welcome in school and that their concerns would be dealt with effectively.

41Parents are supportive of the work the school is doing, though few are able to help personally in classes. Many, though not all, hear their children read regularly and so make a good contribution to the progress pupils make with reading. An enthusiastic group of parents and staff, led by the premises manager and the school secretary, run the 'Friends of East Wickham Infant School' and arrange a number of social and fund-raising events during the year. These raise considerable sums of money, which recently subsidised improvements to the school grounds and equipment such as listening centres and book trolleys. They also contribute to the cost of visits and visitors, so that all pupils can participate in these events.

42Links with the local community are good and several local businesses support the school. Customers at the nearby public house have raised money for a log train and carriage for the playground and the Bexley Business partnership provided a generous grant towards the fine, recently installed pond. There are good links with two local churches whose ministers speak in assemblies. Close links with schools and colleges enable the school to attract students who support in classrooms. Parents expressed concern that staff-training days at the infant and junior schools do not coincide, making it very difficult for working parents. This is being addressed. Relevant information is passed on as pupils transfer between the two schools and there are some curriculum links. As at the time of the previous inspection, links with the wider community provide good support to pupils' academic progress and personal development.

## 46 **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### 46 **Leadership and management**

43The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy head, supported by the newly formed governing body, provide clear educational direction for the school. Links with parents are promoted well through consultation and staff and pupils are managed well. This has been maintained since the last inspection. The school development plan is reviewed on an annual basis with priorities informed by national initiatives and government targets, local authority priorities and the school's own targets, reached following analysis of end of key stage national test results. The governing body evaluates the effectiveness of initiatives through discussing test results and listening to regular reports from co-ordinators. The governing body has a strategic view of school development and a clear view of their role and of their responsibilities. Subject co-ordinators produce linked subject action plans but these plans are not costed and do not refer to the annual budget provided for each subject.

44The school is fully committed to supporting pupils with special educational needs. The governing body receives regular reports and the newly appointed named governors are beginning to increase ways of working within the school, for example, through visits and meetings with staff. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has sound informal contact with staff. However, there is no formal monitoring of overall special educational needs provision, the match of teaching to pupils' individual needs and targets, or of the implementation of the policy.

45Subject co-ordinators have clear job descriptions and demonstrate commitment to the development of their role. Appraisal is not regularly undertaken and professional dialogue between the headteacher and members of the teaching staff are informal. The school is currently in the process of achieving 'Investors In People' status and the report concluded that informal monitoring occurs in the school, and includes the identification of staff training needs, but that staff themselves are unaware that this identification is being carried out. This is also the judgement of the inspection team. The deputy headteacher has a non-class based teaching role and spends some time each week in different classes supporting pupils with special educational needs. During this time informal monitoring of classroom practice occurs and concerns are fed back to the headteacher but strengths and weaknesses are not routinely shared with members of staff concerned.

46Co-ordinators retrospectively monitor teachers' planning each half term for curriculum coverage but feedback on strengths and weaknesses in planning is not routinely given. Pupils' work is sampled twice a year, annotated and leveled against National Curriculum attainment targets and levels and placed in a subject portfolio. Evaluative feedback on pupils' work is not given to staff. The headteacher and deputy head have a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, learning and the curriculum in the school but evidence is not gathered through an open programme of monitoring and evaluating classroom practice. Therefore, action to remedy areas of concern is usually indirect and this limits its effect on raising standards and improving provision across the school.

47The school has agreed and published aims, which express high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The aims are reviewed each year by the governing body but have undergone no change for a number of years. The aims, particularly the pastoral ones influence the work of all staff and form the basis of a shared sense of purpose within the school. Responses to the parents' questionnaire reflect the parents' support for the aims and values of the school. Most pupils are secure, happy and confident within the school community. The school has a positive ethos, which is reflected through its effective learning environment, good relationships and equality of opportunity for pupils. Its commitment to high achievement is implicit in its ethos but is not reflected through a commitment to a rigorous system of monitoring and evaluation.

48The governing body fulfils its statutory obligations and is effective in supporting the school. The review of the role of the deputy head was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. In response to the key issue the governing body reviewed the support role of the deputy and agreed to maintain the status quo. The deputy head has a great deal of expertise in her role as co-ordinator for special educational

needs but does not make full use of this in supporting the headteacher with the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and the curriculum. Priorities and targets for school improvement are not consistently based on analysis of strengths and weaknesses across the school. Since the last inspection report the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues identified. The school has sound capacity for further improvement.

## **52 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

49The school has a generous number of suitably qualified teachers and learning support assistants to meet the demands of the curriculum. There is a better spread of teacher expertise than reported at the time of the last inspection and a suitable balance between longer serving staff and those more recently qualified. All staff have job descriptions linked to their responsibility for co-ordinating subject areas. Learning support assistants and special educational needs assistants are well trained and they continue to work very effectively alongside teachers to support groups of pupils.

50All staff new to the school are supported well by a mentor and procedures for the induction of newly qualified teachers is linked effectively with the borough scheme. The school tries to employ a regular team of teachers for temporary work and this promotes continuity for pupils' learning. Current staff development procedures are informal. The headteacher identifies training needs amongst staff after individual discussion or feedback from co-ordinators. Opportunities for further training or opportunities to observe practice in other schools may then be offered. During the last year training days have focused on whole school priorities such as literacy and numeracy training. Support staff have attended these and other training sessions to build their expertise. This has been beneficial for staff and contributed well to pupils' progress.

51Since the last inspection, extensive improvements and attractive renovations have been made to the accommodation. A well-equipped nursery block, including a nursery assessment unit, has been completed. Refurbished toilets and classes for reception children are bright and clean with good consideration of safety issues. The limited space inside the school still poses some restrictions, for example, the improved library provision is used jointly for group and individual sessions; the hall, although well equipped, provides a limited space for gymnastics, and there is a lack of general storage space. The accommodation for promoting the learning of pupils with special educational needs is well used. The premises staff work hard to ensure the accommodation is always very clean and safe from litter. Colourful displays of pupils' work create a welcoming entrance area and attractive corridors and classrooms. The school playground has been imaginatively improved with additional seating and areas of interest. Included in this project is an outside stage and further line markings.

52The range and quality of resources across the curriculum are good. There is a good range of fiction, non-fiction and group readers to use in Literacy lessons and useful sets of books to promote reading skills through religious education and science. The wide range of resources for supporting pupils with special educational needs is well selected and used. The school has continued to develop and improve the quality and range of resources since the last inspection. For example, the much improved artefacts for religious education and the development of the environmental area. Good and careful use is made of equipment and shared resources are easily accessible.

## **56 The efficiency of the school**

53The school's financial planning is satisfactory. The headteacher consults the co-ordinators in the formulation of the budget, which is costed carefully to reflect priorities, identified in the development plan. Governors discuss and agree this plan and debate the implications of their decisions. There has been some monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of spending decisions and the impact they have on

pupils' attainment and progress. For example, the funding of additional learning support assistants for individual reading was evaluated to assess the impact on raising reading standards, and found to be effective.

54The school has received grants to support the national literacy strategy, for additional learning support assistants for large classes, and staff training. The improving standards in reading and the increased staff expertise with the literacy strategy show that this additional funding has been used effectively and has a direct impact on raising standards. Additional school funds were allocated to give extra support for pupils' reading. The school has carefully assigned funds to redecorate and improve the building and grounds. This has greatly enhanced the learning and working environment. Funds allocated for pupils with special educational needs are spent appropriately and supplemented by an additional proportion of the budget. An active and enthusiastic Friends association raises significant amounts of additional funds, recently providing new listening areas in classrooms, book trolleys and some of the grounds improvements.

55The day-to-day management of the school ensures efficient administrative procedures are in place. The secretary presents a welcoming reception to the school and is helpful to all visitors. In consultation with the headteacher she carries out routine financial transactions and there are clear and manageable systems in place for the ordering and receipt of goods and for banking arrangements. The recommendations from the latest audit report have been implemented.

56Learning support assistants make a very good contribution to pupils learning and the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinators for special educational needs and for mathematics have considerable expertise and experience in their subjects. Currently, they are non-class based and work with groups of pupils or alongside teachers. Although exemplar lessons and assistance with planning have been given, not enough of their time is dedicated to making maximum use of their expertise and skills, such as monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and giving constructive feedback on how standards could be improved. Shared planning makes a positive contribution to the curriculum and the quality of teaching.

57The school's good accommodation and resources are mainly used efficiently. Although the library is used effectively throughout the day for small groupwork, it is not often used to teach library skills or for independent research activities. Expenditure per pupil is about average for London schools. Although standards are average overall on entry to school, there is an above average number of pupils on the register of special educational needs. Pupils make sound progress and by the end of the key stage attain average standards, with an increasing proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in tests. There is a greater proportion of teaching that is satisfactory or better than at the time of the last inspection. During the last four years the school has made sound progress in addressing the key issues from the previous report and is giving satisfactory value for money.

61 **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

58The school has a 52 place part-time nursery and had 33 children in two reception classes at the time of the inspection. The second intake of children in January will result in three reception classes. The nursery caters for a wide range of children and has a significant number who have priority placements due to a range of needs. Overall attainment of children on entry to the reception class is average, although below the local authority average, as shown in the baseline assessments. Children make good progress. By the time they are statutory school age many will achieve the expected desirable learning outcomes in the six areas of learning.

59Provision for children's **personal and social development** is good. Teachers provide a secure and happy learning environment with well established routines, which enables children to settle quickly and make good progress in this area. In the nursery, snack time is well organised and helps to underline the values of sharing, co-operating and taking turns. Children are encouraged to help in the preparation of snacks and are taught how to find their name cards and choose their milk independently. Children in the reception classes discuss issues such as how to make friends and they develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. Adults provide good role models, working well as a team, demonstrating good relationships and co-operative working. The very youngest children and those with special educational needs are well supported, by all adults, through sensitive interjections. Children in the reception classes take turns to speak, put up their hands and wait patiently for their turn. In both the nursery and reception classes, children are confident, enthusiastic and eager to participate in activities.

60Provision for the development of **language and literacy** is good. Opportunities for speaking and listening are good. In the nursery the topic of “space and spaceships” provides numerous opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills. Adults are deployed to play with children in the role-play area and encourage and stimulate speaking skills using a wide range of appropriate vocabulary. In the reception classes, children speak to adults and to each other during practical activities and whole class sessions. In the nursery and reception, children regularly look at books and take books home to read. They hear a daily story and make good progress joining in familiar sentences, recognising letters and sounds and learning to read key words. However, books are not always displayed invitingly, where children can browse and see what is on offer. Many children begin to write their own name in the nursery and by the end of reception higher attaining pupils begin to write commonly used words from memory. Children's progress in language and literacy development overall is good.

61Provision for **mathematical development** is good for all children under five and they make good progress. In the nursery, children have the opportunity to measure materials such as silver foil to cover their space helmet models, weigh ingredients for making star biscuits, match shape puzzles, use beads to make sequence patterns and sing a range of counting songs. Opportunities are missed in some activities, however. For example, when singing counting songs to 5, the teachers did not draw the children's attention to the digits 1 to 5 on the number frieze or ask children to demonstrate counting five beads across on the large abacus that was sited behind the teacher's chair. In reception, children learn to count accurately, sort coins into sets and write numbers to 10 correctly. They extend their mathematical language when describing position and use equipment appropriately to support their learning.

62Provision for the development of children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is good. The 'space' topic in the nursery and the 'traditional tales' topic in reception both lend themselves well to developing and reinforcing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. Opportunities to cook, make models, play with sand and water, play in the “spaceship” in the role play area and explore the outdoor environment in the nursery contribute effectively to the children's growing understanding of their environment. Design and technology lessons in the reception classes enable children to explore and

investigate a range of materials to find those suitable for making a bag for Little Red Riding Hood. Science lessons encourage children to use their senses effectively to identify different types of food and further their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make good progress in this area of learning.

63Progress in **physical development** is good. Children have good manipulative skills, cutting, sticking and painting with care. Tools and equipment are used safely and sensibly. Motor skills are developed well through the provision and use of wheeled vehicles and prams, the climbing frame, large construction materials and other activities in the outdoor area of the nursery. In physical education lessons, in reception, children acquire particularly good skills in dance and drama. Children use space well, listen attentively to the stimulus tape and the teacher's directions, and practice skills with concentration and care. They are confident and competent when asked to offer ideas and suggestions to develop the dance and when demonstrating skills to the rest of the class.

64Provision for **creative development** is good for all under fives and they make good progress. Topics have been planned well to include imaginative and expressive activities. In the nursery, children have been fully involved in designing and constructing the spaceship for their role-play area. Children participate in a range of creative activities each day. These include painting, drawing, sand sculpture, model making, chalking in the outdoor area, listening to space music and joining in songs and stories. In the reception classes pupils have suitable opportunities for creative activities in art, design and technology and music lessons.

65The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers, the nursery officer, learning support assistants and other adults who work with the under fives, work effectively together to ensure good support. The teacher job-share arrangements in the nursery operate smoothly. They liaise in detail each lunchtime and the presence of the nursery officer for the whole day helps to ensure continuity and equality across both sessions. Teachers plan together for all areas of learning and provide relevant activities. They are enthusiastic and positive in all their interactions with children. This motivates children to learn and produce their best. In one very good lesson, the teacher made relevant and appropriate teaching points, which deepened children's understanding and promoted their very good progress. Following baseline assessments, teachers track children's development continually, and in some cases provide different work for their different stages of development. The accommodation for the under fives is very good and supports the curriculum well, although the separate area for reception children is rarely used. The small classes, during the autumn term is having a positive impact on their progress.

## 69 ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

### 69 English

66Standards of attainment overall are in line with the national average. Results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were average in reading and writing. In comparison with pupils from similar backgrounds, results were below average in reading and average in writing. Results in these tests for reading were better than in 1998, with a higher proportion of pupils reaching level 3. Writing standards were not as high as the previous year. The 1999 results were close to the national average and reflect pupils' attainment at the beginning of the current Year 2. Over the last three years the test results have fluctuated, due to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, especially the proportion with statements. Overall standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection, although pupils' spelling is better.

67Pupils have satisfactory speaking and listening skills and they make sound progress. In all classes pupils listen carefully to each other and to their teacher. This enables them to answer questions sensibly,

follow instructions and settle to work quickly. They gain confidence through speaking in front of the class during structured discussion, drama and story time. They regularly present class assemblies to develop more formal ways of speaking and performing to a larger audience. By the end of the key stage pupils use a widened vocabulary and some higher attainers are beginning to use subject specific vocabulary confidently. Reluctant and shy pupils contribute to lessons more confidently when teachers' sensitive questioning encourages them to find ways of expressing their meaning clearly. Pupils made good progress when discussing their news in small groups at the start of the day, and a pupil with special educational needs made good progress when invited to speak 'on the spot'.

68Pupils' attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of the key stage and they make sound progress. Pupils learn to read by using a selection of graded reading books from commercial schemes alongside other fiction and non-fiction texts. In Year 2, higher attaining and more experienced readers confidently tackle books by using punctuation to help establish meaning and by making sensible guesses at unknown words. Most pupils use initial sounds of letters, illustrations and reading ahead to work out unknown words. The recent focus on phonics, word building and spelling patterns is giving pupils more help in learning to read and enabling them to make better links between their reading and writing. Pupils have daily opportunities to read and discuss ideas in stories and poems and the use of non-fiction books in science promotes good progress. From the beginning of the reception class pupils are encouraged to find new vocabulary independently from word banks and dictionary cards but these are not related to current work and lack relevance for many pupils. Parental support for pupils' reading at home has a positive effect on standards and pupils' continuing interest in books.

69Attainment in writing is average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Younger pupils keep writing diaries and record in their own made books. Pupils in Year 1 develop their written ideas in sequences of sentences, sometimes containing full stops, capital letters and correct spellings of simple words. By the end of the key stage pupils re-tell a familiar story in their own words, and invent their own ending. A range of activities, such as poetry, letters, recipes, greeting cards, newspaper articles and their own non-fiction books, such as tour guides for Lullingstone Park and baby catalogues, gives a real purpose for their writing. There are too few opportunities for developing writing skills by recording work in other subjects. Handwriting is taught regularly and pupils are learning to form their letters correctly and in a neater style. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection, but teachers do not always insist pupils transfer newly learnt handwriting skills to all their work.

70Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when given focused support or suitably modified work by their teacher or by other well-briefed adults. In lessons, girls and boys work equally hard in all aspects of English although fewer boys attain higher levels in reading. The school has identified this, alerted teachers and organised staff training. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported soundly during lessons and they make satisfactory progress. Pupils show a good attitude towards their work, showing interest in their activities and contributing well to discussions. They are supportive of each other during group work, when finding new words or when difficulties arise. Pupils give praise readily for others efforts and in one lesson observed, they gave spontaneous applause for the achievements of a pupil with special educational needs. A few pupils find sustained concentration on written tasks difficult and do not have the confidence to work without adult attention.

71The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In nearly a third of lessons observed, teaching was good and there was one unsatisfactory lesson. In a good lesson, the teacher focused throughout on the lesson aims by using good questioning strategies. By asking 'what happened next', 'why did that happen'. This helped pupils to make good progress in understanding how sentences can be connected. The teacher made good use of pupils' own ideas to improve their writing skills. This was effective in helping pupils to see the relevance of what the teacher said. In another good lesson, the teacher ensured all pupils understood new vocabulary before moving on and throughout the lesson, reminded pupils about key skills such as handwriting and spelling. When teaching was unsatisfactory, it was not clear what pupils were expected to learn from the lesson introduction. They were given a task with very little prior



discussion to promote and share imaginative ideas, and during the activity pupils were not encouraged to use dictionaries, thesaurus or word banks independently. The teacher's comments during the plenary did not focus on the quality of work or discuss how it could be improved.

72In most lessons teachers motivate pupils with good use of praise focused on pupils' achievements. Teachers generally set different tasks according to pupils' levels of prior attainment. On occasions however, the work was insufficiently challenging and pupils who had finished their task were not set further work to complete. Classroom assistants and voluntary helpers are well deployed and they work effectively with different groups of pupils. Training is planned to improve the effectiveness of the plenary session in providing oral feedback to pupils about their work and developing strategies for discussing mistakes and misunderstandings. Overall, there is insufficient use of word processing and interactive computer programs to reinforce literacy skills. There is helpful guidance on the stages of reading acquisition in the reading records. These are regularly completed, however there is wide variation in the quality and frequency of diagnostic comments, and in some cases just the title of the book is noted. The marking policy has been helpful in improving pupils' spellings but teachers' written comments do not often point out how the content or structure of work can be improved.

73The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced thoughtfully. The two co-ordinators have been active and effective in promoting the more structured way of teaching pupils to read and write. The recent additional teachers' resources for the progressive development of phonics provide very helpful guidance for teachers. The school is addressing the identified need for more imaginative and creative use of vocabulary and extended writing through additional English sessions. There is a very good supply of books. Two-thirds of teachers have been observed teaching literacy lessons, by the co-ordinator and teachers' planning and samples of work are collected. Teachers have not yet received feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses in their lessons or the quality of pupils' work. A good range of events, such as, book week, theatre groups, guest authors and pantomime support the curriculum effectively.

## 77 **Mathematics**

74Results of national assessments in 1999 show pupils' attainment in the end of key stage assessments to be average and about the same as the results from similar schools. An average proportion of pupils gained the higher level 3. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that the attainment of pupils in the current Year 2 is as expected for pupils of their age.

75By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils work confidently with number and carry out a range of simple calculations. They read, write and order numbers to 100, and most are confidently developing their understanding of larger numbers. Most pupils make given sums of money, using different coins, and calculate their change from 50 pence accurately. They describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes according to sides, corners and angles. Their skills in using and applying mathematics are sound.

76Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. Appropriate emphasis is given to practical activities, puzzles and games, to ensure younger pupils understand number, pattern and mathematical language before being expected to complete written tasks. In the reception year, pupils regularly count forwards and backwards, using a number line to reinforce learning. Pupils are encouraged to correct themselves when they make mistakes. In Year 1, pupils learn to measure objects using non-standard units, and measure how many units it takes to make one metre. They begin to learn to tell the time using a 12-hour clock, and to understand patterns of time within their own day. In Year 2, pupils discern number patterns and distinguish between odd and even numbers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and receive good support in lessons.

77Pupils have sound numeracy skills. The recently introduced numeracy strategy is used well by

teachers to structure lessons. Appropriate emphasis is placed on mental mathematics and this is encouraging pupils' fast recall of facts and an understanding of patterns. In a Year 1 lesson, all pupils counted to 30 accurately and then doubled single digit numbers. In Year 2, pupils counted on and back in 2's and 10's. Some teachers emphasise mathematical terms in lessons, but these are not always reinforced in print or by displays. Mathematics skills are reinforced in some other subjects, for example when measuring in science investigations, but this is not consistent across all classes and insufficient use is made of information technology.

78Pupils have good attitudes towards mathematics. They are keen to participate in question and answer sessions. They enjoy engaging in practical tasks and using equipment. Most pupils sustain interest and concentration well during group tasks and they enjoy sharing their learning with the rest of the class.

79Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers employ a good balance of whole class work, practical activities and written tasks. Some mental mathematics sessions are conducted at a slow pace, and do not provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils. The co-ordinator supports teaching in many classes, enabling some groups to make good progress. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, one group learned to estimate then record how many times they could complete different basic tasks in one minute. They improved their estimating skills and had a clear concept of one minute by the end of the session. In some lessons, planning did not indicate precise outcomes for the different groups of pupils and as a result, some tasks were too easy. Most teachers make good use of resources, particularly when introducing new concepts, and satisfactory use is made of number lines and grids.

80The school has an appropriate plan and new scheme of work for the development of the subject. The co-ordinator is working alongside teachers, taking groups and occasionally leading lessons, to support the introduction of the strategy. Formal evaluative feedback is not given however, which would help teachers improve their skills in lesson planning and ensure all pupils are making appropriate progress. Assessment in the subject is sound. A programme of formal assessments and teachers' record sheets track the progress of individual pupils. Resources for mathematics are good with a substantial range of good quality practical equipment. Standards are about the same as the time of the last inspection.

## 84 **Science**

81Teacher assessments in 1999 show pupils attainment at the end of the key stage to be above the national average and above that of pupils from similar schools. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that the attainment of pupils at the beginning of the current Year 2 is lower than this, although still close to national averages.

82Pupils consider the ways in which science is relevant to their personal health, and how to treat living things and the environment with care and sensitivity. They group living things according to their similarities and differences and know that there are different types of plants and animals. They name different sources of both natural and artificial light. Older pupils are beginning to explore the use of electricity, name different types of battery appliances, and construct a simple electrical circuit, including a light bulb.

83Pupils make satisfactory progress. They cover an appropriate balance of work, with good opportunities to participate in investigations. Pupils are encouraged to conduct fair tests, making predictions about their outcomes. In one lesson, a group of younger pupils investigated how much light passed through different types of paper. They made good progress helping each other through the activity, placing the types of paper in a sequence, and reporting their findings to the class clearly. Pupils are not always encouraged to record their findings to reinforce their learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, groups of pupils put together simple electrical circuits and also spent time looking at battery

torches to see how different parts are connected. They did not record anything, or make a note of key terms they had learned. Pupils record science work in their foundation books. There was very little recorded evidence of work covered during the current term and overall there is insufficient emphasis on developing recording skills to help draw learning together.

84 Pupils generally respond enthusiastically and with interest in lessons. They enjoy opportunities to investigate and discover from first-hand observation, and discuss this work enthusiastically. They work co-operatively, sharing resources and ideas. When lessons are not well organised to meet the needs of all ability groups, and pupils are given very simple tasks, this results in some restless and inappropriate behaviour.

85 The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers use a good range of resources and information books and pupils are given responsibilities to organise materials and to work together. In these lessons, questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils and give them opportunities to share their findings with the whole class. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils are given long time periods on an activity involving little challenge or individual recording. Not all lessons ended with a summary where pupils could learn from each other's efforts and the teacher could assess pupils' learning.

86 The curriculum is sound, with some good links to health education. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the scheme of work has been revised and there is now good guidance for teachers. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has worked hard to help raise funds to develop the school grounds for environmental studies. An excellent pond area, incorporating viewing platforms is established and there is a sensory garden, adjacent to the playground, incorporates aromatic shrubs and herbs. An impressive project plan identifies further development of the school grounds for environmental studies. A good range of learning resources includes quality practical equipment, books and poster packs are used. Since the last inspection standards overall have improved in the subject.

## 90 OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

90

### **Information technology**

87 Attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations. Pupils of all ages show good control of the mouse when they click and double click on commands and drag and place pictures and text accurately. Pupils know and correctly identify the component parts of the computer such as the monitor, keyboard, printer and disk drive and name the functions of the icon-bar. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the end of the key stage, most pupils store and retrieve their work and control an electrical toy. They make most progress during whole class lessons.

88 Pupils show interest and enthusiasm in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are motivated and excited by the use of equipment. The very youngest pupils sustain concentration for significant periods of time in whole class lessons and most work independently, without constant support from adults. Pupils use equipment well and treat it with respect. They share and take turns, working co-operatively, often helping each other sort out problems. Pupils are sometimes in awe of what computers and software can do.

89 Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and they have a growing understanding of the many functions of computers. Most teachers communicate this knowledge well to pupils and use software packages to good effect during whole class lessons, for example, when demonstrating how to use a CD-ROM. Teachers' plan and organise weekly lessons soundly, but the

subject is not sufficiently planned into other subject areas, particularly the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson, and not used to its full potential to support learning in other subjects. Teachers' expectations are generally appropriate, but there are instances of some software programmes being used from nursery to Year 2 with no clear evidence of skill progression. Samples of pupils' work are moderated, annotated and placed in a subject portfolio each term by the subject co-ordinator but assessment of pupils' work is not generally used to inform teaching.

90The curricular requirements of all pupils, including those with special educational needs are satisfactorily met through plans based on the nationally recommended scheme of work. The new subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well organised. There has been effective liaison between the outgoing and the new co-ordinators and the leadership of the subject has a positive impact on the development of the subject across the school. Learning resources are satisfactory with a computer in each class, concept keyboards, touch pads and computerised toys. The school is well resourced with appropriate software to support teaching and learning across the subject and range of pupils. There has been considerable improvement in this subject since the last inspection.

#### 94 **Religious education**

91Attainment in religious education is in line with expectations at the end of the key stage and pupils make sound progress. Photographic evidence, collective books of pupils' work and the school portfolio of work samples show coverage of a range of celebrations and festivals from the Christian, Hindu, Islamic and Sikh faiths. Pupils have learnt stories from the Bible and from other religions, such as David and Goliath and the Hindu story of Rama and Sita. This helps them build an understanding of universal ideas such as the fight of good against evil. They learn about the significance of candles during celebrations and relate this to their own experience of birthday cake and Christmas candles. Themes and topics such as special places, special days and special rules encourage pupils to discuss things familiar to them and gain a broader understanding about traditional events.

92A very small sample of lessons for religious education was observed during the inspection, although discussions and sharing sessions were observed. Teachers sensitively encourage pupils to express their views and create a climate where all opinions are valued. They plan lessons so that pupils can record their work in interesting ways, through making greeting cards, their own books on creation and by printing and painting traditional Islamic and Hindu patterns. A good range of resources and visits to local places of worship help pupils to understand the rituals observed during worship and during rites such as Christenings and weddings. Drama, discussions and collective worship make a significant contribution to the curriculum. Pupils are learning to talk about moral issues confidently and to express feelings and emotions through a good scheme of structured discussion. Pupils in Year 1 showed great respect for one others' fears about the dark and children in the reception class were encouraged to consider how to get to know and make friends. Pupils are encouraged to consider these ideas during playtime by the provision of a circle in the playground and the friendship stop.

93There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has written a new scheme of work from the recently revised Agreed Syllabus. This is better than the previous scheme of work and more appropriate to pupils' ages. It provides helpful guidance and a range of ideas for colleagues and this support, together with checking teachers' planning has been effective in developing a more consistent approach to religious education. Activities are helping pupils understand the wider community to which they belong.

#### 97 **Art**

94Standards in art are appropriate for the ages of pupils. Art is used successfully to support pupils'

understanding across other subjects. For example, younger pupils colour in and make collage displays of traditional nursery rhymes. Pupils in Year 1 make careful drawings of historical artefacts and paint their observations of a Christening to support work in religious education. Older pupils record their observations of Lullingstone country park through collage. This range of colourful and imaginative work is displayed to good effect. The strengths in the subject have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. Pupils are taught to look carefully when making portraits of each other and when creating still-life compositions of fruit. In a good lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to be bold in their work by focusing their attention on the relative size of trees. Teachers give good demonstrations on techniques, such as cutting spirals and blending chalk and oil pastels. This enables pupils to experience success when mixing and blending appropriate shades. Teachers help pupils use paint sensitively, when applying a colour wash as a subtle background. Pupils study art from a range of cultural traditions when making rangoli and mendhi patterns and experience the difficulties of transferring their two-dimensional ideas into three-dimensional animals, such as giraffes. A good range of books, posters and materials are available and the co-ordinator helps teachers with ideas and advice. There have been visits to a local picture gallery but it is currently under renovation. Occasionally parents or friends with artistic skills work in classes and share their expertise.

## 98 **Design and technology**

95 Standards in design and technology are similar to those expected for pupils' ages and they have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. Younger pupils design and construct a ladder for a pet budgie, using wooden sticks and glued joints. They successfully learn about hinges and moving joints by making small animals. Pupils in Year 1 use a variety of construction kits and learn how to make basic structures by copying illustrations from books. They design and make houses as part of their topic on homes. These have been planned after careful observation and made applying different features such as hinged windows and doors. Pupils in Year 2 use axles and wheels on their moon buggies and they incorporate more moving parts in their designs as their understanding of simple mechanisms develops. Paper shopping bags with folded joins and handles were constructed carefully with a good focus on the appropriateness of the finished product. Pupils are enthusiastic about their models and co-operate well during their projects. They are encouraged to discuss their completed work but given very few opportunities to record how they made the models or how they might be improved. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers deploy other adult helpers well to supervise more complex skills and pay good attention to safety arrangements. Resources are good and the sound scheme of work identifies appropriate links with other subjects.

99

## **Geography**

96 Pupils of all levels of ability, including pupils with special educational needs, attain standards appropriate for their age. They show an interest in their work and particularly enjoy their visits to local geographical sites. Class visits to a variety of geographical sites such as Welling Station, Lullingstone and Joss Bay also contribute greatly to pupils' cultural and social development. These opportunities enable pupils to compare the local environment with ones further afield. They also map their journeys to and around the school, and use computers to support their learning in the subject. Pupils record most of their work in geography pictorially and graphically, and some of this work is of a high standard. However, they have too few opportunities for written recording of their geographical work. There is little evidence of diagnostic marking of pupils' work in geography and no evidence of the assessment of pupils' work informing teachers' planning. The school has recently adopted the recommended scheme of work for geography but this has not yet been adapted to meet the schools' own needs. The subject is led by a new, enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has a clear vision for the development of the subject. Teachers' planning is monitored retrospectively each half-term but there is no planned programme of lesson observations or feedback to teachers on strengths and weaknesses in geography. The co-ordinator is currently attending training to increase subject expertise but has not yet had training or induction into the role of subject manager. Standards are about the same as at the time of the previous inspection.

## 100 **History**

97 Standards in history are similar to those expected for the pupils' ages. Throughout the key stage pupils ask and answer questions about the past using first hand historical sources such as artefacts, original scripts and first hand personal memories from a local resident. In one lesson observed, the teacher successfully used a photograph of her great-grandmother, lanterns and candlesticks to capture the interest of pupils and re-inforce the concept of lighting before electricity. Pupils showed a developing understanding of people's lives in the past and this lively, enquiry based approach motivated pupils effectively. Similarly, pupils have studied the changes at East Wickham school since 1930, and have been able to involve their parents in their investigation. Relevant links with art enables pupils to look closely at artefacts and identify significant changes. For example, last year, pupils in Year 2 carefully observed and drew various modes of transport and funfairs. Pupils in Year 1 colourfully recorded their work about Guy Fawkes. Pupils enjoy history lessons and are keen to share their own ideas and experiences with the teacher and their classmates. Pupils listen well and show interest in the subject. Visits to historical sites, such as Lullingstone, effectively promote pupils' cultural and social development. The new, enthusiastic co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject but has not yet received training in subject leadership and has not discussed the monitoring role of subject co-ordination with the senior management of the school. The subject is well resourced and receives a generous budget each year but this is not linked to the subject action plan. Judgements about the subject remain in line with the previous inspection report.

## 101 **Music**

98 Pupils across the key stage attain standards appropriate for their ages. They sing tunefully during weekly singing lessons with the music co-ordinator. There are few opportunities however, for singing during assembly or for listening to music as they enter or leave the hall. In the few lessons observed, teachers were generally confident. They planned a range of opportunities for pupils to perform and compose as well as listen to and appraise music. Work was usually at an appropriate level for the age and ability of pupils, although on one occasion new songs taught to pupils were too challenging because they were chosen to fit with the topic theme rather than for pupils' stage of learning.

99 Pupils enjoy music lessons and listen attentively to teacher's requests and instructions. They are keen to participate, especially if there is an opportunity to clap rhythms or play an instrument during the lesson. Pupils work well together, they co-operate in small groups and most are confident when performing to the rest of the class and during school performances. There is a comprehensive music policy and scheme of work in place. The subject is led by an experienced co-ordinator. Teachers' planning is monitored each half term but feedback is only given when teachers request the co-ordinator to observe a class music rehearsal prior to a performance for parents. The subject is well resourced with a comprehensive selection of musical instruments, tapes, CDs and music resource books. Standards in music have remained satisfactory since the last inspection.

## 103 **Physical education**

100 Overall, pupils attain standards appropriate for their ages in all aspects of physical education. Pupils are keen, enthusiastic and well behaved in lessons. They are attentive and work very well together and individually. Where pupils had to invent a game and agree rules in groups, they worked extremely effectively and showed high levels of understanding about fairness. When given the choice of increasing the level of difficulty of a simple task they were eager for more challenge. Pupils handle small equipment sensibly and share resources well. When a whole class was engaged in throwing beanbags, the pupils were careful and sensible in their practising. The only time attention lapsed was when the teacher spent too long organising or addressed a few pupils personally, while making the

whole class wait. In one lesson observed, pupils did not sufficiently increase their understanding and ability to throw accurately because their poor skill patterns were not corrected. In another lesson, pupils spent too long inactively waiting between tasks and several pupils were able to perform more complex skills and indicated greater understanding of aspects than given tasks allowed. Teacher-pupil relationships are good but in the observed lessons, teachers lacked subject expertise. For example, in one lesson, pupils with difficulties were told several times to watch the ball, but this was not their problem, and no other teaching was given which could have helped them. Dance skills are developed well. Equipment and resources are good but the hall is small and the storage of equipment does not always enable pupils' to access it readily. Pupils good response to physical education has been maintained since the time of the last inspection, although teaching skills were reported as better in 1995.

### **Nursery Assessment Unit**

101 Children attending the nursery assessment unit have a wide range of abilities and special needs. The unit's admissions team carefully allocate places, in accordance with the policy, to pre-school children with significant difficulties in aspects of learning, socialisation and communication. Several also have motor and sensory needs.

102 The nursery has been established for just over one term and in this period many pupils have made good progress in all areas of learning and some have made very good progress. One pupil has been enabled to take a place with support in a mainstream infant school. Another has transferred into a reception class, with support, having previously been unable to cope with such a setting. Other children have already made sufficient progress across the areas of learning for clear assessments of their strengths and needs to be made.

103 Children make very good progress in developing relationships and skills in communication, and consequently in managing their frustrations and anxieties. Where appropriate they are beginning to use and respond with understanding to signing, which effectively supports their communication. Children make good progress in all aspects of physical development, learning to manipulate a wide range of materials and resources such as pens, scissors, fabric, dough, puzzles, small construction and play apparatus. They become confident in using large, wheeled play vehicles, controlling balls and using the climbing frame. Children confidently enjoy and participate in music, songs, rhymes and stories. They respond very well to book sharing and to simple retelling of story elements through play. For example two boys were excited to see that their teddy sitting in the box wearing a 'colander' hat looked just the same as the illustration in their storybook.

104 Several children are making the important developmental step of imitating activities and are beginning to translate them into simple creative play, for example, one boy has just begun to play feed and show understanding in caring for a doll. Most pupils are keen to explore a range of materials and equipment, and are helped to do so with focus and understanding. One boy has recently developed sufficient self-motivation and concentration to spend a considerable time carefully cutting, arranging and gluing shapes into cards, which he then presented to staff and the other children. Pupils are learning basic skills in computer mouse and keyboard control with careful individual support and encouragement. Across the curriculum and in relation to the detailed learning targets in each child's individual education plan, the progress pupils make over time is very good and progress in lessons is good.

105 Many children previously have experienced difficulties in separating from parents and relating to new adults. However all children settle quickly and happily into the unit. They display total confidence in their surroundings and in the staff. They are enabled to make their needs and wishes known. Most children are beginning to relate to others both in adult led situations and when playing alongside another child. Some children are beginning to note others' responses and react appropriately with each other without adult intervention. Some children are now able to work alone for a short while on an adult-set or

self-selected task.

106 The curriculum is planned in line with the mainstream nursery class, and is correctly based on the desirable learning outcomes for under-fives. The unit provides a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum. The focus of teaching is on language and communication, but a very high profile is given to social, relationship and personal learning. Pupils are provided with very well planned learning opportunities to meet each child's individual learning needs. Lessons are stimulating and effective in engaging pupils' active interest and response. The extremely experienced and highly competent unit staff use careful, detailed and continuous observations to provide individually tailored, secure but challenging opportunities for learning. Staff promote the development of self-confidence as children are given time and encouragement to consolidate their learning.

107 There are very good links with parents. Systems such as the home-school books, formal and informal meetings, and the daily availability to parents all serve to promote very good partnerships, which directly benefit the children. The unit staff and the children benefit from the close involvement of the educational psychological service both in the strategic management of the unit and for assessing, planning and supporting children's learning. Speech and language therapy liaison is effective. However it is a significant concern that in some other areas critical information about individual pupils is not made available to staff. For example, professional assessment and guidance about the physical management, mobilisation and specialised care needs of children need to be formally made available by the relevant services. Recently adult support for a child's walking was found by chance to be totally against the recommendations of the physiotherapist. There is good recognition by the unit staff and the managing educational psychologist of the importance of forging specific links between the unit and other professional agencies. The governing body has yet to be involved in ensuring the establishment of essential co-operative working with specialist areas of health and from social services.

108 The formal management of the unit is due to be transferred to East Wickham Infant School later this year. Although the school is fully supportive and committed to the unit there have been no formal management links established, and there are not yet any agreed policies or schemes for management support and monitoring of the unit provision and staff appraisal. This is currently a weakness.



## 112 PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### 112 SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

109 The inspection was carried out over a period of one week by 5 inspectors for a total of 17 inspector days. For the majority of time in school the inspectors visited classes, talked with pupils and evaluated samples of work from each year group. In total, 48 observations of teaching were made. Pupils from each year group were heard reading and inspectors looked at samples of previously completed work. Inspectors checked the work on display throughout the school. They observed assemblies, registration periods, lunchtime and break sessions. Planned meetings were held with the headteacher, teaching, support staff and governors. The school development plan, policies, planning documents, teachers' records, reports on pupils' progress and minutes of relevant meetings were also reviewed. The school's accommodation and resources, including library and book provision were inspected. A parents meeting was held before the inspection with 11 parents attending. 86 parent questionnaires were returned and analysed and additional comments from parents were noted.

113 **DATA AND INDICATORS**

113 **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y2	211	2	61	31
Nursery classes and Unit	29.50	5	17	0

113 **Teachers and classes**

**Qualified teachers (YR - Y2)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	19

113 **Education support staff (YR - Y2)**

Total number of education support staff:	9
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	150

113 **Qualified teachers (Nursery classes and unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	15

113 **Education support staff (Nursery classes and unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	70

Average class size:	26
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113 **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	456739
Total Expenditure	461523
Expenditure per pupil	1709.34
Balance brought forward from previous year	25025
Balance carried forward to next year	20241

Number of questionnaires sent out:

211

Number of questionnaires returned:

86

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	30	65	2	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	37	57	3	1	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	9	50	22	5	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	24	65	5	3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	13	69	7	7	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	22	69	6	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	19	55	15	7	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	28	60	6	2	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	26	64	7	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	19	66	10	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	48	51	1	0	0

### 113 Summary of comments

Parents say that their children like school. They are pleased with the positive attitudes and values promoted by the school. Most consider they are well informed about school events, through regular newsletters and helpful and informative meetings, for example to introduce the numeracy and literacy strategies. Teachers and the headteacher are approachable if there are any problems and are very accessible. Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. Teachers have good arrangements for meeting parents and the school promptly deals with problems. A few parents feel that pupils are not pushed hard enough in their work and the team found that teachers do not always match work well enough to the needs of pupils. The school is aware of the need to synchronize Inset days with the juniors and to give parents as much notice as possible.